



OVENS & COMBIS FEATURE GARDEN CENTRE CATERING – WINTER 2016

Please attribute all quotes to Kris Brearley, Sales Director, R H Hall

- ***What types of oven are available?***

There are many choices available on the equipment market for ovens and the unit chosen often comes down to personal preference as well as space and budget restrictions. Whatever the preference, it has to be a versatile and flexible workhorse able to make light work of the most demanding dishes and be able to respond to the on-going changing demands that come with any professional commercial kitchen. Most operations want to offer a varied and attractive food offering and so without a doubt an oven that can 'multi task' in response to that will be a good investment.

To help make the right choice, caterers must be clear on the intended use: the volume of throughput; the types of dishes/menu available; variations in service time; staffing skills and find out about the latest features and operational functions before they invest.

Options range from large combination steamers, through bake off ovens and combination microwaves, to simple but essential microwave only.

The Maestrowave Combi Chef 7 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 should caterers consider before buying new equipment?***

Operators should consider their equipment needs in line with current and future menu requirements, numbers and times/peaks in service – for example, it maybe that two smaller, versatile ovens that can adapt to changing service needs are better than investing in one large unit or that for example, one larger bake-off oven could cover a breakfast offering by itself and then bake-off products, such as baguettes, ready to be filled for the lunch service.

Space and installation aspects are also key considerations. Consider the footprint of some ovens in comparison to their potential output and whether products can be stacked, one on top of the other. Chefs can easily switch between one or two ovens depending on demand, which will give them great flexibility and potentially added profits when operating to full capacity, off-setting initial outlays. Alternatively a secondary smaller back-up oven such as the Smeg ALFA43UK could be installed to help cater for peaks – or a microwave added for speed. There are a huge range of options to suit and fulfil all needs, whilst remaining cost effective.

- ***Are their certain types or models that use less energy than others?***

Many larger models, particularly combination steamers, require a hard wired supply – with gas as an option where available. However, many smaller countertop units can operate from a 13 amp plug, which keeps energy costs low and offers easy movement of the unit if needed. The Smeg range includes a unique kW switch selector, allowing the user to run from 13amp, single or 3 phase hardwired, depending on the facilities on site.

- ***On some menus, the style of cooking and oven type is made public, but does the name or brand of the oven being used matter to a venue's customers?***

Most customers will not specifically be aware of the leading foodservice brands, although the popularity of programmes featuring professional kitchens and equipment may create interest. The most important factor to a customer however, is the final result! Users must therefore carefully consider the product/brand they choose to ensure the right results and reliability. Sturdy, commercial manufacture is a must, anything less won't perform or last! Choose a leading brand with an established reputation – they shouldn't be tempted to go down the cheap import route. Also consider the availability of spare parts and after sales service, plus what length of warranty is available.

- ***Is there training required on how to operate the oven units?***

Understanding is still the key to success with any cooking. To maximise usage of an oven effectively, I think it is paramount that all caterers are educated as to the full potential of their unit. With basic training some units are able to be easily operated by any user. Features such as pre-programmable touchpads or menu development software, create an easy solution for consistent results.

We recommend that the correct training of staff on how to use and look after the equipment in the first instance will definitely help the life span of any equipment. In addition, simple regular low cost maintenance and cleaning will keep it in peak health and condition.

At RH Hall we train our distributors to be able to offer the best advice and training to the end user. Such advice as to when and how to clean the oven, service interval recommendations and the best use of the oven are just part of the training given to customers. We also have an extensive facility at our HQ fitted out with all the very latest equipment so clients and distributors can see and operate a number of microwaves in addition to a very wide range of kitchen equipment.

- ***If you could offer one tip when deciding on a new oven unit, what would it be?***

First and foremost you should look at choosing from a recognised brand – the major manufacturers are often the most innovative and have developed machines with intelligent features that are time/labour saving and energy efficient too. So, choose a leading brand with an established reputation – don't be tempted to go down the cheap import route.

For more information, please visit www.rhhall.com

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