



MICROWAVES FEATURE

SLTN – MAY 2015

Please attributes any quotes to Ray Hall, Managing Director, RH Hall

- ***What are the key factors caterers should consider when buying microwaves for their kitchens***

To choose the right kind of microwave, operators should look at their menu and decide what tasks the microwave oven should undertake. If you require the microwave to be used mainly for the simple reheat and defrosting of foods then a straight Commercial microwave will suffice. However, if you wish to reheat and cook food products then a combination microwave oven is well advised. Items such as pastry will become soggy if reheated in an ordinary microwave whereas using a combination microwave the crisp, golden brown and conventional finished result will be achieved in microwave time!

It is very important to choose the correct microwave oven wattage. You need to choose an oven with sufficient power, but just as importantly, do not over specify. If too low, you can be frustrated by delays, and if too high, it will be difficult to judge the timing of small portions. Whilst it is common for caterers to choose speed (the higher the output the faster reheat times), it is also very important to understand that for some food products too much speed will destroy smaller portions of food or the delicate and sugary types of products.

It is very important to choose from a commercial range of microwaves, operators shouldn't be tempted to go down the domestic route – these units simply aren't built for the rigours of a professional kitchen. Likewise we would also recommend that cheap imports are also avoided – the testing, safety and product back-up that are offered by the leading brand names are often not available with a cheap import.

The market leading Sharp range of microwaves available through RH Hall offer heavy and extra heavy duty build quality with total control, flexibility and versatility –with in-built features to save time and energy. The best-selling range goes from 1000W to 1900W to cater for all foodservice applications.

The features available today allow a choice of manual and programmable models and some even allow the chef to enter the detailed names of individual dishes and daily/weekly specials - as with the Maestrowave Combi Chef 7, which is able to operate in a variety and combination of cook modes making it the most flexible, efficient and easy to use oven yet! It can bake, roast, grill, steam, defrost, regenerate, microwave, boil or simply keep food warm - this is the oven that can do it all. This high speed oven features Menu Creator 2.0™ software. Packed with features, the oven will produce the best results at the simple touch of a button – a total combination of 11 cooking modes can be used to achieve top quality results. Up to 99 menus can be pre-programmed to ensure consistency time after time. But don't be daunted, the Menu Creator 2.0™ is extremely easy to use; however, if required, full technical support is available from RH Hall. There is a web video available on line which demonstrates the benefits of combination Microwave ovens - visit www.rhhall.com and follow the link on the home page.

- ***What kind of support should bars, pubs and restaurants expect from manufacturers?***

Caterers should look for a full service back-up in terms of on-site warranty and availability of spares from their manufacturer. Expect a least a year's warranty, some manufacturers offer 3 years. Genuine service back-up in a commercial situation is absolutely critical.

- ***How often should caterers expect to replace a microwave?***

With annual servicing in place and by buying a recognised quality brand, there is absolutely no reason why your commercial microwave oven shouldn't last between 3-5 years and even more, dependent on site and on how the oven is cared for! Regular cleaning and servicing are key to ensure users get the maximum lifespan from their microwave.

- ***What types of food are most suited to microwave cooking?***

Today's microwave ovens are sophisticated, yet easy to use and produce excellent cooking results in a fraction of the time it takes to cook foods conventionally and their versatility is under estimated. Many foods and dishes can be cooked very, very well in a microwave oven: cakes, sauces, meat, fish, vegetables, fruit, pasta, rice, eggs and jams can all be cooked with great results – you can even roast a chicken in one, but you won't get a crispy, brown skin! However, a duck will cook well because of the amount of fat naturally found under the skin of the meat.

Meat and pastry products are often better cooked conventionally then re-heated in a microwave oven, but with the versatile combination microwave ovens available, these types of foods can be cooked using microwave technology and still producing excellent results.

- ***How easy are contemporary commercial microwaves to use?***

Models with manual controls are incredibly straight forward to use and offer an out of the box solution for unskilled kitchen staff. However, these models can sometimes lack the advanced features that have become available in recent years.

A touchpad, programmable model may seem daunting at first glance, but provided this is set up correctly from the start it can actually be the most straight forward option.

We can provide expert advice on programming and even offer a pre-programming service at our HQ, prior to machines being sent to site. Combination Microwaves such as the Maestrowave Combi Chef 7 take things a step further. With all the extra cooking modes available, menu options can be set using your PC and then transferred to an SD card for use in the machine. Our Food Solutions team can provide full support and assist with menu development, particularly useful for larger chain operator's.

For more information:

www.rhhall.com www.maestrowave.com

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