

**OUTDOOR COOKING
FOODSERVICE EQUIPMENT JOURNAL
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Please attribute any comments to Ray Hall, Managing Director, R H Hall

Outdoor cooking areas have grown in popularity in the UK foodservice market – which type of operators do you see really embracing outdoor cooking? And what constitutes a well-equipped outdoor cooking set-up?

Due to the huge versatility of some barbecue systems, we have seen a wide range of operators incorporating outdoor cooking into their everyday offering – from small pubs, to golf clubs, to universities. Some simply require a stand alone barbecue, that can easily be moved for service in different areas and is built to last – whilst others have worked with our Food Solutions team to create a complete outdoor kitchen set up, including refrigeration, prep and handwash facilities, with some even incorporating bespoke graphics to promote their outdoor menu options.

When specifying outdoor cooking equipment, you generally don't have the space, design and ventilation constraints that you do when specifying equipment for indoor kitchens. What factors therefore do operators have to pay most attention to?

For any outdoor cooking set up, the most important piece of equipment to get right is the Barbecue itself! First and foremost, caterers should ensure that they are purchasing truly commercial equipment. Many domestic barbecues look the part, but will not last or be able to recover quickly during a busy service. Look for a Barbecue that uses commercial grade stainless steel (be wary that many domestic models use stainless steel but are of light duty construction) and also check out the grid racks - stainless steel work much better than coated ones that invariably chip and flake off in time. Consider heat up times – this can be as little as 6 minutes! Look for good portability as many barbecues have poorly constructed wheels. Importantly, ensure the product comes with a full commercial warranty. Remember that you would not buy a domestic cooker for your commercial kitchen so apply the same thought process for your outdoor Barbecue.

How well does outdoor cooking equipment need to interact or link with the indoor cooking operation? Or should outdoor areas be treated as their own isolated catering operation?

The right barbecue range should give operators the versatility to link their outdoor and indoor menu's, or have a completely separate outdoor operation. Proximity to refrigeration, prep areas and hand wash facilities is paramount if using a barbecue only and many operators will choose to enhance the traditional barbecue items with salads and side dishes, which will be prepared using the indoor kitchen. However, should space and budget be available, a more permanent outdoor kitchen can be created, allowing operators to provide a full menu that is isolated from their standard offering.

How is your outdoor cooking equipment portfolio developing? Have you added any new equipment or products lately?

The Crown Verity range of professional barbecue systems utilises a wide range of accessories to allow operators to create their perfect solution. Easy to retro fit and change, this versatility allows operators to re-invent and expand their menus. Options include griddles, rotisseries, steam pans and more.

R H Hall are Exclusive UK Distributors for the Crown Verity range of Professional Barbecue Systems.

For more information, please visit:

www.rhhall.com

Or contact our Sales Team on 01296 663400/sales@rhhall.com

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