



MICROWAVES FEATURE

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Some operators often make the mistake of using domestic models. What is the single biggest factor that sets a commercial microwave apart from a domestic model?

Domestic microwaves simply aren't built for the rigours of a professional kitchen. The build quality and components used are of a much higher quality and heavier duty in a commercial machine – designed to withstand very frequent use.

I am a foodservice operator that uses my microwave dozens of times a day, every day of the week. How long can I expect it to last?

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.

Is there a correlation between the power and internal capacity of a microwave? (e.g. if I want a microwave that holds larger portion sizes, does it require more power to do so?)

Most microwaves have a fairly standard sized cavity, regardless of the power output. However, there are some machines on the market that are designed to take multiple or large portions for batch output – all of which start with a minimum power output of 1800W.

What factors determine the power ratings that come with microwaves and can this be distinctly categorised into 'low', 'medium' and 'heavy' duty?

Any machine with an output of 1000W to 1200W will typically be classed as low or medium duty - The build quality and components of the machine will determine which of these categories it falls into. These machines are typically used for simple reheating tasks and may have a shorter lifespan than other models. Anything from 1500W upwards is likely to need to withstand heavier usage – and therefore operators should always be looking for a machine that fits in to the Heavy Duty or even Extra Heavy Duty categories. However, operators should not assume that the power of microwave they choose is a testament of its duty rating – the components and build quality have a huge impact on this. Avoid cheap imported models and always check the warranty – a truly heavy duty machine with a high output should come with at least 3 Years On Site Warranty.

Is a 1000W microwave likely to be less rugged or durable than a 1900 watt model? Or is the difference in rating purely a question of power and speed?

See above.

What's more important when choosing the right model for my business: How frequently I intend to use it? How much food I want to cook at once? How quickly do I want it to work?

When choosing the microwave for your operation, all of these factors really need to be considered to make an informed decision. To choose the right kind of microwave, consumers should look at their menu offering and decide what tasks the microwave oven should undertake. It is very important to choose the correct microwave oven wattage. You need to select an oven with sufficient power, but just as importantly, do not over specify. If too low, frustrations can be caused by delays, and if too high, it will be difficult for the user 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's been stated that the main feature that operators should pay closest attention to when buying a microwave is the number of magnetrons it has. Is that true or false?

Traditionally, higher power machines have more than 1 magnetron to ensure even heat. However, as technology has evolved manufacturers are finding more innovative ways to enhance heat distribution. Recently launched, the Maestrowave MW10 is a 1000W machine aimed at smaller operators looking for speed with a reliable reputation. The unique microwave distribution method and cavity ensure perfect cooking, backed up by an unprecedented 3 Year Warranty on the Magnetron – the heart of the machine!

Microwaves can get dirty very quickly. How important is it to make sure my microwave has a removable oven cavity liner?

When using your microwave on a regular basis, one thing that shouldn't be overlooked for getting the best from a microwave is regular cleaning - keep the oven's cavity and inner door clean of food spillage/deposits at all times. This will avoid cavity burn ups and prolong the life of its heart "The Magnetron". This measure will also help the consistency and speed of reheat/ cook times. You could purchase the Microsave Cavity Protection System which is a unique and simple cavity liner manufactured from high quality TPX resin - which is safer to use, easier to clean and provides long term financial benefits. This invaluable add on is designed to work with the Sharp Commercial Microwave range and every Sharp sold with the Microsave CPS comes with a lifetime warranty on the cavity.

Some microwaves come with manual dial controls and others with programmable touch controls. What are the pros and cons of each?

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.

For more information, please visit:

www.rhhall.com

www.microwaveassociation.org.uk

www.maestrowave.com

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