



Heart-warming Amsterdam

Entry Ufi Sustainable Development Award 2016

'Our kitchen has made the deliberate choice to use ingredients with added value for the Greater Amsterdam region, a regional catering concept we call 'Heart-warming Amsterdam'

RAI Amsterdam
11 april 2016

inspiring
people

rai
AMSTERDAM

Heart-warming Amsterdam – the movie!

<https://youtu.be/e04ff08cq0g?list=PL6F5A462A69DA5202>

Heart-warming Amsterdam

We believe in the power of connecting. To bring people, ideas and visions together in a world full of opportunities. Heart-warming Amsterdam is a concept that aligns with this vision.

Groups from all over the world get to enjoy and 'meet' products from local producers, all whilst supporting the environment. Through Heart-warming Amsterdam, visitors of the RAI get inspired by rare products, local vendors and the city of Amsterdam on a different level; it's an experience.



A sustainable catering concept...

RAI Amsterdam's 'Heart-warming Amsterdam' catering concept is about:

- Working with responsibly and preferably locally produced ingredients.
Ingredients are required to be sustainable and animal-friendly.
- This supports vulnerable local producers; care farms for outings or education, small local farms, urban greenhouses and dairy farms .
In addition to promoting local produce, the concept focuses on sustainability on behalf of the wider society. Local producers are seen both as suppliers and as an important source of inspiration. An example is the plant nursery Kwekerij Osdorp, which employs people looking to reintegrate back into the workforce.

To inspire others...

Through Heart-warming Amsterdam, visitors of the RAI get inspired by rare products, local vendors and the city of Amsterdam on a different level; it's an experience. Thanks to the concept we can offer our customers the chance to:

- Meet and learn more about responsibly and preferably locally produced ingredients.
- Offering the possibility to enjoy and get inspired by uncommon and seasonal products grown in the region.
- Tasting Amsterdam; It is a great way to showcase the quality foods that an urbanized area like Amsterdam can produce.

Target group

Heart-warming Amsterdam is offered to all customers of RAI Amsterdam:

- exhibition organisers
- exhibitors
- visitors.

RAI Amsterdam increasingly orientates itself towards proactively offering sustainable products, services and solutions. The goal is to gradually create a sustainable product range with various product categories for customers.

"CSR provides me with the opportunity to work with suppliers and products from the Amsterdam region and I am proud to share these flavours with our international guests."

Rientz Mulder, Kitchen Manager and CSR policy area owner



A photograph of two men in white chef uniforms standing behind a stainless steel counter in a professional kitchen. The man on the left has short brown hair and wears glasses, with his arms crossed. The man on the right has a beard and is smiling, with his hands clasped. The background shows kitchen equipment and a bright, modern environment.

Where it all started...

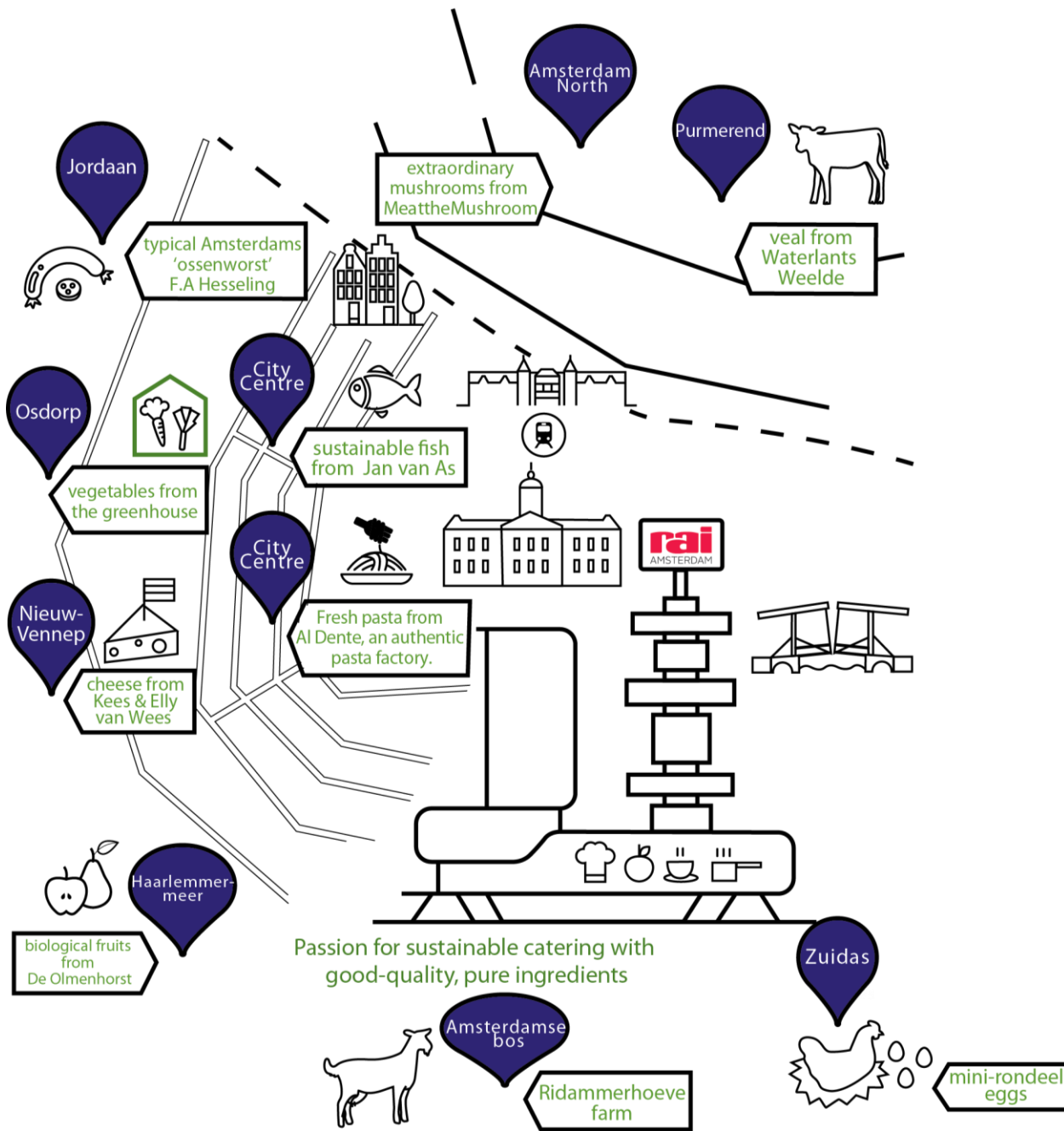
Background

It all started several years ago with a curious kitchen staff, ready to make a difference...

- They visited local producers in order to experience how products, ranging from meat to vegetables, are produced.
- This resulted in a passion for traditional products from the metropolitan region.
- The kitchen currently uses various high-quality, pure ingredients to prepare fully sustainable meals.
- The choices within the Heart-warming Amsterdam concept vary but the products are required to provide added value to society or to the region.
- This way the RAI is able to support vulnerable producers in the metropolitan area, and at the same time use less common seasonal and regional products.
- Heart-warming Amsterdam can be aligned with the wishes of companies with high sustainability demands who prefer organic, sustainable, seasonal or regional products. Due to the current small-scale character of the suppliers, it is not yet possible to provide this range on a large scale.

The objectives for Heart-warming Amsterdam

- Supporting local communities, for example small local farms and urban greenhouses.
- Through this concept, our visitors are offered the total Amsterdam experience, in a quite unique manner. In addition to the sustainable motivation behind the goals, the Heart-warming Amsterdam concept is integrated in our annual catering targets and contributes to commercial results.



Heart-warming Amsterdam

- Selection of regional products from the Greater Amsterdam region.
- Animal-friendly selection such as free-range veal instead of products from boxed calves
- Offering organic or otherwise sustainable alternatives for all regular products
- Using sustainably caught freshwater fish such as pike perch and being the first catering company in the Netherlands to implement the 'Zuiderzeezilver' (South Sea Silver) certificate
- Having added value for society and region

A photograph of a fish, likely a sea bream, leaping from the surface of the water. The fish is captured mid-air, with its body arched and its tail just leaving the water, creating a series of small droplets and ripples. The background is a calm, blue-grey sea under a clear sky.

Actions and implementation

Description

Our kitchen team visited local vendors in order to experience how our future ingredients were being produced. They were inspired and subsequently launched the Heart-warming Amsterdam concept.

Guests can always experience this concept in our Grand Café restaurant and during several events; events where organisers made a conscious choice for a 'green' concept with the experience of Amsterdam.

The focus is on the local community, local producers and the city of Amsterdam. The chefs prepare well known Dutch dishes for our international guests with the ingredients adding a touch of the city.

The experience of being in the Netherlands and being in Amsterdam will continue when you enjoy a Heart-warming meal.



Heart-warming and our brand strategy

We believe in the power of connecting in a world full of possibilities that unites people, ideas and visions. For over century we found ways to bring together people, brand and markets from our base in Amsterdam. National and Internationally! As a facilitating and organising party, RAI Amsterdam connects context, content and communities with one another. We create the right conditions in which inspiring meetings can take place, in which various languages can understand each other as one. This synergy creates the added value of a good experience and/or a business success.

The Heart-warming Amsterdam concept is a great addition to our strategy. With the concept we bring guests from all over the world and local producers together and inspire them with the local initiatives. A big part of the experience is the story behind the products and a new information angle about the city. You can experience Amsterdam in a special way; You can taste a little bit of the city.

Implementation Heart-warming Amsterdam

The concept is promoted throughout all catering communication channels of the RAI, for example via:

- the sales teams
- our website
- the sustainability report
- visitors communication onsite in the Grand Café restaurant

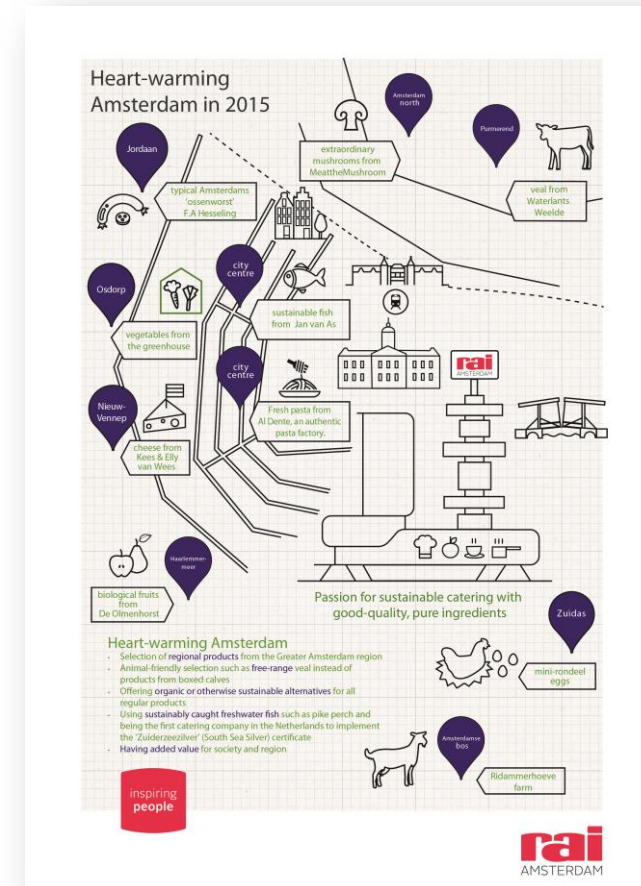
For this concept to flourish we have chosen the best location to amplify the local produce. Grand Café is the perfect place with its vertical garden and loads of daylight. They give the restaurant a natural and 'green' identity, an identity which is also reflected in the menu.



Tools to implement Heart-warming Amsterdam

Some examples of tools:

- We developed an infographic to inform our guests and empower colleagues with the concept.
- Information about Heart-warming Amsterdam is also listed on the menu in our Grand Café Restaurant so our guests can consciously experience the added value of the concept.
- On the tables in the Grand Café a little tree trunk with a QR Code decorates the tables. Scanning the QRcode takes you to the menu, saving paper.
- For event organisers information about the concept is available on the Organisers Portal; a portal for organisers with all kinds of useful information about organising an event at RAI Amsterdam.



Challenge

A challenge that we faced and are still dealing with is the limitation of volume. Due to the small-scale character of the suppliers, it is not yet possible to provide this range on a large scale.



The impact...



Results

- **Increasing the attendee experience for all**

Attendees have a sustainable catering choice. The Heart-warming concept is available to all attendees, during opening hours of the Grand Café (open during events at the RAI).

- **The benefits for RAI Amsterdam**

In 2015, the total food revenue of Grand Café was: Euro 309.000 (excl. VAT). About 56% of the food at the Grand Café is part of the Heart-warming Amsterdam concept. For 2015, the Heart-warming catering concept results are: Euro 172.000 (excl. VAT).

- The catering concept had and has an important role in the sustainable image of the RAI. Besides PR results, the concept helped in winning several international CSR awards. In addition, due to the relationships with local (often small) suppliers, the relationship with the local community has strengthened.

- **Industry benefits**

We hope that with Heart-warming Amsterdam, we stimulate the industry to increase the sustainable options in their catering options. We love sharing our knowledge and learnings by for example speaking at (industry) congresses or via free downloadable trend reports.

Positive impact

The concept works well for both the RAI and for local producers. It is also valued by and serves as an inspiration for our clients.

The concept fits in our sustainability policy. 'Creating a great environment to meet'. The approach comprises three focus area:

- **Improving wellbeing**; creating social added value for internal and external stakeholders. Heart-warming Amsterdam supports exceptional local producers, offering our guests the possibility to enjoy uncommon products grown in the region and additionally get to know local seasonal produce.
- **Reducing environmental impact**; organising events with the lowest possible negative effect on the environment. Heart-warming Amsterdam uses local ingredients. This means less transport miles and therefore less carbon emissions.
- **Empowering communities**; organising and facilitating events that help connect and inspire people. With this concept, two different communities get to meet, maybe not directly, but not less enjoyably or inspirational.



Next step taken...

Our own city farm

With the opening of the Amtrium on the 2nd of June 2015, we launched Europe's most sustainable exhibition and congress building, we took the next step forward in the use of local organic products. A major feature of the Amtrium is its five-storey vertical greenhouse. By building our own city farm, we added a new and valuable dimension to the Heart-warming Amsterdam concept. Through our own-grown organic produce we contribute to the idea of locally grown products, and we do so in a sustainable way.

The vertical greenhouse is used to grow vegetables, herbs and edible flowers for the restaurants of the RAI and THE ROAST ROOM restaurant. Greenhouse products are used on a daily basis.



Positive impact

By regulating the climate via controlled air circulation combined with thermal storage, the vertical greenhouse also serves as the green lung of the Amtrium. It features an automated and fully computer controlled watering process by means of a drip system, which uses rainwater gathered on our own grounds, supplemented with tap water for the irrigation.

A space-saving method for cultivation, the vertical greenhouse serves as an example for urban environments. RAI Amsterdam aims to inspire, and the greenhouse showcases its dedication to wellbeing of the environment in a metropolitan setting.



Vertical Greenhouse – The movie

<https://youtu.be/ZPAE-z9bqiE>



This concept is not only a very tasty,
but also a conscious choice!



See you soon in Amsterdam!

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