



## City of Cupertino

# PLASTIC-FREE GUIDE FOR BOBA SHOPS

Boba shops across the Bay Area have successfully switched to natural fiber or reusable cups, straws, and other foodware to be more sustainable.

## See What Other Boba Shops Are Doing:

### iTea | Gong Cha | Alameda, CA

- Eliminated plastic cups and now use branded fiber boba cups.
- Replaced single-use plastic boba straw with fiber straws.



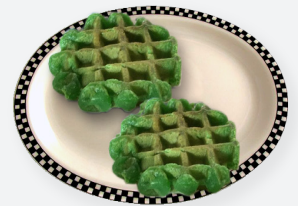
### Nano's Ohana | Half Moon Bay, CA

- Sells branded reusable boba cups that come with a reusable lid and straw.
- Customers receive a discount when they bring their own boba cup or straw.
- Invested in reusable foodware for special weekend menu items - stainless steel trays with paper liners, saving the business \$3,302 annually.



### Mr. Green Bubble Tea | Menlo Park, CA

- Provides drinks in reusable mason jars.
- Uses reusable baskets, utensils, and a bussing station with signage for their customers.
- Promotes dining onsite, which elevates the entire cafe experience as a memorable event, versus a pick-up and forget.
- Uses a separate and detachable lid rather than a seal.



### Teaspoon | Palo Alto, CA

- Serves boba tea in reusable mason jars with reusable straws when the customer stays on-site.
- Serves water in reusable plastic tumblers.
- A Bring-Your-Own cup discount is highly visible to guests.
- Developed a Bubble Straw Club with Girl Scout Troop 60016. Customers receive a free boba tea after bringing their own reusable straw 15 times.
- Sells stainless steel straws and branded boba tea cups in the cafe.



# Tips on going Plastic-Free at your Boba Shop:

## Use Natural Fiber Cups:

- Natural fiber (e.g., paper, sugarcane, etc.) cups with the same dimensions as the plastic cups you are currently using may be used with your cup sealing machine. Test out different fiber cups to find ones that work best.
- Consider using a separate and detachable lid that snugly fits onto the fiber cup rather than a plastic seal.
- Plastic seals will work on fiber-based cups, but are more prone to breaking. Instruct customers to handle their boba beverages gently. Create signage and train staff to inform customers.

## Customer Containers: Safe for Take-Out!

- Allow customers to bring their own reusable cups and containers.
- Provide contactless pour. Make sure to use a boba dispenser and operation that allows for no contact between the pouring utensil and the lip of the consumer's reusable beverage container.
- Encourage brand loyalty and repeat visits with frequent buyer cards - "10th visit with your own cup gets you a free drink!".

## Eliminate Single-Use Items For On-Site Dining as required by the City of Cupertino's Foodware Ordinance:

- Purchase reusable cups or mason jars and reusable straws for guests that dine on-site.
- Encourage customers to eat and drink on site to avoid using single-use disposable foodware.
- Purchase bus tubs and carts to collect reusables in the dining area.
- Purchase easy to wash reusable baskets for snacks.



## Reusables are Safe!

The City of Cupertino requires the use of reusable foodware for dine-in customers. Consistent with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, reusable foodware is considered safe when properly washed, rinsed, and sanitized. Reusable foodware reduces cost, waste, and litter and elevates diner experience.

## Need Help?

The City's Environmental Programs Division is available to provide assistance.

[cupertino.org/foodware](https://cupertino.org/foodware)

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