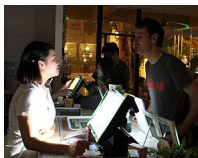


Lights Off For One Hour, Who Is Coming for Dinner?

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
Monday, 23 April 2012 17:27



“Come with your own eco-friendly light-source... bring down lanterns, flashlights, fireflies in a jar – whatever you can rustle up”

Earth Hour, the worldwide event organized by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is held on the last Saturday of March annually to encourage households and businesses to turn off their non-essential lights for one hour to raise awareness about the need to take action on climate change. VeganBurg, a local fast food restaurant in Jalan Eunus, Singapore, participated enthusiastically this year by having their lights out for one hour. All income earned on the hour was also donated to Tzu Chi and Singapore Red Cross Society.



Besides having its lights switched off from 8.30pm to 9:30pm to mark Earth Hour 2012, the organic vegan burger fast food restaurant who has gained much popularity since its inception in 2010 also urged its customers to “come with your own eco-friendly light-source... bring down lanterns, flashlights, fireflies in a jar – whatever you can rustle up” to spark up the scene.

The restaurant founder, Alex Tan, continued to infuse the environmental event with a charitable cause by donating the income earned during the hour to Tzu Chi Singapore and the Singapore Red Cross Society. This was his second time combining charity with environmental protection in the Earth Hour activity.

Mr Tan became a vegetarian in 1998 at a young age of 25 when the plant-based diet helped improve his stomach bloatedness, thanks to a friend’s suggestion after he tried visiting all sorts of doctors. Realizing that his overall health was improving with the diet change, he began reading and researching more into vegetarianism and his diet naturally became vegan by choice.



He conceptualized VeganBurg in February 2010 and launched the restaurant in October that same year hoping to introduce a fresh atmosphere to the local vegetarian scene. VeganBurg’s hip and trendy branding has proved to be successful with the young as many youths can be seen patronizing its outlet.

After the lights were out on 31 March evening, many customers came in one after another – majority of them were young people.

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Mayank, who came to support the event together with his friend, was among the crowd. The vegetarian since young penned a comment and pinned it on the message board. It reads, "Go Vegetarian! Save the Earth! One hour, one day, one month at a time. Saving your HOME PLANET starts with YOU."

His friend Ms Lim, who is trying to veer toward vegetarianism, shared what she thinks: "Earth Hour should extend to become Earth Day or even longer. Most importantly is everyone should start contributing to our planet consciously."

Christine Crawford, WWF-Northern Ireland Communications Manager said during Northern Ireland's official signing up for Earth Hour on 27 February 2012, "Earth Hour is not just about saving an hour's electricity; it's much bigger than that. It's about realizing that the actions we take, from the energy we use, to the food we buy and water we drink, has an effect on the world."