

Ode TO POSSIBILITIES



TRANSPORT Around the world on zero carbon a day

IT'S A BIRD, IT'S A PLANE, IT'S... HY-BIRD! THE RACE TO FLY A "GREEN" plane around the world is on, and French company Lisa Airplanes says its zero-carbon Hy-Bird aircraft will make the trip as early as the summer of 2009. The Hy-Bird—which looks kind of like an airborne high-heeled shoe—is made of lightweight carbon fibre and weighs in at just 1.1 tons. The tail and wings—20 metres or 65 feet tip to tip—are outfitted with photovoltaic cells to supply energy for takeoff and onboard power supply. A hydrogen fuel cell (hence the name, "Hy-Bird") provides power while the craft is in flight. "It is solely powered by an electric engine," Lisa President Erick Herzberger explains. "It will be the first airplane that does not emit any greenhouse gas and is completely silent." It could still be years before travellers can book a flight on a Hy-Bird, and when they do, flight times will likely be significantly longer—cruising speed for Lisa's first model is an estimated 150 kilometres or 95 miles an hour, compared to 920 kilometres or 570 miles an hour for the average 747. The company hopes, though, that the technology will improve and the plane's maiden voyage will inspire excitement about the future of clean transportation.—JOSEY DUNCAN

BUSINESS

All for food, and food for all

WHAT'S YOUR IDEAL DINING experience? A candlelit evening of fine wine and haute cuisine? A stack of blueberry pancakes at a greasy-spoon diner? For Denise Cerreta, it's a "community kitchen" where there's no set menu (so customers are served whatever the chef feels like making) and where patrons pay what they think the meal is worth. And that's exactly the experience she created beginning in 2003 at One World Café (oneworld-everybodyeats.com) in Salt Lake City, Utah, in the western U.S. One World meals are all organic, and guests pay the price they feel a meal deserves.

Because customers choose their portions, Cerreta says, there tends to be little or no waste. If you turn up at One World and are short on cash, volunteer for an hour—washing dishes, cleaning or working in the organic garden—to earn a meal voucher. Every day, a traditional Indian meal of dal and rice is provided free.

Cerreta's One World Everybody Eats foundation wants to put a community kitchen in every city. A first step in that direction was taken in 2006 when Brad and Libby Birky, inspired by One World, opened the So All May Eat (SAME) Café (soallmayeat.org) in Denver, Colorado. Like One World, SAME uses fresh organic ingredients, doesn't have a set menu and allows patrons to set their own prices. Instead of a cash register, customers deposit their payments in a donation box.—JAMES GEARY



PHOTO: JAMES GEARY FOR ODE MAGAZINE