



Press & Media Communications

Photo credits: Letizia Cigliutti

Official Boilerplate

Food for Soul is a nonprofit organization founded by Chef Massimo Bottura and Lara Gilmore that works to prevent food waste and social isolation by empowering local communities to build more sustainable and inclusive food systems.

Since launching the first Refettorio in Milan in 2015, Food for Soul continues to partner with local organizations around the world, opening new Refettorio projects, adapting to local needs and transforming surplus food into nutritious meals served with hospitality, dignity, and care. Guided by the belief that beauty, culture, and community are essential ingredients for social change, the organization develops innovative model and projects bring people together around the table while advancing environmental sustainability and social inclusion.

Through its global Refettorio Network, Food for Soul supports its Refettorio Network partners to scale their impact and operate community-centred spaces that recover surplus food, provide nourishing meals, foster connection, and create pathways toward well-being and opportunity. Beyond its projects, the organization promotes responsible consumption and sustainable gastronomy through advocacy, education, and collaborative initiatives that inspire individuals and institutions to take action for a more equitable future. Food for Soul is a partner of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and its co-founder Massimo Bottura serves as a UNEP Goodwill Ambassador and SDG Advocate..

www.foodforsoul.it info@foodforsoul.it

Short Media Boilerplate

Food for Soul is a nonprofit organization founded by Chef Massimo Bottura and Lara Gilmore with a mission to reduce food waste and social isolation by bringing their community-based cultural project Refettorio to underserved needs, and through consumer education and advocacy.

Since opening the first Refettorio in Milan in 2015, Food for Soul has developed a global network of locally operated Refettorio projects through nonprofit partnership, each transforming surplus food into nutritious meals served with dignity and hospitality.

Through private and public collaborations, cultural initiatives, and sustainable food practices, the organization works to build more inclusive communities and resilient food systems.

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Refettorio Felix, London



Photo credits: Facundo Bustamante

Refettorio Felix, London



Photo credits: Simon Owen Red Photographic

Refettorio Felix, London



Photo credits: Simon Owen Red Photographic

Collective Actions and Global Impact 2015 - 2025

+2752 tonnes

surplus food repurposed into
+ 4.3 million nourishing meals

12

underutilized spaces revitalized
into places of beauty, culture and
sustainability

+1.64 million

welcomed guests with dignity,
turning isolation into connection
and care

+177K volunteers

inspired to take individual actions
that transform lives

Every time we serve a plate of food, every time we approach a table, every conversation with a guest we are reminded that we are in the business of human connection — and how a small act of service can create a lifetime of impact.

Cleo Griffin, Refettorio OzHarvest
Sydney Events Coordinator

This is the only place that doesn't make me depressed. It's everything - the staff, the space, the windows, the plants, the food is art on a plate. Everywhere else it's like losing energy, like people and places suck energy from you. This place gives energy.

Guest at Refettorio Felix

IMPACT REPORT

Contact: info@foodforsoul.it

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Refettorio Harlem, NY

The Power of Hospitality

Photo credits: Free Food

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FOOD FOR SOUL

Restoring Value Through Food, Beauty, and Community

Every day, nutritious food is lost while millions of people experience food insecurity, social isolation, and barriers to opportunity. Food for Soul believes these challenges are interconnected and that lasting change begins by recognizing the value that already exists around us.

Founded by Chef Massimo Bottura and Lara Gilmore, Food for Soul's cultural project "Refettorio", is a model highlighting the social, economic and environmental potential of food by transforming excess into nourishing meals through sustainable practice, underused spaces into welcoming cultural - community hubs, and acts of hospitality into opportunities for connection and belonging. Through its global Refettorio Network and community partnerships, the organization demonstrates how food, culture, and collective action can create more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient communities.

Since 2015, Food for Soul has been transforming overlooked resources into opportunities for change. Through its Refettorio projects around the world, surplus ingredients become nourishing meals, forgotten spaces become welcoming cultural hubs, and strangers become community.

What begins with food becomes something much greater. Around every Refettorio table, hospitality creates belonging, beauty restores dignity, and shared meals spark connection. By bringing together chefs, artists, designers, volunteers, businesses, and local organizations, Food for Soul demonstrates that social and environmental challenges can be addressed through collective action rooted in creativity and care.

This is Food for Soul's call to act: to recognize the value that already exists around us and to use it to build a future where no food, place, or person is left behind.



Photo credits: Angelo Dal Bo

Our Collective Action and Global Impact Across the Refettorio Network

As the founder and steward of the Refettorio model, Food for Soul connects a global network of partners across cultures and continents, committed to reducing food waste and social isolation. We create opportunities to learn from one another, build community resilience, and amplify collective impact through collaboration and the exchange of best practices. The Refettorio Network strengthens local communities while advancing a collective vision for a more sustainable and inclusive world.



Photo credits: Refettorio Geneva

2025 Impact Snapshot

+281 *tonnes of
Food Saved*

Our food philosophy helps prevent food loss and waste by transforming surplus ingredients into nourishing meals, improving food security while promoting more sustainable food practices. Refettorio partners recover imperfect and surplus ingredients from local food systems, reducing environmental impact while supporting healthy diets inspired by the UNESCO Mediterranean Diet and the Double Pyramid model.

+234K | +138 K

*Meals Shared
Around the Table*

*Meals to
Community Aid*

At the table and in communities around the world, Refettorio partners prepare nourishing meals served with hospitality and dignity, both around convivial tables in iconic cultural spaces and throughout the community with the support of local solidarity partners. We welcome people experiencing social vulnerability, including those who are isolated, houseless, refugees, or facing marginalization, offering a place of belonging where beauty and hospitality foster inclusion.

49K | +9%

*guests
beneficiaries* *food assistance
programs*

Refettorio projects nourish more than physical health. They offer spaces that nurture the mind and spirit through education, training, and pathways to improved livelihoods.

Supportive programs may include:

- Workforce development
- Housing support
- Health and hygiene services
- Arts and cultural programming

108 | 6573

*Guest Chef
Experiences*

*Volunteer
Hours*

We celebrate the quality of ideas and share the importance of purposeful passion, compassion and empathy to create social change. Through a global Call to Act, we provide opportunities for everyone to lend their expertise, time and service that will strengthen the resilience of our communities.

Information for quick facts sheet

Founded

In 2016, Food for Soul formerly organized as a nonprofit organization with a governance operating under the registries Ente del Terzo Settore in Italy and 501(c)3 in the USA.

Founders: Massimo Bottura & Lara Gilmore

Chef Massimo Bottura and entrepreneur Lara Gilmore founded Food for Soul to inspire social change through food, beauty and hospitality.

Mission

To prevent food waste and social isolation by empowering local communities to build more sustainable and inclusive food systems.

Vision

A world where no food, place or person is wasted.

Guiding Principles: Quality of Ideas • Power of Beauty • Value of Hospitality

Three principles that guide every Refettorio and every Food for Soul project.

Digital channels

Website	www.foodforsoul.it
Press enquiries	info@foodforsoul.it
Instagram	@foodforsoul_it
Facebook	foodforsoul.it
Hashtags	#foodforsoul #cookingisanactoflove

[INSTAGRAM](#)[WEBSITE](#)

Refettorio San Francisco, SF



Photo credits:Farming Hope

Leadership Quotes

"We all have a key role to play in society, and we have to catch this opportunity: for the first time we can play a fundamental role in bringing communities together and creating positive social ripples throughout society."

Massimo Bottura, Founder

"We all need to eat to survive. Food is the great connector, it is a universal language. Around the table we are equals. Even more importantly, around a table we are together. This is what we will try to do: cure humanity through the incredible power of food."

Massimo Bottura, Founder

"Each day Refettorio chefs put their ingenuity and passion into creating dishes that are delicious, beautiful and nutritious. They show the invisible potential in what many see as waste."

Lara Gilmore, President

"At Food for Soul, we believe lasting change grows where culture, beauty, and shared purpose meet."

Lara Gilmore, President

Media assets

[BRAND GUIDE](#)

[ORGANIZATION PHOTOGRAPHY](#)

Refettorio Pojects



**Refettorio
Ambrosiano**

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**Refettorio
Gastromotiva**

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**Refettorio
Felix**

at St Cuthbert's

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**Refettorio
Antoniano**

Bologna

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**Refettorio
Paris**

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**Refettorio
Napoli**

Made in Cloister

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Mérida**

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Harlem**

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**Refettorio
Modena**

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