

# BANNED!

Top chefs just say no to serving bottled water—and yes to helping the environment

**B**ottled or tap? You'll never hear that awkward question at the Incanto restaurant in San Francisco. "I serve local water in a glass carafe rather than imported water in a throwaway bottle," says owner Mark Pastore. As environmentalists—and a growing number of restaurateurs—like to point out, bottled water may be healthy to drink, but it isn't green: The plastic bottles are made from petroleum and, despite recycling efforts, often end up in landfills and incinerators. Trucks haul millions of gallons of bottled water a year, which consumes fuel and contributes to air pollution; imported brands sometimes travel thousands of miles. "It is counter to all that is sustainable and reasonable," says Joe Bastianich, business partner of star chef Mario Batali, whose upscale Manhattan restaurant Del Posto will phase out bottled water this fall.

The backlash against bottles reaches beyond restaurants. In June, San Francisco joined a list of municipalities like Los Angeles and Salt Lake City that have made it illegal to spend city money on bottled water and are encouraging their citizens to turn on the tap—which shouldn't be that big an adjustment. After all, guess what's in popular brands like Dasani and Aquafina? Local water.

By Nancy Matsumoto in New York City

At San Francisco's Incanto, Mark Pastore serves specially filtered tap water—at no cost to the diner.



Bales of plastic bottles at a California recycling facility



## WATER WASTE?

Bottled-water producers defend their products as healthy alternatives to soda.

Some numbers to consider:

- 166 Bottles of water consumed by the average American each year
- 8 out of 10 Number of unrecycled plastic water bottles that wind up in landfills or incinerators
- 1,000 Estimated number of years required for a plastic water bottle to decompose

Source: Container Recycling Institute; EnvironmentMassachusetts.org