



Sustainability at Travaasa

Eco-awareness and sustainability feel as authentic as the 210-acre landscape at Travaasa, where inspired architecture and modern amenities combine with a reverence for the natural beauty of the Texas Hill Country. From land and water conservation efforts to the use of recycled materials throughout the property, greening and eco-friendly principles guide every facet of our design and operation. The decision to build Travaasa as an environmentally conscious resort was inspired by the untouched beauty of the adjacent Balcones Canyonlands Preserve. Only 34 acres were developed, while the majority balance of the land has been protected in its pristine natural state. Native vegetation and wildlife are abundant throughout the undisturbed preserve.

To ensure Travaasa be as “green” as possible, hatch + ulland owen architects executed a master plan fully integrated into the existing terrain using a “least disturbance” design philosophy. As a key strategy, the design team kept paving and landscaping to a minimum, opting instead for treatments such as unpaved parking areas and previous open-grid hard surfaces that reduce water runoff and promote groundwater recharge. Where paving was necessary, roads and walkways were clad in pale-toned concrete and generously shaded with existing foliage to reduce heat buildup. This method had the added benefit of reducing the use of petroleum products used in asphalt.

Energy Consumption

Energy consumption and air pollution are limited using a wide range of tactics, including the implementation of passive strategies and options, free of mechanical or electrical systems that require the combustion of fossil fuels. The strategic placement of operable windows to allow fresh air in every guest room maximizes natural ventilation and lighting. By creating a serene “walking environment” with interconnecting scenic pathways, the master plan encourages walking, further improving air quality and reducing noise.

Because water has become a precious commodity in central Texas, we employ multiple conservation techniques for property maintenance. Xeriscaping utilizes native drought and pest-resistant plants. All water sources on the property—faucets, showers and lavatories—are outfitted with low-flow fixtures. Travaasa is devoted to other eco-friendly techniques throughout its daily operation, including waste minimization; reuse and recycling of all possible materials; composting, local and organic food sourcing; recycled paper product usage; and sustainability education. Travaasa is a proud winner of Treehugger’s 2010 “Best of Green” award for best resort and has also been awarded an American Society of Landscaper Architecture Merit Award.

Construction Materials

Travaasa building materials utilize recycled materials, renewable resources and localized stone, such as concrete that contains fly ash, a material generally treated as disposable waste for landfills; Trex® decking, manufactured exclusively from reclaimed plastic products and waste wood; and Hardie Board, fiber cement siding made of ground woodchips and Portland cement. Walls and roofs were constructed with at least 30% post-consumer recycled materials.

Well-appointed guest rooms with painted gypsum wallboard contain 95% recycled materials, acoustical floor underlayment of 100% recycled waste paper and ceiling tiles comprised of 37–69% recycled materials. Also employed were materials derived from rapidly renewing resources, such as bamboo plywood flooring, sustainable ipe wood and linoleum, which is made from cork and linseed oil, both agriculturally derived products.

With health and wellness being at the heart and soul of our core values, construction utilized low-emission building materials whenever possible. Active policies that decrease the presence of harmful gases in the environment and ensure optimal indoor air quality include the following:

- Except where unavoidable, paints and other finishes contain no or low levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs).
- All carpeting meets or exceeds the Carpet and Rug Institute's Green Label Indoor Air Quality Test Program.
- Trim and cabinetry are made from formaldehyde-free, medium-density fiberboard.
- Sheetwood is oriented strand board, fabricated without the use of urea formaldehyde resins.