

MICROWAVE FEATURE SLTN – 20TH JULY 2017



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

- ***What impact can a well maintained microwave have on a venue's service and food offer?***

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, with great results. The most obvious benefit to any operator is speed, but there is a great deal of versatility that a microwave can offer. Used properly, the microwave will form a key part of the kitchen operation and the ability to serve a full menu – it is therefore incredibly important that these are well maintained to reduce any unplanned downtime.

- ***How important is a thorough maintenance regime? What tips would you give to operators looking to improve their current maintenance regime?***

Caterers should look for a full service back-up in terms of on-site warranty and availability of spares from their manufacturer. Expect at least a year's warranty, some manufacturers offer 3 years. Genuine service back-up in a commercial situation is absolutely critical. 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. When using your microwave on a regular basis, one tip 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 plastic cavity liner which is safer to use, easier to clean and provides long term financial benefits. Designed for the extra heavy duty Sharp range, every model sold with the Microsave CPS comes with a lifetime warranty on the cavity.

- ***What benefits does a commercial microwave offer over a domestic microwave? Can operators with lesser demand get away with a domestic mode, or should all go for commercial units?***

Put simply, a commercial microwave is built for a commercial kitchen! From the power and output, through to the components and workmanship – every element of a professional machine is designed to operate under greater strains, regular usage and heavy wear and tear. It is very important to choose from a commercial range of microwaves, operators shouldn't be tempted to go down the domestic route – a domestic machine will not cope with the rigours of a professional kitchen. Importantly, any warranty provided with a domestic machine will also be invalid if used in a commercial environment, meaning that an operator could be faced with regular costly repairs or replacements.

- ***What are the latest innovations in commercial microwave technology? What benefits do they offer chefs/operators?***

Leading brands are developing models with new features and functionality in response to customers looking for product innovation. One key is not just the equipment itself, but in menu's and food products too – the marrying of equipment and food/menu developments to get the maximum quality, value for money and labour saving solutions. We have been working with leading food producers and packaging companies to develop dishes specifically for microwave regeneration.

The revolutionary iWave® Foodservice Solution uses microwave technology to provide a fully automated, 'straight to plate' system. With barcode scanners replacing traditional touchpad or manual controls, the iWave® offers a 'fool-proof' solution for certain applications – vending, care homes, hospitals and schools to name just a few. We can work with various food companies to fully test and develop a bespoke menu for any site. With e-reporting options available, stock and budget control can be also managed easily.

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! This award winning model 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.rhall.com and follow the link on the home page.

- ***What should operators prioritise when looking at purchasing a commercial microwave?***

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. Cheap imports should also be avoided – the testing, safety and product back-up that are offered by the leading brand names are often not available with a cheap import.

- ***Lastly, how important is staff training in terms of optimum use?***

Understanding is still the key to success with any cooking. To maximise usage of a microwave or oven effectively, I think it is paramount that all caterers are educated as to the full potential of their unit. By fully understanding a microwave and getting the right techniques for each type of food, succulent meat, poultry and fish together with perfectly cooked vegetables that retain taste, texture and nutritive value are all possible. Many of the techniques used in microwave cooking are the same as used in conventional cooking, but with a few minor adjustments. There is a great deal of diversity of dishes that can be prepared quickly and easily from fresh ingredients. Not only that, but more nutrients are retained in microwave cooked food than by any other cooking method. In fact, correctly cooked vegetables contain 85% of their original vitamin content, when boiled they often contain none! Historically there has been a lot of negativity towards cooking with microwaves, but there shouldn't be, microwaves can cook great food in a fraction of the time it would take with other methods. Not only do they save time, but money and nutrients too. 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.

R H Hall are the Sole UK and Eire Distributor for the Sharp range of Professional Microwave Ovens and Sole Worldwide Distributor for the Maestrowave range of Catering Equipment.

For more information:

www.rhhall.com www.maestrowave.com

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