

APPLIANCES

DESTRESSING YOUR DAY

Text: Kim Lilley



Slack kitchens don't necessarily turn out food to match. They may be beautiful to look at and fitted with all the latest appliances, but what is produced is still very much up to the operator. A client recently told me that her oven smelt of plastic when she used it. On further questioning, I discovered that the oven was three years old before she even turned it on! "It's just that we always went out for dinner," she said. Such is our life of convenience.

That said, convenience is the essence of modern appliances. Kitchens used to be housed deep within the bowels of the home, the place of maids and servants who toiled away over boiling coppers and open fires. Laundry would take several back-breaking and hand-wrenching days. Now we do a load of washing by merely pressing a few buttons and walking away - magic!

The requirements for a galley, kitchen or laundry, are highly individual. Some prefer the simplest, most basic appliances while others need all the gizmos and gadgets technology can offer. I often wonder whether the latter is more time consuming ... trying to fathom some appliances can really take the "convenience" out of convenience. There is something to be said about a life of simplicity - my mother had my brother and I dry dishes every night while she washed as she maintained we got to talk. I always complained bitterly about the chore, but cunningly she became a very well informed mother.

We probably all know an "appliance freak" and to watch one in action is a treat in itself. I have a friend who gets a glint in his eye when he describes his latest purchase. Many visits have resulted in time spent in the kitchen sampling a latte from the latest coffee machine, with milk frothed in the latest microwave, while eating a toasted sandwich from the latest sandwich maker. He definitely has a nose for the latest appliance and gadget; it's just his kind of thing.

Kitchens have become a social gathering place and very much the heart of the home. It's not just a place to refuel, more an informal

living room. There's a certain charm in sitting on a barstool at the breakfast bar, glass of wine in hand, watching the preparations and discussing the meal about to be served. It can't be beaten for creating a relaxed atmosphere that makes for a good night.

We all know the saying "we are cooking with gas" - a statement that implies everything is organised and that things will start to happen quickly. Those who have gas hobs and ovens rarely go back to conventional electric cooking appliances. However, induction appliances are slowly becoming an expected means of cooking. Induction works on the simple principle of magnetism. An inductor creates a magnetic field when a suitable pan is placed on the zone and this starts the production of heat. Faster than gas and with power savings of around 60%, these hobs are worth consideration. The savings in power are because you only heat what's inside the pot, rather than the whole pot. Temperature is more controllable and, remarkably, the elements are safe to touch, even on the highest setting. This makes for easy cleaning as anything that boils over won't bake on. De Dietrich have a very smart range of induction cook tops, ranging from a 65cm 3-element, to a 90cm 5-element. They also have an impressive range of electric ovens and what I found very attractive was the self cleaning interior. The oven has a pyrolytic enamel interior, so to clean it you take out the shelves and the oven heats to around 500 degrees which disintegrates any food particles. For safety, the door is unable to be opened and remains cool to touch.....now that's my kinda cleaning!

A chef friend refuses to use a microwave. I find this staggering, as my microwave has to be my most used appliance, but maybe this reflects his superior cooking skills, whereas I'm skilled at reading a packet that says microwave on high for 10 minutes. However, I'm sure he'd be impressed by the De Dietrich combination microwave. It's a cross between an oven and a microwave with eight cooking functions - micro, micro defrost, micro+fan, micro+grill, fan, turbo grill, grill and oven defrost. The electronic temperature control can be managed to the nearest degree. It's very stylish, looking just like



the conventional oven and, when fitted above a conventional oven, makes for a very attractive arrangement.

The cleanup from cooking is always a bore and that's why dishwashers have become so popular. Blame the physiological effect of my youth spent drying the dishes, but I still don't have a dishwasher. It has always been difficult to find a dishwasher which carries a warranty in a marine environment, but Gaggenau have stepped up. Their GI 214 and GM 203 models carry a 2 year warranty. The integrated facades make them quite invisible in the galley. Very efficient and easy to operate, the sensors in the machine determine the ideal program, heat is re-used to save energy, and the soiling level of the water is continuously checked.

Trash compactors are another invaluable invention, especially on a boat. Parex Appliances' In-Sink-Erator Trash Compactor can reduce 160 litres of rubbish down to one 40 litre storage bag. Ideal for the marine environment or the holiday home, where dealing with waste is often a problem. They say a two person household shouldn't need to empty a bin more than once a fortnight, and a larger family no more than once a week on average. A week's worth of rubbish for a family of four is reduced to a compact, easy to carry bundle. The Air Sentry tray allows the fitting of a solid deodoriser to eliminate smells and keep the compactor fresh and clean. The unit measures 31cmW x 51cmD x 81cmH, so it can fit easily under a bench or stand alone.

While on the subject of trash, In-Sink-Erator also manufactures a very efficient waste disposer. As 25% of household waste is food, this type of appliance does make for an easy and hygienic way of disposing waste. Food waste disposers not only reduce the amount of household waste that ends up in landfill sites, but this waste can also be recycled into soil conditioner at the water treatment plant.

One of the unique and innovative features with this product is that two of the models have an air switch that eliminates any chance of electric shock due to wet fingers as there's no electrical circuit. Now that's thinking for you!

An appliance often taken for granted is the fridge and freezer - what would we do without these? Liebherr fridges and freezers are for the discerning. Packed with innovative ideas, it's little wonder that every day 7,000 refrigeration appliances leave the Liebherr manufacturing plants for commercial and domestic use in Europe, Asia, North America, Australia and New Zealand. Some models feature BioFresh drawers that provide the perfect climate to keep fruit, vegetables, meat, fish and dairy products. With the temperature maintained just above 0°C and ideal humidity levels, foods will retain their appearance, flavours and vitamins for longer. The SuperCool function is ideal if you have just returned from the supermarket and want to chill fresh food quickly. This function reduces the temperature of the refrigerator compartment to +2°C for six hours. The ice making function is permanently plumbed in, providing a constant supply of perfect ice cubes, replenished automatically - very James Bond!

A smaller Liebherr bar fridge would be ideal on a boat. Boasting the SuperCool function, it has automatic defrost and can be integrated to fit snugly and unobtrusively underbench. For the wine connoisseur, Liebherr offer outstanding wine cabinets allowing the storage of red wines, white wines and champagne together in the one unit. Stored in separate temperature-controlled zones this allows for perfect drinking temperatures for each type. Or, use one zone for your long term cellaring needs and the other two zones to store your reds and whites at ready to drink temperatures.....very convenient.

An appliance which recently caught my attention is the Bosch

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“Built-in” Benvenuto espresso/coffee maker. Wouldn’t it be great to have café quality coffee at the touch of a button in your own home? It’s about the size of an average microwave and, apart from the curved recess, looks similar to a microwave. As the name suggests it is built in so sits seamlessly within the kitchen cabinetry.

All the abovementioned products are available through the team at Lifestyle Appliances, who are expert in outfitting homes and large boats and will ensure you have just the right appliance for your needs.

For a stunning industrial look kitchen you can’t go past Alpes, supplied in New Zealand by Shipwright Agencies. This appliance range has an entirely different look. For fifty years Alpes has used solely and exclusively 19/10 nickel-chrome alloy stainless steel in the field of kitchen equipment. The appliances and equipment can be used individually or housed in modular compartments and stood together to form a kitchen. The evidence of quality and design is seen throughout the sink bowls which are usually deep, the gas ovens, hobs, tapware, storage units and work benches. While pricey, their products will likely outlive those who install them being solid in construction.

What I really want is a laundry that does the ironing automatically. Far-fetched? Maybe, but if they make one I want it! New Zealanders are used to top loading washing machines but front loaders are starting to become popular as they use less water, are fast and use low suds. Asko, the Scandinavian appliance manufacturer, boasts that their front loaders use fewer components but wash cleaner, use less water and electricity and last longer due to smooth running. Asko have a matching washing machine and dryer with a stainless steel façade and an integrated option for a seamless look. For the ultimate in laundry accessories, how about adding an Asko drying cabinet to your wish list. Many people are under the impression that a drying cabinet and a tumble dryer do the same job, but that’s not so. A drying cabinet dries wet and damp clothes, shoes, boots, gloves, hats and many other things that can get wet without necessarily needing to be washed. It dries laundry that shouldn’t be dried in a tumble dryer. Asko’s new drying cabinets are surprisingly spacious, with the equivalent of 16 metres of clothesline. They are extremely energy-efficient and maybe just the icing on the cake in a superyacht laundry.

Right, with all these fabulous new appliances on the market I’m off to get a dishwasher. There must be some way of installing one in my apartment; maybe I could stack the microwave on top of the dishwasher, next to the Liebherr fridge/freezer with the automatic icemaker, next to the Bosh built-in coffee machine which I could put beside the Liebherr wine cabinet.....oops now there’s no room for the sink or me Oh well, I’ll just have to eat out! ■