

1 HOTEL TORONTO

Case Study

Toronto, Ontario

March 2025

1 Hotel, Toronto



INTRODUCTION



1 Hotel, Toronto

1 Hotel Toronto is a luxury property inspired by nature. As the country's first mission driven hotel, 1 Hotel Toronto introduced the city to a new standard for a sustainable luxury experience. The hotel celebrates the beauty of Toronto's natural environment and offers an urban oasis in the heart of the city. Situated in the King West neighbourhood, the hotel cultivates the best in sustainable design and architecture, together with extraordinary comfort and an unrivaled level of service. The hotel's three pillars: environment, people and equity and prosperity are demonstrated through their mission which is to 'offer a sustainable luxury hotel experience where nature inspires everything we do'¹.

This luxury lifestyle hotel brand is a valuable case study illustrating how sustainable design, technology development and partnerships can foster environmental stewardship, community engagement as well as a luxury guest experience.

¹ <https://www.1hotels.com/>

HISTORY



1 Hotel, Toronto

Barry Sternlicht, Chairman of Starwood Capital Group created the 1 Hotels concept with a vision to capture nature inside a hotel as well as preserve and safeguard the environment. His vision was to create a brand that more than just a hotel but also a platform for change.



I wanted to capture the beauty of nature in a hotel and commit to safeguarding it as best as I can, a responsibility that I believe we all share. It's 1 world. But 1 is more than a hotel, it's a philosophy and a platform for change.

Barry Sternlicht

Chairman, Starwood Capital Group

The first 1 Hotels property was established in the US in 2015, located in New York City adjacent to Central Park followed by 1 Hotel South Beach, Miami. In 2021, the Toronto hotel was opened as the first Canadian property. Toronto was chosen due to its diverse culture which was a good fit for the brand.

The 112-room hotel features four unique restaurants, a Field House (gym), rooftop pool and Garden Pavilion where the culinary team grows a variety of edible flowers, herb and local vegetables. On a first come, first serve basis, the fully electric Audi Q8 e-tron House Car is available for guests to take advantage of. Their three restaurants are rated in the top 3 of Toronto on TripAdvisor (Casa Madera #1, 1 Kitchen #2, Harriet's #3) and ranked number 2 out of 128 hotels in Toronto. 1 Hotel Toronto has also been recognized as the number one hotel in Canada for the Condé Nast Traveller 2024 UK Reader's Choice Award. Additionally, 1 Hotel Toronto has been awarded One MICHELIN Key in the first ever release of The MICHELIN Guide's top honours for the best hotels in Canada.

THE PRESENT

Now in its fourth year of operation, 1 Hotel Toronto has shown that its mission-driven approach to sustainable hospitality appeals to a wide demographic of travellers who care about their impact. Not only is the hotel an economic success, but it also focuses on community. During the summer, farmer's markets are hosted, and the Garden Pavilion is used by the neighbours as well as guests. In the winter the pond is turned into an ice rink which the community uses. Monthly programming is also an integral part of enhancing the guest and local community experience.

Toronto, Ontario





Toronto, Ontario

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Challenges

The greatest challenge for the hotel is that establishing sustainable operations sometimes comes with a higher cost. For example, biodegradable and reusable items are often more expensive than single use items so making this shift must have buy in at all levels.

Training is another challenge. All team members must be on board with the hotel's mission and vision but often this comes with additional training. One example is waste sorting to obtain a high diversion rate. Sorting of waste takes time and effort, something often overlooked by other properties.

Successes:

When operating as a sustainable property, working with multiple partners and vendors is key. From the local farmers that supply produce to the restaurants to trust Zero Waste consultants, it's important to remain accountable and seeing the rewards is a great success for the hotel. There are always options for improving sustainable performance and according to Christopher he says: "Making an impact, small or great has been rewarding. We are making a difference and monitoring our impact through careful reporting to ensure we are always improving. This is really part of our success." 1 Hotel Toronto's General Manager Anthony Campaniaris continues, "At 1 Hotel Toronto, we believe in the power of community and the richness that local partnerships bring to our guest experience. By working with local vendors, we not only support the artisans, farmers, and creators who make this city unique, but we also offer our guests a genuine connection to Toronto's vibrant culture. Partnering with organizations like Food Print Group is essential to our mission of being a truly responsible hotel. By holding ourselves—and our partners—accountable for the impact we have on the environment, we ensure that every choice we make, from sourcing food to managing waste, aligns with our commitment to sustainability."

REGENERATIVE TOURISM ASPECTS

There are a number of efforts that 1 Hotel Toronto has done to focus on regeneration:

Reused materials for building:

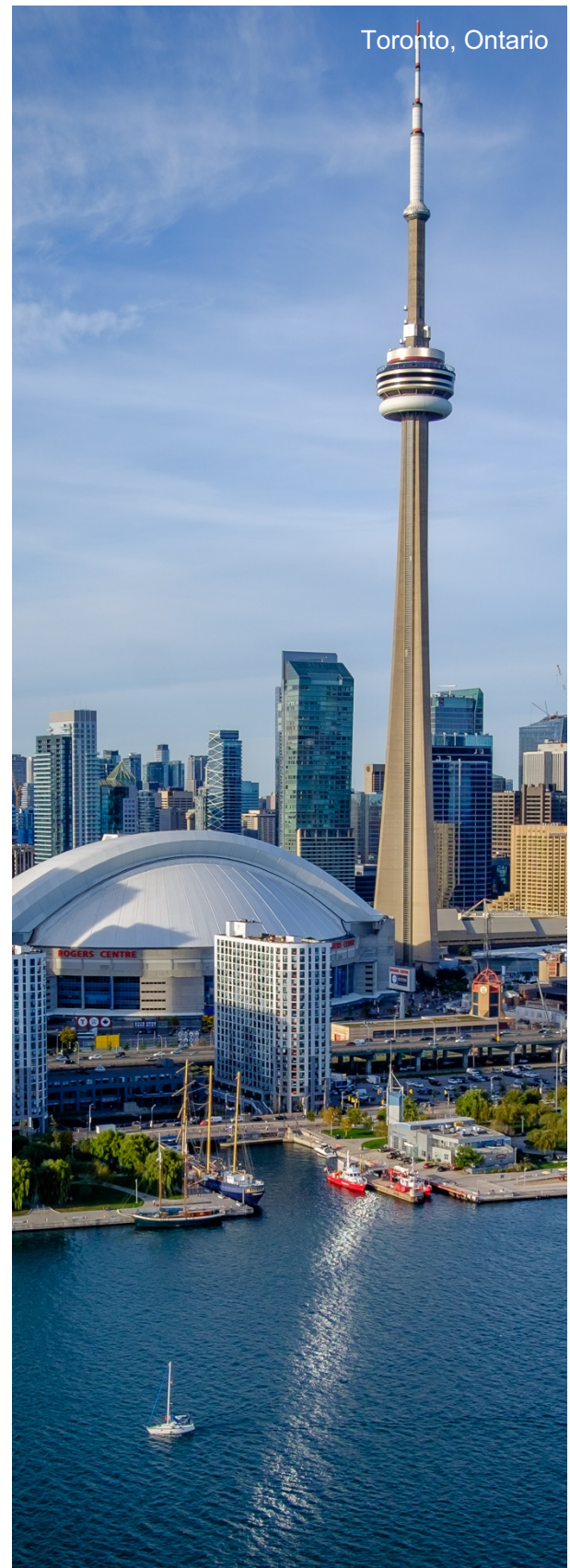
The property's biophilic design was done in collaboration with award-winning architecture and design firm, Rockwell Group and project managed by The Athen's Group which specializes in the development of environmentally conscious upscale hospitality properties. 1 Hotel Toronto used reclaimed timber, driftwood, and other furniture in the hotel which was retrofitted when they purchased the property in 2021. Local woodworking studio Just Be Woodsy transformed fallen Toronto trees into over 1,000 pieces of hand-crafted one-of-a-kind furnishings throughout public and private spaces such as dining tables, grazing boards, host desks and side tables. Another example is that each guest room provides water carafes made from recycled wine bottles to avoid single use plastics. "Often guests don't always look behind the scenes, so 1 Hotel Toronto tries to showcase how guests can be involved to make better choices" says Christopher.

Art:

Throughout the hotel, guests can discover nature inspired artwork by local makers.

Moss & Lam, the Toronto-based art studio was commissioned by the Hotel to create a hand-made art installation. Intricately designed out of paper to mimic loon feathers, the piece hangs above the Lobby's front desk.

Using flowers, flora and moss foraged throughout Ontario, Lauren Wilson, Floral Designer and founder of Timberlost created a bespoke installation behind the bar at Flora Lounge, located in the hotel lobby.





Locally sourced produce:

The hotel has an onsite garden which grows fresh herbs, fruits, edible flowers, and varieties of vegetables. The hotel also boasts a microgarden in partnership with Mighty Harvest² which provides microgreens used by the hotel's chefs. Another key effort for the hotel's culinary teams is to source products within 100km of the hotel as much as possible. Partnering and supporting local farms, producers who ethically raise and grow high quality products is essential.

Clean energy and LEED Certification:

1 Hotel Toronto is the only hotel in Ontario with LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold Certification³. The hotel is equipped with smart energy efficient heating and cooling systems to ensure that light and other ambient heating and cooling are not in use when rooms are vacant. The hotel's intelligent energy and building management systems save approximately 17% of annual energy consumed and over 167 tons of CO₂ has been reduced since the hotel opened.

Water Stewardship:

All fixtures in the hotel are low-flow and all water is double filtered to encourage guests to drink from the tap. An efficient water irrigation system controlled by timers and weather data to water the exterior plants. Water conserving shower timers are also placed in the rooms for guest to be mindful of their water consumption.

Bringing nature inside:

1 Hotel Toronto has more than 3,300 plants, including native plants more resilient to the local climate, providing a sense of balance and restoration, and giving the earth a little more breathing room⁴. Supporting reforestation efforts has also been a focus on the hotel. The hotel has planted thousands of trees throughout Canada with partners such as Veritree.

² Mighty Harvest <https://www.mightyharvest.ca/> last accessed October 2024

³ LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a certification that provides a framework for healthy, highly efficient, and cost-saving green buildings

⁴ 1 Hotel Toronto <https://www.1hotels.com/toronto/sustainability> last accessed October 2024

Repurposing:

As a brand that is always thinking of new ways to give back to the community, 1 Hotels created the 1 Less Thing program. Through this initiative, guests can lighten their suitcase by leaving behind a gently-used piece of clothing (or two), and 1 Hotel Toronto donates the collected items to a local charitable partner. As of 2024, over 100 kgs of items have been donated.

Zero Waste:

All 1 Hotel properties carefully track their monthly impact. Working with a variety of trusted partners including Considerate Group⁵ to track utilities such as energy, water and gas and Food Print Group who helps with their zero-waste program. As of 2024, 1 Hotel Toronto has diverted 90% of their waste from landfills.

Supporting people:

Initiatives are set up to support team members with paid time off to volunteer in their local community, park cleanups and tree planting. The hotel works with Seeds of Hope⁶, working with victims of human trafficking through volunteering and donation of items. “These types of initiatives are very eye opening for our team members and raise awareness.” says Christopher. Other benefits include health benefits, discounts on health and fitness brands and daily meals for all staff.

Education and Engagement:

A big part of the hotel's mission is to engage and inspire guests to consider their environmental impact. Thoughtful touchpoints throughout the guest experience are in place as a subtle reminder that they can make a difference. For example, chalk boards instead of paper note pads are provided in room and engagement activities such as Mindful Mixology classes aim to educate guests how to slow down and use ingredients to their fullest. Additionally, in-room toiletries come with clever suggestions alternative use. For example, a shower cap can also be used as a camera lens cover. 1 Hotel Toronto also offers a special design tour of the property sharing its sustainability efforts which has influenced other hotels to also improve and share.



⁵ Considerate Group <https://considerategroup.com/> last accessed October 2024

⁶ Seeds of Hope <https://www.seedsofhope.ca/> last accessed October 2024

The Future

The next step for 1 Hotel Toronto is to continue building partnerships and collaborations. Working on a TRUE Certification to become Zero-Waste Certified will solidify the integrity and credibility of the hard work 1 Hotel Toronto has done to minimize waste produced from the hotel. Their vision is not just about quantity but quality to ensure that they live up to their vision and mission. Christopher sums up the hotel's efforts by saying: "We are building our hotel to really be the leader in sustainable hospitality in Canada and we believe small actions make a big difference".

