

Ari Derfel

Ari Derfel is an entrepreneur, executive leadership coach, consultant, food systems advocate, mountain guide & public speaker. His academic career spans the University of Wisconsin, Harvard, Georgetown, UCLA & Cambridge University in England.

He is the co-founder of the award-winning Gather restaurant in Berkeley, known for its outstanding cuisine, sustainable food and beverage programs, design, and financing strategies. The NY Times called Gather, “a Michael Pollan book come to life” and Esquire Magazine named Gather one of the Best New Restaurants in the US in 2010. Ari also co-founded Back to Earth in 2001, the first exclusively organic catering and event production company in the world.



Ari currently serves on the Central Kootenay Food Policy Council (CKFPC). The purpose of the Council is to be the formal bridge between local government and the many civil society and industry organizations working on food systems in the region, from hunger and food access to farming and waste management.

He is also the former Executive Director of Slow Money, a national organization, with chapters across the US and abroad, focused on catalyzing investment in Local Food Systems. He also currently sits on the board of the People’s Community Market, a company working to build a new grocery store that will remedy the vast food desert of urban West Oakland, California.

As a consultant and executive business coach, Ari specializes in visioning, strategic planning, finance and mindfulness. He works with clients to design and implement systems necessary to identify, track progress and ultimately achieve organizational goals. In addition, he helps teams to develop honest, pro-active, healthy communication practices among all team members. Moreover, he helps teams to design effective structures for accountability to improve overall team performance. He believes the most successful businesses are those that pay attention to the quadruple bottom line – ensuring financial profitability, practicing environmental and social responsibility, and providing people with positive employment experiences that help them to learn and grow as people through their work.

Ari is also internationally known for his work on waste and consumerism. In 2007, as a personal meditation, he saved every single piece of trash and recycling he created over the course of the entire year. When he was done, he commissioned an artist to turn it all into a piece of art. His efforts were featured in numerous print, television, web and radio media worldwide.

Please see Ari’s Tedx Presidio talk [here](#).

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