



LIGHT CATERING EQUIPMENT FEATURE

TUCO – JULY 2015

Please attributes any quotes to Kris Brearley, Sales Director, RH Hall

- ***What are the essential pieces of light catering equipment needed for a university kitchen?***

It really depends on the type of catering operation, the size of kitchen and the throughput – but as a minimum sites should consider an oven, microwave or combination microwave (such as the Maestrowave Combi Chef 7) which can undertake a multitude of tasks in a single compact unit. Add to this an induction hob for further instant heat plus certain specific complementary pieces such as Panini grills, rice cookers and soup kettles, which can all be essential pieces depending on the type of operation and menu offering and of course space restrictions and budgets! More specific back bar equipment such as Slicers should be considered if the kitchen is dealing with larger volumes of cooked meats for sandwiches etc. Available in blade sizes starting from just 8”, these can be a surprisingly affordable addition to any university kitchen and allows the caterer to take advantage of higher margins by slicing their own cooked meats.

- ***What considerations do caterers need to take when purchasing light catering equipment?***

Regardless of size or duty, sturdy manufacture is a ‘must’ and this is what you get by choosing a well-known brand - anything else won’t perform or last. Choose a leading brand with an established reputation for good quality, durability and reliability. These brands usually build in great operational features too, which should always be considered.

Equipment that is multi-functional and versatile is ideal and where space is at a premium, units with a small footprint can help save valuable space – as can those that can stack, one on top of the other.

Look at the running costs of the equipment available, savings can be made by selecting an energy efficient item. 13 amp plug in options will be cheap to run and versatile. Induction Hobs also offer a very energy efficient option, as no heat is lost when cooking.

- ***Do staff need to be trained in how to use light catering equipment?***

Equipment that is straight forward to use and maintain is the easiest option, reducing new staff training times and ensuring ease of operation for all members of the kitchen team. Products such as the Maestrowave Combi Chef 7 can be pre-programmed with up

to 99 menu settings, allowing unskilled operators to produce consistent and high quality results at the touch of a button. Induction hobs also provide a safe and easy method of cooking as do items such as Panini Contact grills, which are ideal for the snack/grab & go requirements of many students.

- ***What one tip would you offer universities on buying new equipment?***

Many cheaper imports are flooding into the UK and it can be tempting to go down this route, but unknowingly to many, a lot of this equipment doesn't have any product conformity standards and the back-up of a full warranty. So when purchasing, I would recommend operators to go for a well-known brand - guaranteed quality doesn't cost you more!

- ***Please include any other comments that you feel our readers will be interested in.***

- We stock 100+ quality brands and over 10,000 products with full ESPO accreditation and have a dedicated public sector team to provide independent advice. We are also looked to for support from organisations such as the Craft Guild of Chefs.
 - RH Hall's Foodservice Solutions offer bespoke and tailored solutions for any foodservice brand, concept, menu or operational need. University caterers can tap into our successful creative foodservice solutions that have been developed already with a number of major foodservice chains and operators, including ready-made packages that offer a simple way to launch a concept into their operation – one such example is the package created with Chicago Town for their Pizzas and the Smeg ALFA43UK oven – all the leg work has been done – all the optimum menu timings, products selections have been developed and the package is ready to buy and have installed, up and running, almost immediately.
 - We have an extensive development kitchen facility at our Pitstone HQ and this is open to all within the industry. It showcases a vast array of cooking equipment and customers can see these pieces in the flesh and try them out before they specify them for their kitchens. Our development team can work closely with a university's own chefs/caterers to look at equipment and create new menus, adapt recipes and perfect equipment timings to enhance cook/bake/regeneration results or bring in our tried and tested concepts to also maximise their operation.
- ***Please include a definitive website address where readers can go for more info on your company.***

www.rhhall.com and the recently re-launched website of www.maestrowave.com

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