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LOOK WHAT'S COOKING IN THE KITCHEN

A Look at the Latest Appliances and Gadgets

North Olmsted, Ohio . . . Is your television almost continually tuned to *The Food Network*? Do you consider Emeril your hero? Is your kitchen considered the 'hub' of entertaining among your family and friends? If you answered 'yes' to any of these questions, you are not alone. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of people cooking and entertaining at home.

According to Gina Provenzano, Senior Associate Editor of *Bon Appetit* magazine, the reasons behind this increase all stem from the many external influences on our society. "Foremost is the state of the world – from global conflicts, a weak economy, and a diminished sense of security – everything is uncertain. As a result, we look to a place where all is good and safe to find comfort – and that's at home, and the hearth of the home is the kitchen."

Today's kitchens have become both a haven for gathering and a focal point for the latest and greatest of cooking and convenience appliances. Provenzano notes that this combination is another reason for the 'chef as celebrity' craze presently underway.

So, with all this home cooking interest, today's consumer is looking for kitchen appliances and gadgets to not only enhance food preparation, but also make life easier and more comforting. Here are some of the latest products for the gourmet wannabe:

Three-Rack Dishwasher

Did you know the latest models of dishwashers now have three racks? A bottom rack designed specifically for items such as pots, pans and baking sheets. Just think of the room you'll gain on the other two racks if the bottom can hold these large and cumbersome items.

Pulldown Faucet

One of the most-used items in any kitchen is the faucet – why not make it as functional as possible with a pulldown faucet? Moen's Aberdeen™ high-arc pulldown is unique because it has a one-of-a-kind pause button. This button allows cooks to interrupt the flow of water as the wand passes over the sink and puts water only where it's wanted. So, filling up a large pot or cleaning up after a holiday meal is no problem. A single-button activation feature switches the water stream from an aerated stream for everyday uses to a spray for power rinsing fruits and vegetables.

Warming Drawers

For the busy family or the frequent entertainer, warming drawers are the perfect answer. With the ability to set temperatures from 90 to 250 degrees, these drawers will keep food warm until guests arrive or the kids get home from practice. Because of their functionality and convenience, warming drawers are making their way into more and more home kitchens.

Refrigerators with Special Features

As compared to refrigerator models from a few years ago that just provided shelves for storage, today's units have baskets and individualized storage compartments to keep food organized and easy to find. In addition, if you are constantly combating the myriad of frozen foods that fall out of your freezer, look for a unit with where the freezer takes the form of a bottom pullout drawer. Another new option in refrigerators is a 'quick chill' feature allowing you to quickly cool wine or other beverages before your guests arrive.

Ovens That Do the Cooking for You (Well Almost!)

Ovens today do amazing things – and if you haven't shopped for one in awhile, you'll be pleasantly surprised. One recently introduced model will actually refrigerate food for up to 12 hours, then allows you to set a timer so it starts cooking at a designated time. When you arrive home, a hot meal is waiting for you. But if you get held up at the office, this smart oven will convert back to a refrigerator after a certain amount of time. Or, choose an oven that provides for both steam and convection cooking in one unit.

Some may ask if it's worth investing in a higher-priced appliance if it offers increased functionality in the kitchen? According to Provenzano, special 'bells and whistles' will make a cook's time and effort in the kitchen a little easier and provide more confidence. "If you think about the amount of money one would spend in remodeling their kitchen, the differences in choosing the higher-priced items, while significant at the time, makes such an impact over the long haul, that I would encourage people, if it is financially appropriate, to opt for the higher-end appliances that best serve their needs," she noted. "I would also recommend researching the pros and cons of each piece. Talking with designers, reading reviews and talking to real cooks is the best research a consumer can do when making such purchases."

Sink Accessories

Strainers, cutting boards, rinse baskets and plate racks that are custom fit to the sink will make it easy to wash and prepare your favorite fruits and vegetables, as well as clean-up after a meal. Sink accessories such as these are available for select Moen sinks, including MoenStone® Granite. By purchasing items designed to complement your particular sink, you will ensure a snug fit and optimized workspace in your sink area.

Cappuccino Maker

What kind of host or hostess would you be without the ability to serve up a hot and frothy cup of cappuccino in a hurry? The latest machines let you make up to four cups in five minutes – allowing you to have those after-dinner drinks ready at the same time you serve dessert. To complement this appliance, look into obtaining a coffee grinder or even a coffee roaster.

Filtered Water Dispenser

A must-have for every kitchen is a filtered water device. There are many types available, including filtering faucets, faucet attachments, countertop pitchers and in-refrigeration units. A new option is Moen's PureTouch® AquaSuite™ filtered water dispenser which is an attractive alternative that sits next to the kitchen faucet to provide convenient, great-tasting water for drinking, sauces, juices and soups.

Gadgets Galore

And what are some of the smaller items that make cooking easier?

- A measuring cup with an angled wall makes it easy to measure liquids without having to hold up the cup.
- Salad spinners are handy tools for cleaning lettuce, fruits and vegetables.
- A microwave steamer allows you to steam vegetables or rice in the microwave for a quick dinner.
- Silicon mats are great for baking and eliminate the need for foil or parchment paper.

So watch out, Emeril! By outfitting your home's kitchen with the latest appliances and gadgets, not only will you make your life easier, but you will amaze your friends and family with your exceptional cooking prowess. Who knows? Maybe your kitchen will be one day featured on *The Food Network*.

For more information about remodeling projects or Moen products, contact Moen Incorporated at 25300 Al Moen Drive, North Olmsted, Ohio 44070-8022, call toll free 1-800-BUY MOEN (1-800-289-6636) or visit its web site at www.moen.com.

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EDITORS NOTE: Moen Incorporated is one of the world's largest producers of residential and commercial plumbing products. Moen is the #1 brand of faucets in North America. The company manufactures a complete line of single and two-handle faucets in a wide assortment of styles and finishes. It is also a leading producer of residential and commercial sinks, a variety of shower accessories, and bathroom accessories (sold under the brands Moen, Cleveland Faucet Group, and Creative Specialties International).

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