

# ALI WORLD

INTERNATIONAL

THE ALI GROUP MAGAZINE

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*Vistas*  
RUI SILVESTRE

**WELCOME TO THE CLUB**  
Rosinox swings for success  
with the reopening of Vistas  
Rui Silvestre in Portugal

**WELBILT IN PROFILE**  
ALI GROUP'S GAME-CHANGING  
ACQUISITION OF WELBILT, INC.

**SWEET SENSATION**  
CARPIGIANI'S PARTNERSHIP  
WITH CHEF NIKO ROMITO

**ali**  
GROUP



The revamped Michelin-starred Vistas Rui Silvestre restaurant at the Monte Rei Golf & Country Club in Portugal saw Rosinox work closely with the chef and designer



## Welcome to this, the tenth international edition of *Aliworld*

I hope that all of you are well and surviving – and indeed thriving – in these challenging times in which we continue to find ourselves.

The industry continues to face significant challenges across many fronts. But with those challenges come opportunities to look at our businesses in new and more innovative ways. Sustainable design is just one way that many foodservice operations are helping their bottom line while also “doing good” for the planet. In our article on current industry trends, we look at how designers, consultants and operators are adopting more sustainable design concepts and how equipment manufacturers are meeting this challenge.

Once again, we have filled this issue with articles that we hope will provide ideas on how to operate your business more profitably and successfully by showing how other operators are prospering. In our cover story, we’ll tell you about a chef who is reaping the rewards of months of collaboration with a designer and the equipment manufacturer Rosinox to produce a fine-dining venue that is already a destination for gastronomy lovers.

In other articles, you’ll see how an Italian supermarket chain is flourishing through its focus on fresh, top-quality foods, many of which are prepared from scratch in-house. And we’ll show you how a hotel chain updated an 18th century property with attractive, functional new kitchen and dining spaces while retaining the building’s original charm.

I would also like to send a special congratulations to seven of our companies. Cleveland\*, Bongard, Mareno and Metos all celebrate a 100th anniversary this year, while Olis, Wexiödisk and Grandimpianti ILE celebrate 50 years. Each of these companies has remained successful by consistently focusing on innovation and service to customers.

Since our last edition, we’ve welcomed some new members to the Ali Group family. Notably, the Welbilt\* group of companies (see p6), which includes such renowned brands as Convotherm\*, Frymaster\* and Merrychef\*, is now part of the Ali Group. The Montague Company, producer of a wide range of high-quality cooking and frying equipment, has also joined us (see p12). The addition of these companies means we will now be able to provide our customers with an even greater range of best-in-class products. These are incredibly exciting times for the Ali Group. While I am personally delighted to see these exceptional brands and companies join the Ali Group stable, bolstering our global presence, you – our trusted partners – can rest assured you will always receive the same high level of service and support you have come to expect from Ali Group companies.

I look forward to reconnecting with many of you at our schedule of events, which include the FHA Show in Singapore in October, Gulfhost Dubai in November, the NAFEM Show in Orlando in February, the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago in May and HostMilano in October 2023.

In closing, from all of us at the Ali Group, let me wish you a most profitable, productive and safe 2023.

**Filippo Berti**  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Ali Group

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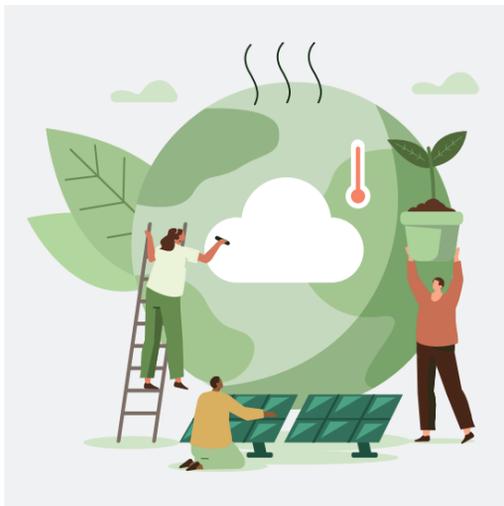
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## 01 Growth

# ALL WELL AND GOOD



In July 2022, Ali Group officially completed its acquisition of Welbilt, Inc. The move sees the consolidation of a powerful global foodservice equipment entity, **Kevin Clark**, CEO of Welbilt, and **Phil Dei Dolori**, CEO of Welbilt EMEA/APAC, tell Michael Jones

**A**li Group's acquisition of Welbilt, Inc. was the culmination of more than one year of negotiation and regulatory approval, which began on May 28, 2021. It sees Ali Group consolidate and increase its global presence in the foodservice equipment market, bringing to bear the full power of Welbilt's offerings and worldwide partnerships with customers and suppliers alike.

The move sees Ali Group adding leading Welbilt brands such as Merrychef® and Convotherm® into the fold. The Ali Group now consists of 95 global brands in 34 countries, with 75 manufacturing facilities in 17 countries – including primary manufacturing facilities in the US, Mexico and China – and

sales and service subsidiaries throughout Europe, the Middle East, Africa, North America, South America, and Asia Pacific. It also saw Kevin Clark, formerly president of ACP, Inc. and a 38-year veteran of the foodservice equipment industry, become CEO of Welbilt; while Phil Dei Dolori was promoted to CEO of Welbilt Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia Pacific.

The acquisition was a great move for both parties, says Clark. "Welbilt has great brands, in the North American market particularly, so it expands Ali Group's presence in that market, not just in volume, but in categories – that's important to both our end-user customers and our channel partners. Ali Group is excited about the acquisition. It's a

long-term strategic fit for both businesses."

Dei Dolori is in full agreement. "It's exhilarating to be part of what I think is the greatest single transformational acquisition ever in the foodservice equipment industry. When an acquirer really understands your business and what you do, and respects what you do, it just adds to the overall excitement. We're a leading company in the world now. We're going to be unstoppable. It's just a great combination," he says.

"It fits like a glove for three reasons," says Dei Dolori. Firstly, it sees a balance in geographical coverage growth for Ali Group and Welbilt. Secondly, it fits from a product line perspective. "Welbilt had gaps in horizontal cooking and warewashing, as

well as a gap in refrigeration and ice machines in Europe and Asia. Now, Ali Group has filled all those gaps. We're going to bring in some select Ali Group brands into our distribution channel and to our end-customers where it is complementary to do so, to help them grow."

Finally, it fits for the end-customer segments, he says. "In Europe and Asia, Welbilt primarily – but not exclusively – serves large- and medium-sized restaurant chains, convenience store chains, and supermarket chains. But, because we had those product gaps, we were only partially in the general HoReCa [hotel, restaurant, catering] market. We didn't have a complete offering. Ali Group's strength is really in the HoReCa and institutional foodservice markets: schools, hospitals, and independent restaurants. So,

it's another near perfect fit – that's what's exciting," says Dei Dolori.

The acquisition will also benefit the partner organizations, including dealers and consultants, that both groups currently work with, says Clark. "There is certainly a scale of portfolio advantage, where we bring some weight as well as adding some pieces to the puzzle that Welbilt didn't have, as well as the other way around. There's very little overlap in this acquisition, which means these businesses will continue to grow and innovate."

According to Dei Dolori, some of the persistent questions his team used to get asked by the larger mid-size restaurant and retail chains were, 'Do you have warewashing?'; 'What do you have for ice?'; and 'Do you have horizontal cooking?' ▶



Above: New CEO of Welbilt, Kevin Clark, believes the acquisition by Ali Group was "a great move" for both parties

"Chains like to have one point of contact supported by product experts. They are always looking for packages or solutions, followed by a service offering. Going forward, we're going to have a pretty full offering."

For Clark, ultimately the move works because it sees two "special" companies uniting. "If you look across Welbilt's global portfolio, there's very established brands in major key categories in a commercial kitchen. Whether it's Delfield® in the [North American] fabrication and refrigeration piece, Garland® in core cooking, Frymaster® as one of the premier frying brands in not just North America but in the world – all the brands are very strong and have their unique position in the space. All of the Welbilt brands we acquired are considered leaders in their category: number one, two or three – very much in that upper echelon," he says.

For Dei Dolori, Welbilt will always be a special company, because of both its bright future as part of Ali Group, but also its storied history. "In the 1970s, Welbilt was the first US-based company that established distribution outside of the US in a meaningful way, with a presence in the UK, Germany, Spain, and Asia Pacific. The reason was some of their largest chain customers, such as McDonald's and Yum! Brands, were expanding globally, and they needed Welbilt innovation, expertise and service support outside the US. That pulled Welbilt into international markets."

### Sharing synergies and innovation

Clark believes both organizations will benefit from sharing best practices too. "There's certainly some customer-facing sales synergies we can share. Welbilt has some strong sales relationships that do not overlap with Ali Group's offering, so we can roll in some of the existing Ali Group companies to talk about how we can better serve their market. It goes the other way too: there's some existing long-term relationships in the Ali world that Welbilt can benefit from. And there are other synergies in foodservice equipment. We're a big purchaser of sheet stainless steel, so our stainless leverage goes up and we would expect some cost synergies there."

One thing Clark is adamant that won't happen is that companies won't be "smashed together" to save costs, he says. "That's just not the way Ali Group works. Our synergies will be more market-facing."

For many years, Welbilt has been a byword for innovative equipment that is focused on "solving problems around energy, space, and labor for its targeted end customers," says Dei Dolori. "It's Welbilt's DNA."

And innovation will remain core to Welbilt's – and Ali Group's – product offering, says Clark. "Welbilt and Ali Group are both very innovative companies. Ali Group's legacy is entrepreneurial, nimble companies that are close to their markets. Innovation often comes from market need, so you're perhaps going to see a little bit more of that kind of philosophy from the Ali world permeating into Welbilt."

The acquisition will see a mix of cultures where "central innovation takes a backseat to market or local-led innovation, giving the best of both worlds," says Clark.

In terms of their respective new roles, both Clark and Dei Dolori are excited to realize the opportunities the acquisition presents their teams – and clients. "I'm grateful to Filippo Berti's confidence and trust in me to give me this opportunity," says Clark. "I've worked for a variety of different companies in this industry. I have been in the foodservice manufacturing side since 1992 and people have often asked me where were my favorite places to work. Ali Group is top of the list, but the next one was working for Delfield in the Enodis days. So, in some ways, it's a little bit like coming home. I have intimate knowledge of these businesses, so, it's a good



**“ We need a balance of seeing what the next decade brings, but also solving our customers' issues today... We will continue to do what we can to invest in our business ”**

**Kevin Clark**

fit for me, but it's also exciting to come in and see the changes made in Welbilt in the last 12 years and work my way through those before leading it forward into its next generation of growth."

Dei Dolori sees his role as "developing the strategy and execution priorities" for Welbilt's EMEA and APAC teams. "That means leading – not managing – the team to drive performance. We're lucky because we have a very experienced, 'cross-pollinated' team: about 80% of our leadership team in Europe and Asia is from the industry, while about 20% comes from outside the industry,



or related industries. We are really blessed with a very experienced, high-performing leadership team in both regions. Our job is to keep that profitable growth going."

### Facing global impacts

With the industry currently dealing with some significant challenges, including rampant inflation, supply chain pressures and spiralling energy and food costs, combining expertise and skill will prove vital for end-user customers, says Clark, particularly in order to face the labor crisis.

"Customers are facing major labor challenges. That has seen automation go from a buzzword to reality. But there's innovation that will be more effective in 20 years, and some that will be effective next week. We need a balance of seeing what the next decade brings, but also solving our

customers' issues today. Sometimes those are innovative steps, not leaps, but [they] eventually get you there. We will continue to do what we can to invest in our business. Our goal is to continue to innovate, grow and find ways for these great brands in the Welbilt portfolio to continue on that path."

Being close to the market, flexible, nimble and entrepreneurial makes Ali Group, now augmented with Welbilt, ideally placed to weather these storms and adapt to changing times, says Clark. "From an overall industry standpoint, if Covid has taught us one thing it's that, especially here in North America, there will always be a need for food prepared outside of the home and, through its resilience and creativity, the restaurant industry will remain up to the challenge of meeting that need. The future of foodservice equipment continues to be bright." ■

### BRAND WATCH



**1929**

Welbilt's roots go back to the original founding of the Hirsch brothers' Welbilt Stove Company

**11**

Welbilt has built 11 strong, global equipment brands in the foodservice industry

**4,000+**

Welbilt's team includes more than 4,000 employees worldwide

[welbilt.com](http://welbilt.com)



Welbilt is blessed with "an experienced, high-performing leadership team," says Phil Dei Dolori, CEO of Welbilt Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia Pacific (left)

01 Growth



# Ali Group welcomes Kold-Draft



Renowned for its top-quality ice machines, Kold-Draft International is now an Ali Group company. "End-users will see the world-class quality Ali Group is known for," says **Jeff Biel**, vice president of marketing and product development for Scotsman/Kold-Draft



Kold-Draft ice makers have become an invaluable tool for mixologists

**T**he history of Kold-Draft® begins with its founding in 1920 as a manufacturer of water pumps. In 1955, the company introduced its first automatic ice machines. With a unique "upside-down"

horizontal evaporator, the machines were the first to produce consistently perfect, large square ice cubes. For the next 50 years, Kold-Draft produced only full-size ice machines. In 2016, the company introduced its first undercounter machine, and now, its SC201 undercounter model is its best-selling machine. Today, Kold-Draft offers a full line of both undercounter and freestanding machines in a variety of sizes to fit any beverage operation.

**Art meets science**

The ice-making technology in Kold-Draft machines has been called "the perfect balance of art meets science." Unlike vertical evaporator systems, the Kold-Draft horizontal evaporator system eliminates impurities that can affect ice texture and flavor and produces pure cubes that melt more slowly.

The 1.25-inch square (31.75mm) cubes produced by the Kold-Draft system are larger than cubes from traditional ice makers and are the only true cube shapes

in the industry. That size and shape help maintain carbonation and won't dilute drinks as quickly as other cubes.

The pure, slow-melting Kold-Draft cubes have long been a favorite with bartenders and master mixologists, and the machines have built a loyal following. In 1999, author and mixologist Dale DeGroff, who has been called "King Cocktail," told *The New Yorker* magazine, "There's only one type of ice I'll tolerate. That's a big cube made only by a Kold-Draft machine." With the increased emphasis nowadays on artisanal drinks — and the importance of quality ice in those drinks — Kold-Draft ice makers have become an invaluable tool for mixologists in bars, restaurants and other venues with craft cocktail programs.

Jeff Biel, vice president of marketing and product development for Scotsman/Kold-Draft, says that this is a win-win for customers. "End-users will see the world-class quality that Ali Group is known for in everything from technical and customer service to manufacturing and the sales channel."

"We are very pleased to welcome Kold-Draft into Ali Group," says Filippo Berti, Ali Group's chairman and chief executive officer. "The Kold-Draft acquisition is strategically important to our Group as it strengthens our position as a leader in the global commercial foodservice industry. This provides us with one of the industry's most unique and well-known ice shapes and further enhances our portfolio in the ice machine segment." ■

**BRAND WATCH**

**KOLD-DRAFT**

Kold-Draft produces first automatic ice machines	Undercounter model introduced	Purity level of cubes produced in Kold-Draft machines	Length of each side of a perfectly square Kold-Draft cube in sq. in (31.75mm)
<b>1955</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>99.9%</b>	<b>1.25</b>

[kold-draft.com](http://kold-draft.com)

## 01 Growth

**Joe Deckelman**, president of The Montague Company, discusses why the brand is a great fit for Ali Group and how it is able to keep pace with restaurants as they evolve concepts and menus

# THE MONTAGUE COMPANY JOINS THE ALI GROUP

**T**he Montague Company's roots reach all the way back to the time and place of the Gold Rush: San Francisco in 1857. There, a young inventor named Wilfred Weed Montague started a business selling pots, pans and other assorted hardware items. Eventually, he expanded the business into making steel-and-brick ovens, the predecessor of today's Montague line of products.

By 1910, the company, now incorporated as W.W. Montague, Inc., was widely recognized as the leading maker of stoves on the West Coast, and soon thereafter expanded into furnace-making as well. Like so many other companies, W.W. Montague ran into financial trouble during the Great Depression and was purchased by Joseph Whalen, a Montague employee who had worked his way up to foreman after starting as a sheet metal mechanic in the 1920s. In 1936, the furnace side of



Montague has a worldwide reputation for producing a broad range of high-quality kitchen equipment

the business was spun off, with Whalen retaining the range manufacturing portion of the company. He moved to San Francisco's Mission Street and began operating under the current name of The Montague Company.

Through the ensuing years, Montague grew its product line as the company developed a worldwide reputation for producing a broad range of high-quality kitchen equipment. In 2022, the Whalen family — descendants of Joseph Whalen — sold the company, and Montague became one of the newest members of the Ali Group family of companies.

### Focusing on quality

Joe Deckelman, president of The Montague Company, says "we've never aspired to be the biggest and widest-ranging company per se. We've tried to focus on our core expertise, which is providing high-value cooking products." Producing a piece of equipment that chefs will want to buy takes in-depth knowledge of their world, he says. "Our products are built with the operator in mind: how they're going to use it or abuse it, how they're going to clean it or not clean it. All of those things are central to the design component of everything we've done here."

True to its roots, cooking equipment is still the heart of the Montague product line. Reflecting the variety of prep methods found in the modern restaurant kitchen, Montague offers standard, convection and pizza ovens; broilers and fryers; and a variety of ranges and range tops. Montague island cooking suites are an essential component of many foodservice kitchens. It also offers specialty cooking

equipment such as pasta cookers and wok ranges. And more recently, Montague added to its product lineup a selection of refrigeration equipment, like prep tables and chill stations.

To respond to industry changes, Montague keeps a close eye on the way restaurants operate today. For example, Montague island cooking suites are known for their durability; Deckelman says the suites can easily have a 20-year operational life. However, with restaurants changing their concepts or menus more frequently than ever, the equipment they need today might not be the same equipment they will require five or 10 years down the road. To facilitate these changes, Montague developed its UDC plug-and-play modular suite. "The framework of the system stays the same," Deckelman says, "but you can just disconnect the equipment from the utilities, roll it out of there and plug whatever it is that you want in there for your new design. We completely evolved our island suite concept to cater to what people are doing these days and the fast turnover of staff and menu changes."

Montague's close connection to the consultant community is another important factor in its success. "It's our lifeblood," Deckelman says. "It's a daily activity for us to interact with them." A consultant can come to Montague with a design — anything from a finished design down to the proverbial sketch on the back of a cocktail napkin — and they will develop an integrated cooking solution. "Cooking equipment is the centerpiece of a commercial foodservice operation," he says. "It's very complicated, intricate and specific.

And that's our wheelhouse. Working with design consultants is what this company is built around."

### A new beginning

Deckelman previously worked at Champion, another Ali Group company, so he is familiar with the Ali Group and its decentralized structure. Each Ali Group company is encouraged to operate as an individual business unit, and that will work well for Montague, says Deckelman. "It allows us the freedom to breathe and to do the things that we need to do to succeed, but it's always in the context of what they're trying to do as a group." He has also seen the management styles of the founder of the Ali Group, the late Luciano Berti and current Chairman and CEO, Filippo Berti. "Filippo Berti is just as impressive as his father for maintaining consistency across all the brands. They demand a lot from their people, but they're firm, fair and have integrity. From operating an individual brand, that's all you can ask from a parent company — to know what they're trying to get you to accomplish and how you fit into their larger goals."

What's in the future for Montague? "That's an easy one," says Deckelman. "The world is going electric. We are 95+% gas-powered cooking equipment right now. In five years, it'll be 50-50. In 10 years, it'll be 95% electric and 5% gas. We are at the forefront of a major fuel type paradigm shift in our industry. We will be the leader of that." ■

### BRAND WATCH

**1857**

Montague's roots trace back more than 150 years to its formation in 1857

**20+**

Montague island cooking suites can easily have a 20-year operational life

**24/7**

The heavy-duty 24/7 Range from Montague is built to support non-stop cooking

[montaguecompany.com](http://montaguecompany.com)



## 02

## Trends



## SUSTAINABILITY INNOVATION:

# Setting the tone for sustainable design

Across the whole foodservice sector, from restaurants to schools, sustainability is the driving force behind design projects. Jim Banks looks at the innovations and initiatives that are driving resource efficiency and, as a result, cost-savings for foodservice operators, and how equipment manufacturers are stepping up to the challenge

In a time of high commodity prices, soaring energy costs and the looming climate crisis, foodservice operators are having to work hard to maximize their margins and care for the planet. Fortunately, those goals form a virtuous circle – the increasing emphasis on sustainable equipment and practices can yield cost savings through resource efficiency in the long run, though new equipment may come with a higher upfront cost.

Equipment designers and foodservice consultants are increasingly putting forward more energy-efficient equipment as an option for their clients, but there is a careful balance to be struck between operating cost and capital investment. Slowly and steadily, however, the global foodservice sector is understanding the benefits of sustainability, whether it is in the electrification of cooking equipment, more efficient refrigeration systems, or investment in dishwashers that use less water.



Eric E. Norman, FCSI, vice president of Clevenger Associates



“Operators always have sustainability in mind but as equipment costs have gone up, they are looking at upfront cost and long-term operating cost,” says Eric E. Norman, FCSI, vice president of US commercial kitchen design company Clevenger Associates. “Designing and operating sustainably does save money in the long term in terms of electricity, water and other resources.”

Much of this, adds Norman, depends on the type of operation. “A corporate office building, a convention center or a large-scale project will take a long-term view as they will

operate over 10 or 20 years, but it is harder for an independent operator.”

A key trend that is sweeping the industry, notably in Europe though more slowly in the US, Asia and Africa, is the electrification of cooking. Induction hobs are slowly but surely replacing gas hobs and ranges, though they are less suited to wok cooking and there is some resistance among high-end chefs.

“Power is the biggest buzzword now and there is a shift to all-electric kitchens in some parts of the world,” says Norman. “In the central US there is not a push for it, but our office in Seattle has seen it in multiple projects. On the West Coast, some municipalities, state and local governments are starting to mandate it.”

“Most equipment is already electric, but a pinch point will be open-burner cooking for high-end chefs,” he adds. “Induction has a learning curve compared to open flame. After power, water is the next priority. In all areas, manufacturers have done a great job in improving efficiency and innovating.” ▶

**“Power is the biggest buzzword now and there is a shift to all-electric kitchens in some parts of the world”**

## THE WAR ON WASTED WATER

Many companies in the Ali Group are leading the way on resource efficiency through innovation and a commitment to sustainability, whether it is designing devices that use less power, minimize water consumption, or reduce the demand for chemicals.

One example is Wexiödisk AB, a Swedish manufacturer of commercial dishwashers. Its managing director, Magnus Titusson, explains that sustainability is at the core of the company's ethos, though always with the intention of meeting the customer's needs, because warewashing has a potentially high impact on the environment through water usage or the discharge of chemicals.

"For many years, our philosophy has been eco-design, where the life cycle cost of a dishwasher, ergonomics and sustainability go hand in hand," he remarks. "Therefore, what is good for the customer or operator will be good for the environment."

That said, Wexiödisk also focuses on the ergonomics. "It should be easy for the operator and service engineers

to work with our machines. We focus on the machine performance – water, energy and chemical consumption. We focus on the machine quality and robustness – machine design and selection of components from high-quality brands," says Titusson.

One key factor about the company is that its approach to sustainability is not new. It is not only in light of the climate crisis that manufacturers have been focusing on greater resource efficiency – it has been a necessity for decades.

The focus on efficiency and environmental impact in the warewashing sector is not a new phenomenon and, as a consequence, the steps forward in innovation that are being taken now are not made from a standing start. Momentum has been building for a long time.



**Magnus Titusson, managing director at Wexiödisk AB**

“What is good for the customer or operator will be good for the environment”



"Sustainability has been a part of our DNA from the start in 1972 and the company has grown with this in our minds all since then," says Titusson. "Our philosophy is that dishwashers should last for a long time, meaning at least 20 years. From a sustainability perspective the worst one could do is to buy equipment and throw it away after only a few years."

"Of course, this strategy puts many demands on us, such as providing spare parts for all product series for many years and being very accurate when selecting important components such as pumps, valves, and

electronics," he adds. "We also minimize the use of plastic parts in our machines and instead use stainless steel where possible."

Among the innovations that the company has driven is the Pre-Rinse Machine (PRM), which aims to make the prewashing process less time-consuming and more efficient. It works in combination with a rack conveyor or hood-type machine and has the potential to greatly reduce running costs and improve quality.

"Positioned prior to the dishwasher, the PRM reuses the water from the dishwasher that otherwise should have gone to

the drain, meaning this water is "free of charge" and, from an ergonomic point of view, the manual hand shower could be removed, so reducing the amount of manual work," says Titusson.

"From a quality perspective, the prewash process is done in a controlled way, from above and below, using water from the dishwasher," he adds. "The overall running cost will be significantly reduced due to removal of the manual hand shower. The dirt will stay in the PRM and consequently there is not a need to change the water in the dishwasher as often as before. It also enables you to reduce the washing time and chemical consumption in the dishwasher." ▶

“The overall running cost will be significantly reduced due to removal of the manual hand shower”



## CUTTING THE CLIMATE COST OF COLD STORAGE

When it comes to resource costs and environmental impact, refrigeration is a key target for innovation. Once again, Ali Group companies are at the cutting edge of product design, whether it is for the restaurant market, hospitals, schools, or hospitality. Not only is equipment becoming more energy-efficient, but it is also using less environmentally harmful refrigerants.

“Beverage-Air and Victory Refrigeration are committed to manufacturing the most energy-efficient units possible without sacrificing performance,” remarks Oscar Villa, president at Ali Group North America’s Refrigeration Division. “We completely transitioned



“Our brands have eliminated hydrofluorocarbon in both our refrigerants and foam to offer products with lower ozone depletion and global warming potential”



Oscar Villa, president, Ali Group North America's Refrigeration Division

our self-contained products to R290 refrigerant.”

R290 is natural, non-toxic and has no ozone-depleting properties. R290 has excellent thermodynamic performance. It is highly energy efficient, yielding up to 30% savings. “Our brands have eliminated hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) in both our refrigerants and foam to offer products with lower ozone depletion potential (ODP) and global warming potential (GWP),” says Villa.

As well as transitioning to a sustainable refrigerant, the brands have also employed variable speed compressor technology. Beverage-Air was the first recipient of the Environmental Protection Agency’s Emerging Technology Award for Adaptive Commercial Refrigeration Equipment, due to its use of a variable speed compressor, paired with a sensor-driven control capable of modulating temperature in response to a varying thermal load, which results in energy savings up to 25%.

Beverage-Air is a two-time winner of the ENERGY STAR® Excellence in Product Design Award and strives to have the most models qualified in the refrigeration category.

No matter the sector, the market or the type of equipment, Ali Group companies are setting the trend in sustainability. ■

## LOGICAL THINKING

The issue of ‘greenwashing’ – when a company markets its environmental credentials for positive press coverage, but in reality is not making any significant strides towards acting sustainably – has been rife in the foodservice sector for many years. Williams, however has taken its impact on the environment seriously for decades.

Its commitment to green refrigeration stretches back to the 1980s when it was the first manufacturer to develop CFC-free insulation. In the 1990s it developed the first catering refrigeration equipment to use environmentally friendly refrigerants with an Ozone Depletion Potential (ODP)

of zero. Since then, it has continually pioneered a raft of greener technologies, ranging from energy-saving smart controllers to systems using eco-friendly refrigerants including natural hydrocarbon.

Williams continue to pioneer the use of environmentally friendly natural refrigerants as standard across its ranges and for all its food storage cabinets. Its CoolSmart Controller minimizes a cabinet’s energy consumption through fan and heater pulsing, intelligent defrost and independent management of evaporator and condenser fans, while innovative insulation delivers structural strength and thermal properties to the equipment while minimizing environmental impact.



# 03

## Success stories



# Food for thought

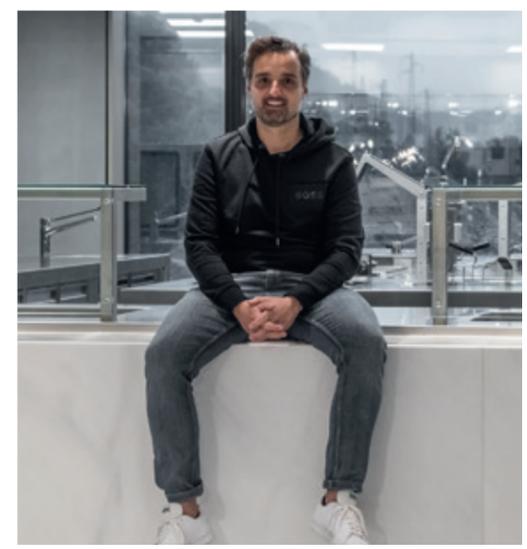
There's an old saying that an army marches on its stomach, which means teams function better when they have access to high-quality, nutritious food. Catering equipment supplier Ambach and design and build contractor Niederbacher have put the satisfaction of the workforce at the heart of their latest kitchen project, the latter's **Thomas Krismer** tells Vicky Coulthard

**M**ore and more businesses are realizing that food has a key role in the workplace. Having a welcome place to sit with colleagues and enjoy healthy meals could go some way towards boosting well-being, company culture and even productivity.

When PROGRESS, a leading producer of precast concrete for the construction industry, was designing its new headquarters in Bressanone, Northern Italy, it knew it wanted a meeting place for staff that was different from the average work cafeteria. The result is a real restaurant that offers a wide range of high-quality dishes in refined yet relaxing surroundings.

With 160 covers and 500 meals served daily in the restaurant and self-service cafeteria, the kitchen is a high-performance and bespoke heavy-cooking suite that combines precise functionality with appealing design. The product of a partnership between professional catering equipment supplier Ambach and design and build contractor Niederbacher, the kitchen is in keeping with the architectural principles of the PROGRESS headquarters.

Ambach and Niederbacher have a long history of collaboration, stretching back 30 years. For



the PROGRESS project, the two companies knew they had to produce a complete solution. Thomas Krismer, senior consultant partner at Niederbacher, explains: "The requirements for the gastro project were optimal work processes, optimal processes in hygiene, energy- and resource-saving and sustainability. But the major target was to put staff catering on a new level so that the employees could get high-quality food in a feel-good location.

"It was a matchless experience for me to be part of a team that creates a feel-good place for employees instead of a simple canteen. I think employees are the most valuable part of a company, and PROGRESS's investment was really smart and future-oriented."

**Improving the environment**  
PROGRESS's HQ has been designed and built utilizing the latest scientific research into workplace environmental studies. Both the shape of the building and the arrangement of the interiors acknowledge such research and have resulted in a high-quality workplace for the employees. The interiors are arranged so movement flows between individual work zones, meeting rooms and connecting areas. The walls were tailor-made in PROGRESS's own recast concrete plant to ensure optimum working



PROGRESS's HQ has been designed and built utilizing the latest scientific research into workplace environmental studies. Below, left: Thomas Krismer, senior consultant partner, Niederbacher



The PROGRESS project is a good example of the unique mix of industrial production and handcrafted expertise that characterizes Ambach and its products



“ The suite has a minimalistic look and a clear profile that follows the irregular angle of the side wall of the room so it fits perfectly ”

Stefano Tommasini  
Ambach

conditions, as well as providing sufficient space for innovation and development.

Referencing PROGRESS's area of manufacturing, cement was used for some elements in the kitchen, along with more traditional materials such as stainless steel and marble and wood finishes in the buffet area. Taking into account the form and architectural elements of the building, a tailor-made solution was developed: a single cooking island that integrated all the cooking appliances, including two Ambach IQ touchscreen-controlled electric, tilting, pressure bratt pans, and a worktop manufactured as a continuous one-piece hygienic top.

Stefano Tommasini, area sales manager at Ambach, says: “The design request was very specific. The suite has a minimalistic look with elegant lines and a clear profile that follows the irregular angle of the side wall of the room so it fits perfectly. The brushed-finish surfaces and the special stainless-steel knobs complete the picture and give it a modern look.”

More challenging, says Tommasini, was embedding different bulk cooking appliances into the single-piece hygienic-top cooking island, integrating the bratt pans, IQ touchscreen control, plus a 90-liter kettle, pasta cooker, griddle, fryer, and two full-surface induction hobs.

“We successfully integrated the bratt pans into the single-piece top of this cooking island. Honestly, I have never seen anything similar on the



market. This is a hybrid between a conventional cooking island and a bulk cooking block, a mix between front- and back-of-house kitchen.

“Then there was the problem of how to spread the incredible weight of the section with the main cooking appliances,” adds Tommasini. “To overcome this, we installed the robust Ambach System 900 frame structure and a special reinforced self-supporting plinth.”

The Ambach System 900 is built to maximize performance and minimize energy consumption – a crucial balance for a long-lasting and efficient commercial kitchen. Appliances offer significant energy savings to cut the running costs of the kitchen and therefore offer a good return on investment while reducing the impact of the kitchen on the environment. What's more, the system has been created with hygiene as a priority. The components are designed to minimize dirt, grease, and grime to make cleaning as quick and easy as possible. All the corners of the unit have a wide radius, and burners and joints are waterproof. Cooking plates also have a full working surface with a small cavity around the perimeter that drains away fat and excess liquids.

“We also had to ensure the reliability, safety and ease of maintenance of such a complex and powerful suite,” adds Tommasini. “For this reason, it's been equipped with an extra cooling system and configured to allow technicians easy access to the internal components and connections.”

### The collaborative process

The PROGRESS project is a good example of the unique mix of industrial production and handcrafted expertise that characterizes Ambach and its products. “It proves our capacity to provide the best solution meeting clients' requests, a blend of technology, customization and aesthetic design, which perfectly represents our company motto of ‘You, your kitchen,’” says Tommasini.

“This was possible thanks to the strong collaboration between Ambach and Niederbacher and a long process that included several discussions and adjustments.”

The strong working relationship between Ambach and Niederbacher helps to smooth the progress of projects they are involved in. The completed kitchen redesigns they've teamed up for include the following references, all located in South Tyrol, Italy: the Hotel Gasthof Steinegger,



Adler Lodge Ritten and Hotel Mezdi Adler Lodge, the Amonti & Lunaris wellness resort, the Hotel Winkler, the Hotel Feldhof DolceVita, the Wellness Resort Quellenhof Hotel Park, the Piz Boé Alpine Lounge Mountain Hut, and the Emma Hellenstainer Hospitality and Catering College.

“Thanks to this continuous collaboration, our companies have developed a shared knowledge and know-how that is the real key factor for the success on the market,” says Tommasini. “Ambach's high-quality standards and possibilities, together with the leading position and presence of Niederbacher on the local market, do the rest.”

“Niederbacher is a demanding partner, but this pushes us to continuously develop and improve our products and solutions in order to meet their requests and follow new market trends. Furthermore, both our companies are based in Caldaro, Italy, and that makes it easier for us to sit around a table and discuss in detail every project.”

Krismer adds: “Basically, both firms know each other like an old married couple.”

He is aware though that any collaboration can only be deemed to be successful if the client is happy. “We know that the feedback of the employees in relation of the all-new PROGRESS company restaurant was very good. They were thrilled,” says Krismer. ■

### BRAND WATCH



**1953**  
Ambach has nearly 70 years of experience in the design and manufacture of professional kitchens

**100%**  
Ambach manufactures 100% usable cook tops that provide complete ergonomics and temperature control

**40%**  
Ambach's fast heat-up Pressure Braising Pans reduce cooking time by 40%

[ambach.com](http://ambach.com)

# Embracing the ageing process



Dry-aged meat is becoming increasingly popular but requires controllable temperatures to optimize texture and flavor. Enter the Williams Meat Ageing Refrigerator, a compact and high-spec unit that's beefing up business for butchers and restaurateurs alike

**A**s a traditional butcher, Arthur Howell has always been keen on dry ageing to improve the flavor and texture of his produce. But dry-aged meat is a tradition that has now become a trend, with everyone from Michelin-starred chefs to barbecue enthusiasts extolling its virtues.

The history of dry ageing goes back centuries, to a time when humans discovered meat tasted better if it was left to hang for a while rather than eaten fresh. Letting the meat age allows the enzymes to break down muscle tissue, making it more tender, while the evaporation of moisture from the meat during the drying process concentrates the flavor. However, the age-old practice isn't without its problems: unstable temperatures can cause contamination as the meat matures, resulting in mold. This can be trimmed off, but that has an impact on a butcher or restaurateur's yield.

For Howell, the game changer in his dry-ageing practice came with the Williams Meat Ageing Refrigerator, which operates at the optimum temperature range of 1°-6°C and humidity of 60-90% to ensure the meat matures perfectly without the risk of contamination. Howell had no hesitation about investing in the refrigerator for his family's butcher shop, which first opened its doors in the beautiful coastal town of Wells-next-the-Sea, Norfolk, England, in 1889.

"When we installed it, it was the talk of the shop for weeks. It was a real conversation starter,"

says Howell. "Customers like theater, things that stand out and are different. The Williams Meat Ageing cabinet certainly delivers. It looks great and it looks after the meat really well."

"There's no doubt it's had a positive impact on business," he says.

### Perfect for front-of-house display

The Williams Meat Ageing Refrigerator is designed to be seen, constructed from stainless steel and featuring a full-length glass door and internal energy-saving LEDs to ensure the meat is displayed to customers in an eye-catching way. "Williams spent over a decade working alongside butchers, Michelin-starred chefs and casual dining operators who offer aged beef, developing and refining its walk-in meat-ageing coldrooms," says Malcolm Harling, sales and marketing director at Williams Refrigeration.

"It was important to make sure the unit looked fantastic," he adds. "We recognized that, whether it was to be purchased by a butcher or restaurateur, it had the potential to be a real talking point for their business. The stylish design and robust stainless-steel construction means it is perfect for front-of-house display, allowing it to be easily integrated into a range of different locations."

Aesthetics aside, Harling says a critical consideration was that each unit has the capacity for all meat joints, including larger cuts such as strip loins, and a choice of shelving or hanging rails. "Other important practical features included



**“The stylish design and robust stainless-steel construction means it is perfect for front-of-house display”**

**Malcolm Harling**



Williams' meat ageing coldroom technology (left, middle) provides a smart solution for clients; Butcher Arthur Howell (above) has benefited from the Williams Meat Ageing Refrigerator

were an activated carbon filter to stop any odors produced from air circulated within the cabinet, as well as the addition of a robust, full-length, heavy-duty stainless-steel handle for easy door access," he adds.

**Beefing up sales**

Howell dry-ages his beef for a minimum of 28 days to make a real difference to taste and texture. He also dry-ages lamb, although he leaves this to hang for no more than 21 days.

Experimenting further with dry ageing is Stephen Hill, master butcher at Perrys of Eccleshall, in Staffordshire, England, who says the Williams Meat Ageing Refrigerator is also proving ideal for venison, goose and chorizo.

"Venison has a tendency to dry out when it's aged, but it keeps beautifully in the Meat Ageing Refrigerator," says Hill, who purchased his first unit in 2019.

"We used to struggle to sell venison saddles, but with saddles going into the ageing fridge, we can make venison wellingtons, which we've had great success with," he says.

Both butchers agree that the refrigerators have made a difference to their business. "Our aged beef has been such a hit with customers that we need much more capacity to keep up with demand," says Hill.

"For example, as a result of the flavor of the aged meat, we sold 50% more rib of beef at Christmas. It's profitable, too – we can add £5 a kilo on retail sales.

"A six-bone rib of beef that's been aged about 28 days can go for £75–80; after four months, you're looking at £130. You lose about 5% of the volume in the drying process but the extra flavor more than makes up for it."

Howell adds, "Dry-ageing the meat adds to its value – and the price customers are willing to pay. At the moment, we're adding £4 a kilo, so a sirloin that starts off as £26 will be £30 once it's been aged.

"It's early days, but I reckon customers would be happy to pay more for the meat because it has great flavor and tenderness," he says.

**The tender trend**

The fashion for dry-aged meat has picked up in the past few years, as more and more customers go for quality produce. Hill's investment has been so successful that he's added another three refrigerators to his shop.

Harling adds: "One of the big drivers behind its popularity is undoubtedly the internet – there are many cooking channels on YouTube which focus on dry-ageing meat," he says.

Restaurateurs and butchers have responded to this increased consumer interest by seeking out equipment that can meet this burgeoning demand themselves.

"The trend is still growing and has a very healthy-looking future. Customers and diners are far more open to new culinary experiences, and the tenderness and flavor of aged meat is a great selling point," says Harling. ■



**“Our aged beef has been such a hit with customers that we need much more capacity to keep up with demand. It's profitable, too”**

**Stephen Hill**



Perrys of Eccleshall can add £5 a kilo on retail sales for their aged meat products, thanks to the Williams Meat Ageing Refrigerator



**THE TECH SPECS**  
Benefits of the Williams Meat Ageing Refrigerator:

- Himalayan salt blocks for moisture management and improved flavor
- Choice of perforated stainless steel shelves with anti-tilt slides or robust meat hanging rails
- Activated carbon filter to remove odors within the cabinet
- Internal bright, low heat, LED strip lighting delivers great energy savings and clear visibility of produce
- Heavy-duty PVC magnetic balloon gasket to provide 100% tight seal to enhance energy efficiency and prevent heat ingress
- Visual alarm to warn of temperature fluctuations that could impact food safety
- Natural hydrocarbon refrigerant with low GWP/zero ODP to deliver superior thermal efficiency
- Self-closing glass door with full-length, heavy-duty, stainless steel handle
- Radiused interior base corners that eliminate dirt traps to make cleaning easy
- Foodsafe stainless-steel interior and exterior for easy cleaning and durability
- Heavy-duty non-marking swivel casters for mobility and stability
- CoolSmart controller that optimizes refrigeration efficiency

**BRAND WATCH**



**1980**  
Williams Refrigeration was founded 42 years ago

**400+**  
More than 400 products in the standard product range

**100%**  
All food storage cabinets use natural refrigerant

[williams-refrigeration.co.uk](http://williams-refrigeration.co.uk)



# AN ISLAND AT THE CENTER OF THE CULINARY MAP

The long-awaited reopening of Michelin-starred Vistas Rui Silvestre in Portugal is the culmination of months of hard work in a collaborative effort between the chef, the designer and equipment manufacturer Rosinox. Jim Banks talks to all three to discover the importance of a bespoke cooking island to the restaurant's exclusive appeal



“ The restaurant itself has a huge balcony and a magnificent view over the golf course, the forest and, on the horizon, the sea. It is very beautiful ”

Ricardo Martins  
NX Hotelaria (pictured below with Rui Silvestre)



In July, celebrated chef Rui Silvestre opened the revamped Vistas restaurant at the Monte Rei Golf & Country Club. This fine-dining venue, which already has one Michelin star, is home to celebrated contemporary Mediterranean cuisine with a modern and exotic twist.

“Seafood is a big part of what I cook,” says Silvestre. “We are in the heart of the Algarve, 10 minutes from the sea, so we serve lobster, clams, mussels – everything the sea has to offer us. I marry that with my own cultural expression. My family is a melting pot of cultures. My grandmother is from India, my mother from Mozambique, and I balance those influences with local cuisine.”

Silvestre has retained his Michelin star for the third consecutive year, contributing to establishing the eastern Algarve as a destination for gastronomy lovers, and with his newly revamped kitchen he may well soon have another. That would be in keeping with the exclusive and high-quality reputation of the venue, which caters to a very select clientele.

“It is a very different kind of resort, with luxury villas that are owned or rented, and you can only enter the restaurant if you are a member or resident at the club,” remarks Ricardo Martins, group CEO at design company NX Hotelaria. “The restaurant itself has a huge balcony and a magnificent view, with the glass walls giving a view of the sunset over the golf course, the forest and, on the horizon, the sea. It is very beautiful.”

**Exclusive cooking space**

The kitchen, which previously catered for three restaurants on-site, has now been redesigned with an exclusive cooking space just for the Vistas restaurant. The new open kitchen for this restaurant, which features all-new equipment, had to match the needs of the chef in terms of both aesthetics and functionality. For this, Ricardo turned to equipment manufacturer Rosinox, knowing that it could deliver on both fronts.

“We specialize in creating new concepts for kitchens and we knew Rosinox shared our vision for creating new solutions,” says Ricardo. “Chef Silvestre wanted a kitchen that followed his vision ▶



The new open kitchen at Vistas Rui Silvestre has been redesigned with an exclusive cooking space and all-new equipment



“There are 12 people in the kitchen serving around 26 people at any one time. The island is at the heart of it. It is like a huge piece of jewelry”

**Rui Silvestre**  
Vistas Rui Silvestre



technically and aesthetically, and when I showed him the design he started to cry with happiness.”

“He wanted very high-quality products, so we introduced Rosinox, which created the cooking island at the heart of the kitchen,” he adds. “Although the brand was not distributed in Portugal before this, Rui saw the equipment used by other chefs and he was completely in love with everything, from the image to the functionality.”

**A jewel in the heart of the kitchen**

The cooking island features familiar components but is entirely bespoke in its composition. It features a traditional gas solid top range, allowing the chef to cook on high heat in the center and then simmer on the outside. There’s also an electric double-tank fryer that allows the cooking of different tastes such as tempura in small portions. There’s a salamander grill, chrome planchas, and a large brass charcoal oven that can be used as an open grill.

“The concept is a mix between electric, gas and charcoal cooking, so the chef benefits from all elements to give the taste and flavor to the food,” says Giuseppe Politi, export manager at Rosinox. “The challenge for us was to work closely with Ricardo to understand the vision and put forward the right solutions.”

“The cooking island was completely designed to meet Rui’s demands and it is not a modular range that can be changed as needed,” he adds. “He is married to this cooking island for life, which is why we had to get it right the first time. I want the chef to be smiling all the time, so we needed to remove any clouds on the horizon as soon as they appeared, which meant talking about everything, including preventative maintenance, cleaning and safety.”

The island had to be custom-made to accommodate the white, brown and gold color scheme that defines the restaurant. This meant using brass, copper and bespoke enameling. Every feature, from the layout to the aesthetics, is unique to this kitchen.

For Rosinox, this is the first step in establishing a strong local platform. “In cooking equipment, there are different routes to market. There are consultants who believe in our unique products, and Ricardo’s team fell in love with Rosinox a few years ago. They met us at an exhibition, came to

the factory to see how we make our products, and we visited them in Lisbon. Portugal is turning into a high-end market and although we are starting from ground zero, we have a reliable partner in NX Hotelaria,” says Politi.

“We associate the brand with very high-end quality,” says Ricardo. “It is the obvious choice, and we are very happy with them. Everything we asked for we were able to discuss with them as part of a very dynamic relationship.”

Indeed, the quality of the relationship between all parties was fundamental to the success of the project as a whole. “There are 12 people in the kitchen serving around 26 people at any one time,” says Silvestre. “The island is at the heart of it. NX Hotelaria created the rest of the kitchen around it. It looks good, which is important in an open kitchen. It is like a huge piece of jewelry in the middle of the kitchen.”

“We had a very easy relationship with the team,” he adds. “They really love what they do as much as I love what I do. They create things from the heart with passion, so it was a very natural process.”

Though the designs and the concept, which were first begun in November last year, inspired great confidence, it was only eight months later when he could cook on it for the first time that Silvestre could truly see the value of what Rosinox had created. He was not disappointed.

“When we started designing it, I asked for everything I needed and I wondered if it was even possible,” he says. “I don’t know how they did it. I wouldn’t change a thing. It is exactly what I wanted, but everything went well, and I am very happy.” ■

**BRAND WATCH** **ROSINOX**  
GRANDES CUISINES

Rosinox consistently produces the finest cooking equipment available to chefs.

**1837**

Rosinox can trace its heritage back 184 years

**22 years**

Rosinox became part of the Ali Group in 1999

**2013**

Rosinox moves to a new facility in Bourges, France

[rosinox.com](http://rosinox.com)

The Rosinox cooking island had to be custom-made to accommodate the white, brown and gold color scheme that defines the restaurant



# Grand designs

The F&B offering at Rome's Hotel de la Ville reflects the Eternal City's diverse culinary history. Elly Earls met chef **Fulvio Pierangelini** and Grandimpianti's **Alessandro D'Andrade** to learn about the complexities of revamping a centuries-old property and why constant dialogue was key to the project's success

**W**ith its magnificent views over the Eternal City, the 18th century palazzo that now houses Rome's Hotel de la Ville was originally a pit stop for European nobles traveling through the continent on the hunt for cultural enlightenment. Fast forward to 2019 and British hospitality group Rocco Forte Hotels, which operates 14 five-star hotels dotted around Europe, had teamed up with designer Tommaso Ziffer to renovate the iconic property in extraordinary fashion, drawing on influences from the era of the 'Grand Tour' but bringing it into the 21st century with playful, contemporary touches. The real selling point is the plethora of terraces, which give guests a serene spot away from the city's chaos, while offering 360° views of its monuments.

The F&B offering, developed by Michelin-starred Italian chef Fulvio Pierangelini, reflects Rome's diverse culinary history – rooted in the Italian kitchen but bringing in tastes and textures from many other cultures. This is epitomized in the elegant 100-cover Mosaico restaurant, which is situated in an internal courtyard reminiscent of a small square in Trastevere, a popular neighborhood in Rome.

"I believe food should be shared and enjoyed with others, not alone," says Pierangelini, the creative ▶



“ My cuisine is based on simplicity. I love to say: ‘it is not what you cook but how the food is prepared, which is important’ ”



Fulvio Pierangelini (right) offers a varied menu, blending Italian classics with inspiration from the Middle East, Asia, and the Southern Mediterranean



director of food at the property. “Mine is a ‘free’ cuisine that wants to tell about an unconventional Rome. I offer a varied menu, blending Italian classics with inspiration from the Middle East, Asia, and the Southern Mediterranean.”

‘Caput mundi’ is a Latin phrase used to describe a city as the capital of the world. For Pierangelini, this befits Rome, which, as he sees it, is a crossroads of cultures and influences without boundaries, but highly respectful of Italian traditions. “For this reason, my cuisine, although creative and innovative, is based on simplicity,” he says. “I love to say: ‘it is not what you cook but how the food is prepared, which is important.’ Mosaico’s menu may be unusual for a Roman restaurant, but it will delight guests by simply presenting the best from the garden, the stone oven, the sea and the farm.”

**Constant dialogue from day one**

There are several other catering outlets spread across the eight floors of Hotel de La Ville. Da Sistina is an all-day bistro restaurant modeled on a Roman trattoria, the Julep Herbal and Vermouth Bar serves inventive drinks based on the 13th century spice routes and the glamorous rooftop terrace Cielo serves light meals and cocktails with sweeping views of the Eternal City.

As Grandimpianti had collaborated with both the Rocco Forte team and Chef Pierangelini on previous occasions, the company was invited to pitch for the project at the tendering stage. They won the task of supplying high-quality, high-performance kitchen equipment for the entire property, to a strict brief provided by Pierangelini and a consultant, Andrea Viacava.

From design to installation, the project took two years to complete, largely because the building is a historic structure, protected by planning laws. The complexity of the project meant constant dialogue was essential from the very first construction phases, which lasted about a year, between Grandimpianti’s technical department, the chef and Viacava. A Grandimpianti technician was on site at all times during the development of the project.

“It was the only way to achieve the high-quality objectives that distinguishes all the structures of the Rocco Forte chain,” says Alessandro D’Andrade, sales director at Grandimpianti. “The main goal was to create kitchens and cafeterias that exactly met customer expectations, in terms of quality, performance, design and technology.”

**A rewarding result**

All parties involved were particularly proud of how Mosaico turned out. Guests can dine al fresco in ▶



“ It was a demanding project, both in the design and execution phase. But the final result rewarded the whole team ”



the beautiful courtyard or venture inside where the open kitchen with its remarkable red standalone oven strikes you as soon as you enter.

For Pierangelini, it's the 'main actor' in the scene, perhaps tied with his varied menu, which includes oven-baked langoustines, ginger-glazed sole and tender beef accompanied by wild mushrooms and peaches. Desserts range from chocolate pizza to light zabaione, and burrata and Parma ham are served to start with freshly baked breads. "The oven is well known for the fragrant bread and the delicious 'focaccine' – that's the Italian name – we bake in," he smiles.

Designed by Ziffer, the restaurant also features candlelit copper tabletops, which reflect the natural light that streams in, and contrast with the striking black and white cement floor.

Elsewhere in the property, Grandimpianti created custom-made Ambach cooking suites with one-piece hygienic worktops for all the restaurants and cafeterias, as well as a package of refrigeration equipment managed by a centralized system.

"It has been a very difficult and demanding project to manage both in the design phase due to the development of plant arrangements and the construction and execution phase," D'Andrade says. "But the final result rewarded the whole team."

Pierangelini believes the reason the project was successful was because everyone involved was attuned to each other's needs. "The Grandimpianti team has always helped us by supplying the right equipment for us. They are always available and very proactive in providing solutions," he says. "The direct relationship, the flexibility, the fast answers and the willingness to listen to our needs makes our work easier and is essential for a successful, long-lasting collaboration."

Grandimpianti has several other projects underway with Rocco Forte Hotels including Villa Igia in Palermo, Sicily, which was recently completed, and Hotel de Russie in Rome. These two will certainly not be the last. ■

**BRAND WATCH** **GRANDIMPIANTI**  
ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING

**200+**  
Grandimpianti has worked on 200+ hotel projects

**1965**  
The company was founded more than 50 years ago

**5**  
Grandimpianti services five main client categories

[grandimpianti.it](http://grandimpianti.it)

The key to the success of the Hotel de la Ville project was because "everyone involved was attuned to each other's needs"

### 03 Success stories

# Baked to perfection



Now in its centenary year, Ali Group bakery equipment brand Bongard's landmark innovations reveal it has much to celebrate – a fact highlighted not only by its success, but also in a recent cultural event at the Elysée Palace, says Bongard's managing director, **Benoît Sévin**



**F**rance is renowned for its baked goods – from buttery, flaky croissants to melt-in-the-mouth macarons, not to mention its golden, crusty baguettes. Of course an essential ingredient of their sublime quality is, unsurprisingly, the efficiency of the baking equipment operating behind the scenes.

With a market enjoying the luxury of a diverse range and volume of products from outlets spanning supermarket bakeries and artisanal pastry shops, there is, in turn, an appetite for cutting-edge equipment that caters for all.

Bakers, pastry chefs and caterers want a manufacturer that brings innovation and know-how to the table. They want a partner that listens to requirements and draws up production units and layout recommendations customized to enhance their processes and fit their space.

French bakery equipment manufacturer Bongard does just that. Benoît Sévin, managing director of the brand, says, “Bakers are offering a greater variety of products than ever before. This represents a challenge for ovens: on one side, they must maintain traditional baking for bread, while on the other, offer more variety and at a faster pace.”

In 1922, Oscar Bongard founded his eponymously named company in order to repair and maintain bakery ovens that had been damaged during World War I. Then, making use of his engineering background, he took the next logical step and began designing the ovens himself.

#### Hard work pays off

The ensuing century has been spent perfecting technical expertise and drawing on culinary tradition to come up with some of the most advanced equipment on the market.

Since 2007, it has been “part of the Ali Group, a world leader in the foodservice equipment market,” says Sévin. Yet even as the brand expands, it remains focused on its core values: baking quality and flexibility. “Our electric deck ovens are here to take on this challenge. They still use the traditional baking decks that ensure proper baking characteristics, with added



intelligence to facilitate management of recipes and energy.”

Today, 60% of French bakers have invested in Bongard's hardware, and export sales ring in at 150,000 units, including around 40,000 ovens sited globally. “Our equipment, developed to meet the requirements of the French bakery industry, is recognized for its quality worldwide and is suitable for all types of bakery production across the globe,” says Sévin.

With these achievements in mind, it was perhaps fitting to kickstart its 100th year by showcasing a selection of equipment in a temporary bakery set up in the garden of the Elysée Palace. On 12 January, this was where Bongard was part of a submission by the Confédération Nationale de la Boulangerie-Pâtisserie Française for the iconic baguette to gain UNESCO recognition on the UN's Intangible Cultural Heritage list. Aiming to protect certain skills and traditions, even French president Emmanuel Macron made an appearance at the event to show his support for the craft that has been passed down through generations.

#### Smart additions

Using capacitive technology, the new Intuitive'2 and Sensitiv'2 touchscreen controls make equipment smarter and easier to use.

Bakers are able to program their recipes and monitor energy consumption; they can lock in their recipes and share them between production sites.

The range of Soleo EVO electric deck ovens offers flawless modularity with its range of 640 possible combinations.

The Paneotrad® dividing and forming process can produce 340 baguettes/hour.

## IMPORTANT MILESTONES



In 1955, Oscar Bongard Jr. took over from his father. Ovens became more economical and cooking consistency improved.

1955



In 1966, Oscar Bongard Jr.'s brother became co-manager of the company.

In 1966, the Cervap oven obtained a worldwide patent with its steam tubes arranged in a loop around a refractory stainless steel fire chamber, making it silent and economical.

1966-67



In 1996, the Oscar rotating rack oven, a tribute to Oscar Bongard, earned the Janus du Design award for improving the user's quality of life.

1996

1956-58

Between 1956 and 1958, the head office, then the factory, was relocated to Holtzheim near Strasbourg.

1986-98

Between 1986 to 1998, Bongard perfected mixing, dividing, shaping, proofing, fermenting, conserving, and freezing of the dough to complete its historical set of baking and cooking skills.

2007

In 2007, Paneotrad® introduces its unique patented process for separating and shaping pieces of dough, and limiting flour dust emissions.

Since 2007, Bongard has been part of the Ali Group family of companies.

2006

1922



Bongard has boasted a rich heritage in mixing, proofing, fermenting, baking and cooking equipment since it was founded in 1922 by Oscar Bongard



Bongard's head office is in Holtzheim, France. Reliable references and close-to-home service are particularly appreciated by its customers worldwide



### User experience

Asked to come up with one key ingredient to Bongard's success, Sévin maintains that user experience has always been a priority. "We have a commercial development center based at the headquarters in Holtzheim, France, equipped with a demonstration bakery and preparation laboratory," he says. Here, would-be purchasers can test the equipment before they buy – an inventive setup also offered regionally by company distributors.

Installation technicians are fully trained and have access to an online platform with technical information, and an ordering system that dispatches spare parts within 48 hours. "They accompany them throughout their project, whether it is a new bakery or just an equipment replacement," he explains. The company aims to offer its services seven days a week to limit users' production losses.

For its French customers, there is a finance leasing option, too, which helps buyers take an agile approach to cash flow.

With rising inflation and rent, equipment has been adapted to be more compact and modular to save on floor space. "We offer equipment and bakery layout recommendations customized to each baker's process and available space," says Sévin. Updated ovens "allow for a large range of products to be fitted on a restricted surface" and hardware has been redesigned to "respond to the new trend for equipment to be visible in retail areas."

The recent launch of HERA, a smart reach-in retarder-proofer allowing for speedy or slow dough rising, is more suited to a smaller space, while large-scale retailers might prefer a roll-in retarder-proofer that can be altered as necessary. Customer feedback is positive, saying it is time saving and more reliable.

For the stickier, messier combos, the latest Saturne EVO planetary mixer iteration has a removable, transparent cover that can be washed separately, so it's particularly suited to sugar, cream and egg-based products.

When creating the user-friendly production units for workers, comfort is key, says Sévin, with a focus on reducing the risk of work-related musculoskeletal disorders. "In addition to being ergonomic, several pieces of equipment limit respiratory problems linked to flour emissions," he adds.



**“ The company aims to offer its services seven days a week ”**

**Benoît Sévin**  
managing director, Bongard

### A sustainable outlook

For Bongard, designs aiming to limit energy consumption and their environmental impact include ovens that are 90% recyclable, with excellent insulation. "Our electric deck ovens have a higher than average surface-to-power ratio. They allow the same volume of dough to be baked in a reduced area and reach warm-up time faster than other, less powerful models."

A plan to add digital controls to all of its ovens will optimize energy consumption through automated and independent management, energy-saving mode or delayed starts. Sévin says Bongard has "a commitment to further develop our equipment ecologically, supported by an eco-friendly design approach."

In the future, the brand will be connecting ovens, fermentation and conservation equipment to a secure proprietary cloud. Users will be able to connect to their employees and the support platform, helping bakers share information with their teams, and flag any maintenance issues.

A remote system will embed communication and enable managers to optimize use of equipment by contacting their installed fleet, users and recipes. "The cloud is a true collaborative space where bakers can share information with their teams," says Sévin.

So having made such an indelible mark during its first centenary, Bongard looks primed to continue with its recipe of adaptation and vision moving into the next. ■



### BRAND WATCH



Bongard's high-performance production units make it a privileged partner in the baking and pastry-making sector.

**150,000**

Bongard has more than 150,000 units of equipment (including 40,000 ovens) installed worldwide

**4**

The company has four production sites across Continental Europe

**60%**

About 60% of bakeries in France contain at least one unit of Bongard equipment in their operation

[bongard.fr](http://bongard.fr)

## 03 Success stories

# Easy classic contemporary

With kitchen equipment supplied by Proxy, the Osteria Via Emiliana in Monza harnesses modern Italian expertise while drawing on a rich culinary history, its owner **Andrea Fumagalli** tells **Victoria Green**



**A** basket of real treasures” is how Andrea Fumagalli describes the culinary traditions of the Emilia-Romagna region in northern Italy. Feeling the Monza area, in bordering Lombardy, lacked this kind of gastronomic offer, he opened Osteria Via Emiliana in the city famed for hosting the Italian Grand Prix.

“We drew on the knowledge of my mother and my aunts of Emilian origin – true custodians of tradition,” he explains. “Together with them, we have educated the guys who work in the kitchen today, and handed down ancient flavors.”

The result is classic Emilian cuisine: homemade pasta, gnocco fritto, tigelle flatbreads, dishes from the Apennine mountains of Reggio Emilia – “a beating heart of Italian gastronomy,” says Fumagalli.

When it came to creating the kitchen, it made sense to use a brand synonymous with Italian design: Proxy, boasting Italian components and an Italian production site. As well as its solid “made in Italy” pedigree, Proxy prides itself on products that are easy to install, easy to use, easy to integrate, easy to clean.

Indeed, says Fumagalli, “it makes your work much easier, and more fluent. At peak times, we can count on quick and easy tools. Staff can face the challenges of the most intense service periods with serenity.”

### Smooth online ordering

To make sure its own service operates as smoothly as its machines, Proxy has invested in its website, developing an innovative online ordering system that’s reserved for Proxy partners. The entire product range is online, enabling partners to view the availability of machines, read the relevant documentation, and place orders. In Proxy’s words, this allows the creation of a professional kitchen in a few simple steps.

Alberto Pirovano, owner of Proxy partner Pico Service, describes it as “an excellent, effective and well-made showcase that guarantees quick orders which are almost always ready for delivery. Given the current climate, this is something not to be overlooked.”

Based just north of Monza, Pico Service has been designing and installing commercial

“Proxy helps by offering a high-performance, Italian-made product with attention to detail”

Customers such as Osteria Via Emiliana in the Emilia-Romagna region of northern Italy appreciate Proxy’s fully configurable range of gas and electric cookers

kitchens for 30 years. With this lengthy experience, says Pirovano, the company “always provides competence, passion and professionalism in the service of one of the sectors that distinguishes Italian hospitality.”

Pico Service “immediately appreciated what we were looking for in our restaurant,” says Fumagalli. “In addition to helping us with the initial project design, they advised us what to use for our daily work – for example the possibility of having more configurations of gas cookers.”

### Made in Italy

Proxy’s range of gas and electric cookers is fully configurable, with free-standing top and base modules available in sizes from 40cm to 120cm, and burner power equivalent to up to 7.7 kilowatts. The modular design makes it easier to replace or integrate new equipment, should a commercial kitchen need to expand. There are also electric

fryers with removable heating elements, or gas ones with burners outside the tank to facilitate cleaning – again, the emphasis is on ease of use from start to finish.

“I really appreciate the Italian manufacturing with prices that allow us to fully satisfy even the most demanding customers, while remaining sufficiently competitive in the market,” says Pirovano. “Proxy helps by offering a high-performance, Italian-made product with attention to detail, always guaranteeing excellent value for money.”

For Osteria Via Emiliana, this high-performance equipment is complemented by traditional methods: all pasta is handmade, for example, and left to rest on tea towels, while dishes include the evocatively named polpette della Nonna Emma (Grandma Emma’s meatballs). It takes a slickly professional operation to recreate at scale the authentic tastes of home. ■



**BRAND WATCH**  
**PROXY**  
PROFESSIONAL FOR YOU

**2019**

Proxy was founded in 2019

**90+**

The company has more than 90 products available with fast delivery

**100%**

Proxy products are designed and produced with CB certification 100% in Italy

[proxy.alibelluno.it](http://proxy.alibelluno.it)



# Sweet dreams are made of this

Niko Romito is serious about gelato – in his partnership with Carpigiani he works to perfect the time-honored and traditional sweet treat in his restaurants. He tells Tina Nielsen how gelato plays a central part in his kitchen



**N**iko Romito is known well beyond the borders of his home country Italy. The chef behind several high-profile restaurants, including the three-Michelin-starred Reale in Castel di Sangro, he also oversees Spazio restaurants in Rome and Milan and an exciting collaboration with Bulgari Hotels.

He was a student of economics and had harbored ambitions of becoming an architect before he turned to cooking at age 25. “My father passed away and I left my studies to run the family restaurant with my sister Cristiana,” he recalls. “We had some tough moments along the way when I decided to change the cooking philosophy from traditional cuisine to more creative and modern style.”

However, alongside his sister, he pursued his path and in the space of seven years achieved the highest accolade awarded by The Michelin Guide.

“I have studied a lot, I have met some great people, I grew up very quickly and after a few years I felt huge satisfaction,” he says, adding that the memory of receiving his first Michelin star still shines brightly in his memory. It was a moment he describes as an accomplishment and a new start all rolled into one.

Gelato has long played a central role in the cuisine of Romito’s restaurants, and he has invested a lot of time in learning about techniques to achieve the best results. “A great gelato is a matter of taste and texture. I usually work around a single main ingredient to extract the flavors in a

purified and intensified way,” he explains.

“I love the versatility of gelato, the fact that different temperatures determine a different experience on the palate. If added to fruit it enhances the freshness. It can be associated with ingredients of a different structure and temperature, reaching an incredible balance of taste on the palate.”

With creativity playing a prominent role in Romito’s restaurants, the gelato doesn’t stop with the sweet flavors of the dessert menu. The vegetable menu in his restaurant kicks off with a green pea gelato served with a drop of extra virgin olive oil. “The deepest essence of the vegetable is straightforwardly preserved, so intense and recognizable,” he says.

“The goal is always to enhance the ingredient, whatever that is, to express its taste to the maximum. We have worked on significantly reducing sugars and animal fats, and creating water-based gelato thus preserving texture and softness. The result obtained exceeded my expectations.”

### A successful collaboration

The self-taught chef has worked with Carpigiani for some time now, starting when he was looking for a technical partner at his Accademia Niko Romito, a vocational school for professional training accredited by the Region of Abruzzo and in partnership with Slow Food’s University ▶



Niko Romito (top) is the chef behind several high-profile restaurants and creator of the iconic Bomba Niko Romito (above)



**Q&A WITH CARPIGIANI'S MATTEO ANDREOLA**

**How did the collaboration with Niko Romito start?**

It began in 2016 when we received a request for a partnership with Accademia Niko Romito culinary school. Together with our Carpigiani Gelato University's faculty, we developed a gelato-making course suitable for its educational program. Since then we developed a fruitful collaboration that has extended to several other projects, from the Bulgari Hotels around the world to Spazio restaurant in Milan. We have an extensive range of machines suitable for all needs that can easily meet a chef's expectations.

**Why is this an important partnership?**

We had the chance to work with a great professional and his fantastic team. As always in a partnership, people are the most important part and we are honored to be able to share so many projects and different retail formats in which gelato turned out to be a fundamental part. Perhaps the most important element is that chef Niko Romito really loves gelato and has grasped its potential.

**What are the future plans for the collaboration?**

In the future we plan to continue with the training activities dedicated to future foodservice professionals as there is a huge request for skilled chefs and pastry chefs. In addition, we are actively exploring the potential of gelato in the hotel sector. From breakfast to dinner, there are many moments in which you can offer a frozen dessert to your guests and make them happy. We are also partners of the 'Bomba' project, which will have further developments with a new retail format.

*Matteo Andreola is business unit manager – Foodservice Professionals & Pastry, Carpigiani*



Chef Niko Romito's iconic Bomba Niko Romito, served filled with gelato, has become a bestseller



Carpigiani's equipment with its advanced technology and devices, enables the processing of ingredients that results in a fluffy and creamy texture

of Gastronomic Sciences.

“For me, Carpigiani is the leader in the gelato field, so we signed a partnership that today is growing and entails a lot of research on how to continue improving the gelato and the processes that lead to a product that embodies taste, lightness and health,” he says.

The collaboration between Romito and Carpigiani goes beyond the standard client-manufacturer relationship as the Carpigiani experts and professionals also hold classes and lessons in the Accademia teaching and educating students in the use of their technology and approach.

Working with Carpigiani equipment with its advanced technology and devices, he says, enables the processing of ingredients that result in a fluffy and creamy texture. “In all my gastronomic offerings, gelato is proposed in the classic way, paying tribute to a long-lasting tradition yet presented in the most contemporary way,” he says. “The idea is to create different experiences associated with the gelato. For example, my iconic Bomba Niko Romito, which we also serve filled with gelato, has become a bestseller in a very short time.”

**New plans**

In addition to his restaurants in Italy, Romito has established a working relationship with Bulgari Hotels, dating back to 2017 and the first opening in Beijing. It received a Michelin star in 2019 and was followed by openings in Dubai (awarded two



stars in 2022), Shanghai – which also received a star – then Milan and Paris. There will soon be openings in Rome, Tokyo, Miami, and Los Angeles.

It is a project that requires continuous research on new recipes. “It’s a never-ending trip into the Italian gastronomic tradition, which includes countless dishes in all their regional variants. You can expect different menus, although following the same guidelines and inspiration: a true Italian cuisine with a pure, uncompromised taste, lending the palate elegance and pleasure,” he says.

“I want clients who enter the Bulgari Hotel and eat at Il Ristorante Niko Romito, whether in Moscow, China, Dubai, Paris or anywhere else in the world, to walk out feeling they have been to Italy, even if they’ve never set foot on Italian soil.”

Already with several restaurants under his belt, Romito continues with ambitious plans for the future. “I’m most looking forward to the opening of the Campus, a completely new and unique international university hub in Abruzzo, dedicated to food in its widest sense: nutrition, cooking, managing, food industry,” he explains.

“I’ve already created an Accademia where I teach the new paradigms of a modern cuisine but the Campus will allow me to move a further step into transmitting and developing knowledge, concerning not only cooking, but also the entire food system.” ■

**“In all my gastronomic offers, gelato is proposed in the classic way, paying tribute to a long-lasting tradition yet presented in the most contemporary way”**

**Niko Romito**

**BRAND WATCH**



**1946**

Founded in 1946 Carpigiani is celebrating 76 years in business

**180**

An international sales network with 180 distributors

**500+**

The company has an extensive network of more than 500 service centers

**carpigiani.com**

# 04 Innovation



**“WE WORK CLOSELY WITH CUSTOMERS, SO THEY GET THE RIGHT PIECE OF EQUIPMENT, THE RIGHT TRAINING AND SUPPORT WITH MENU DEVELOPMENT”**

Colin Lacey



## MERRYCHEF AND M&S

Leading UK retailer M&S has a long-standing relationship with Merrychef that goes back to 1998, when M&S opened its first in-store café.

“Our relationship with Welbilt has enabled us to work closely together to maximize the equipment potential for use in our environment, and ultimately improve the service our customers receive,” says Sam Watts, café operations manager at M&S. “For example, working on cooking multiple products in the same oven, together, has enabled us to cook more products simultaneously and reduce wait times for our customers; conneX gives us the combination of fast cook times, a clearer user journey and the ability to instantly update menus files through Wi-Fi,” he adds.

That relationship began small, but has blossomed over the years, and it serves as a testament to Merrychef’s strategy of building strong relationships. “It started with one or two pieces of equipment, then it grew,” says Lacey. “Once you’ve got the customer, they will come back to you if the support is right, and you make a difference to their business.”

## Merrychef finds synergies with

## Ali Group sister companies

With Welbilt joining the Ali Group, leading global brands such as Merrychef have found a home where it can prosper even more, says **Colin Lacey**, VP and managing director for the company

In July 2022, Ali Group officially acquired foodservice equipment manufacturer Welbilt, bringing a range of globally renowned brands into its portfolio. Merrychef, market-leading manufacturer of high-speed ovens, is among them.

“The acquisition overall is very synergistic, so we add to Ali Group’s presence with global and regional customers,” says Colin Lacey, VP and managing director for Merrychef. “Ali Group brings a lot of complementary businesses to our existing customers, who want suppliers that can offer complete solutions rather than single products. We have always done that, but this consolidates our offering.”

Welbilt has 13 brands in its portfolio but joining Ali Group opens opportunities to work with suppliers in warewashing, refrigeration, baking and shelving, to allow Merrychef and others to provide its global customer base with access to more complete solutions.

“It also gives us a consolidated distribution,

service and support structure,” says Lacey. “Our customers have known us for many years, so they will listen when we recommend a sister company. We work with solutions and focus on solving problems, and we share with Ali Group an end-to-end approach.”

“We work closely with customers, so they get the right piece of equipment, the right training, and support with menu development, and we work closely with chefs to ensure quality and consistency,” he adds. “What sets us apart is intimacy with our customers. We are not just selling a piece of equipment, we see them as part of the family and we support them throughout, helping them to grow their revenue and save on costs.”

### Building a bond with customers

Culturally, Welbilt and Ali Group are closely aligned, and this is embodied in some of the technologies that have been brought into the fold. One example is a common controller strategy, which standardizes the

controls for all Merrychef equipment. “It gives our customers a simple user experience, especially when it comes to training and cleaning of equipment,” says Lacey. “If you can use one piece of Welbilt equipment, you can use all of them because the symbols and logic are the same.”

For Merrychef, connectivity is also a core theme in the development of its equipment, and its latest conneX range makes menu customization quick and easy. “Putting a new item on the menu used to require a USB to be posted to every site,” Lacey explains. “Now, we can push a menu to an oven almost instantly using our connected equipment. It is very easy and doesn’t cost much – like a software upgrade on a smartphone – so it solves a fundamental problem for our customers.”

That customer-centric approach has made Merrychef an ideal partner for large brands and new start-ups. In the UK, it has a large portfolio installed at Marks & Spencer (M&S) in-store cafés (see sidebar), but also partners

with new ventures such as Kudos Coffee.

“While it was scary to spend that sort of money at the beginning, now it’s a no-brainer and in the next shop we’ve got two Merrychef ovens,” says Rob Good, owner and founder of Kudos.

“It removes the errors from in-store operations. Put it in the oven and you get the same result every time, especially with the same ovens all programmed in the same way. The staff love it. They were blown away when they first started to use the equipment, with its speed and simplicity. It is great to use and has made life easy.”

Merrychef can certainly claim to have the best high-speed ovens on the market, says Lacey. “You see our equipment in Subway and Starbucks, but we have a philosophy of how we support customers that even applies to start-ups,” he adds.

“Just like other Ali Group brands, every customer is treated with respect, and we aim to develop a relationship.” ■

## BRAND WATCH



**1950**

Designed commercial microwave ovens, launching the first combination oven in 1968

**2000**

High-speed ovens launched with the world’s first, and only, planar plume technology in 2007

**2022**

Merrychef, part of Welbilt, Inc., joined the Ali Group this year

Merrychef has built its entire history on shaping the future [merrychef.com](http://merrychef.com)

04 Innovation

Stay connected

il gigante

With a long history and an old-fashioned emphasis on good service and authentic ingredients, Italian supermarket chain Il Gigante is also an innovator, always looking for new ways to provide the freshest, highest quality food to its customers. Its new connected kitchen in Villasanta is doing just that, as technical and purchasing director **Andrea Brunu** explains to Victoria Green

Quality is "the daily priority" for Italian supermarket chain Il Gigante, says technical and purchasing director, Andrea Brunu

It's 50 years since Giancarlo Panizza opened the first Il Gigante store, in Sesto San Giovanni on the outskirts of Milan. The Italian supermarket chain has since expanded across the north of the country and employs more than 5,000 people across its 61 stores, 12 franchise shops and chain of cafe bars, A Modo Mio.

Panizza, who remains president today, has been credited with helping to create the modern hypermarket as we know it by selling food and non-food products alongside each other in that very first store. Today's Il Gigante supermarkets sell tens of thousands of products, including a range of own-brand essentials such as honey, potato chips and, of course, pizza. Around 90% of these are made in Italy, helping to support local producers.

"Quality is our mission and daily priority," says Andrea Brunu, Il Gigante's technical and purchasing director. "I believe that it is the quality of our products that sets us apart from our competitors. We want to offer niche and genuine products made from authentic flavors, like in the past."

As well as the cafe bars, Il Gigante stores include bakeries, patisseries and 'gastronomy corners' selling everyday products freshly made from scratch. For a company that prides itself on the quality and freshness of its food, the challenge was getting these products out in those branches that lacked the space for an on-site kitchen.

"The goal was to give smaller

stores the possibility of selling fresh products made by us, even if they didn't have a production corner," explains Brunu. "When we focused on this objective, we realized that we needed to have a central kitchen for the preparation and cooking of meats and baked goods to be delivered to our stores."

**A real turnkey project**

Having chosen the Villasanta shopping center near Monza for the location of the central kitchen, Il Gigante needed to find a partner who could deliver this solution. The choice was straightforward. "We have been collaborating with Grandimpianti for over 20 years," says Brunu. "We have always had an excellent relationship with all the people in the company who have worked with us."

Specializing in turnkey solutions for the Italian market, Grandimpianti designs, specifies and delivers foodservice

**"WE REALIZED THAT WE NEEDED TO HAVE A CENTRAL KITCHEN FOR THE PREPARATION AND COOKING OF MEATS AND BAKED GOODS TO BE DELIVERED TO OUR STORES"**

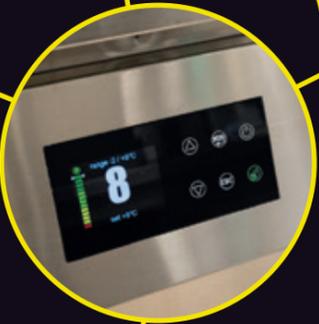
**Andrea Brunu**

projects in the commercial and institutional sectors. Il Gigante first enlisted its help when needing to purchase equipment for producing ready-to-eat meals and pastries.

"Grandimpianti can offer a wide choice of brands and equipment from within the Ali Group, offering a real turnkey project," says Brunu. "This is absolutely a plus for us."

For its part, Grandimpianti appreciates Il Gigante's forward-thinking approach to specifications. "The supermarket chain is always looking for innovations that can improve production and energy performance in its stores," says Andrea Furfaro, sales manager and after-sales director at Grandimpianti.

It wasn't just a question of providing all the necessary equipment to produce quality meals; it needed to be a technological solution that would enable the chain





Grandimpianti's goal for Il Gigante was to be able to remotely monitor the use of the machines and also have the ability to control recipes and cooking times

to standardize its gastronomic offer across all its stores. Furfaro explains: "The client required a connected kitchen to simplify the management of different kinds of appliances through better remote control and predictive maintenance. In this way, the chain can optimize production with better control of time and costs, guaranteeing a complete, varied, and consistent offer in all its stores."

Grandimpianti supplied equipment from several Ali Group brands, including Ambach, Aurea, Comenda, Hiber, Lainox, and Mareno – so the challenge was to build a common platform that would connect and manage all these different companies' software. For this, says Furfaro, it was crucial to have an internal team with the technical and IT know-how to manage everything effectively.

"The huge experience of the Grandimpianti technical office was essential in identifying the equipment with the right requirements from the Ali companies," he says. "The main feature we were looking for was flexibility: technical offices able to analyze and propose suitable solutions in a very short time. We are really grateful to all of the Ali companies involved in this project. Their efforts confirmed to us that we can always rely on their experience and availability."

**Optimized performance**

The resulting connected kitchen offers plenty of benefits for Il Gigante. By automating a number of manual processes, it minimizes human error, thereby improving safety. "But, above all, the main advantage is that,

through a unique cloud interface, the client can get access to all of the Ali machines installed, simplifying a lot of the work in the kitchen," says Furfaro. "In this way, both the client and Grandimpianti can have total control of the kitchen in real time, 24-hours a day."

"The goal was to be able to remotely monitor the use of the machines and also have the ability to control recipes and cooking times," Brunu explains. "Obviously having better control of the appliances contributes to having greater control of energy consumption – and we know how important that is, especially now." Italians have some of the highest energy bills in Europe, and have seen steep price rises recently due to the global gas crisis. By optimizing performance, the connected kitchen creates cost and energy savings, also reducing environmental impact.

So what have the Il Gigante



**“HAVING BETTER CONTROL OF THE APPLIANCES CONTRIBUTES TO HAVING GREATER CONTROL OF ENERGY CONSUMPTION – AND WE KNOW HOW IMPORTANT THAT IS”**

Andrea Furfaro

team made of the new kitchen? "The results are excellent," says Brunu. "We are able to fully exploit ovens and blast chillers, even for vacuum and low-temperature cooking, and the quality results are excellent." He also praises Grandimpianti's professionalism. "On this project, our relationship strengthened."

After all these years, it's a partnership that's finding new and innovative ways to solve problems together. "Il Gigante have found in Grandimpianti the partner it was looking for," says Furfaro. "I'm really proud and satisfied of our collaboration." ■

**BRAND WATCH**



**500+**  
Grandimpianti works on 500+ turnkey client projects each year, across multiple sectors

**90+**  
The company has access to 94 other Ali Group brands in all segments

**50+**  
Grandimpianti was founded more than 50 years ago in Italy  
[grandimpianti.it](http://grandimpianti.it)

04 Innovation

# Greener washing



DIHR's dish and warewashing range blends advanced deep-cleaning and drying solutions to make its machines energy efficient



**“BUILT-IN TECHNOLOGY ALLOWS OUR MULTI-PATENTED HDR SYSTEM TO REDUCE UP TO 50% OF THE QUANTITY OF DETERGENT OTHERWISE EMPLOYED IN THE WASH AREA ”**

Giovanni Bianco

**BRAND WATCH**



**30+ years**  
experience in serving hotel and restaurant businesses worldwide

**35,000**  
units produced per year in 20 product ranges

**105**  
countries distributed to globally each year by DIHR

DIHR is a leading global manufacturer of glass, dish and warewashing machines.  
[dihr.com](http://dihr.com)

Commercial kitchens use a lot of energy, and that ultimately affects the bottom line. Dishwashing manufacturer DIHR's innovative technology can help limit the environmental impact of the kitchen and save money, the company's **Giovanni Bianco** tells Vicky Coulthard

**W**hile the carbon footprint of the ingredients on a restaurant menu remains a major talking point in our eco-conscious world, the energy footprint of foodservice businesses is just as important. For instance, it's estimated that dishwashers consume more than 60% of all water used in restaurant and hotel kitchens, which is why it's important to choose the right dishwashing solution – one that offers peak performance as well as reducing the amount of water and

electricity needed to run it. Veneto, Italy-based DIHR's dish and warewashing range blends advanced deep-cleaning and drying solutions to make machines energy efficient and economical to run by decreasing consumption of electricity, water and chemicals. DIHR produces over 35,000 units a year and distributes in 105 countries, to clients including Airbus, Accor Hotels, the Bank of Italy, London Zoo, Carlsberg Group, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Atelier Louis Vuitton and IKEA. Giovanni Bianco, DIHR sales area manager, says the company has “embraced a green and ecological vision,” using energy from renewable resources – hydroelectric, wind, solar and

biomass – to reduce the carbon impact of its manufacturing processes and preserve environmental resources. Its HDR and HDRF (heat recovery and dryer) systems are key to DIHR delivering the same environmentally conscious solutions to its clients. “We developed the combined heat-recovery and drying system with the aim of creating a solution to save water and energy at the same time,” says Bianco. “Built-in technology allows our DIHR multi-patented HDR system to reduce up to 50% of the quantity of detergent otherwise employed in the wash area. It also reduces the cold inlet water used to maintain the correct temperature in the

prewash tanks,” he says. “No water is wasted to preserve the prewash temperature, which leads to a 50% reduction of detergent consumption for the wash tanks. The machine can be fed with cold water and the dryer works on reduced operating costs. Less installed power is needed to heat the rinse water. Steam condensation is cut, and the air temperature cooled down for the well-being of kitchen operators,” says Bianco. Energy savings come from thermal insulation that recovers the steam produced inside the washer, and the lower wattage. DIHR has long embraced a green vision and reduced the installed power of systems while maintaining the drying results.

**Monitoring performance** “The HDR system exploits the heat otherwise dispersed in the working environment to preheat both the inlet water and the inlet air that is used respectively to rinse and dry. The system takes advantage of the energy produced by the working machine so it almost becomes a self-feeding unit,” says Bianco. When it comes to maintenance, DIHR's optional cloud remote interaction system allows clients to monitor performance, even at a distance. “Connectivity pushes the professional kitchen forward,” he says. “Thanks to the new cloud option, clients can log in to our secured web portal, which shows the connected equipment and

checks and monitors its status in real time. A map displays the location of the machine and the related serial number, limiting and facilitating the potential intervention of a technician who can now anticipate the necessary parts to be replaced and even set temperatures, cycle times and detergent dosage remotely. “A daily activity report is available, with all the events related to the dishwasher in a detailed spreadsheet. The technician and end-user can keep track of the machine, including when the next ordinary maintenance will take place. It's also possible to customize and integrate our connectivity system with centralized kitchen management systems.” ■

04 Innovation

# Lean, green and exceptionally clean

At its most basic, a dishwasher is faster, more efficient and kinder to the environment than washing by hand. At its best, a professional, contemporary machine can become an invaluable asset to any business, as displayed in Kromo's most up-to-date design, the company's **Rafaëlle Allot** tells Isobel Clark



**STATE-OF-THE-ART TECH**  
Controlling settings and functions remotely makes life easier for operators, says Rafaëlle Allot, sales area manager of Kromo

**BRAND WATCH**



**3**  
Through its highly automated production, Kromo makes a machine every three minutes

**100+**  
Kromo's machines are distributed to more than 100 countries worldwide

**148**  
Kromo produces 148 models, from the smallest glasswasher to the largest flight type machine

[kromo-ali.com](http://kromo-ali.com)

**W**ith a guarantee of sparkling glassware and shiny crockery, the dishwasher assumes a place of power in any lineup of modern appliances as a hard worker that boasts a high standard of hygiene and quality finish. But take a deeper dive into the inner machinations of this ingenious invention and it's clear there's a lot more to it than a cycle of soap and water.

Dish and warewasher producer Kromo, part of Ali Group, is in the vanguard of such development, and the last 30 years have been spent making a global name for itself – at last count exporting to around 100 countries. Renowned for its innovative approach and diligent research, all products are made in Italy under the watchful eye of Kromo's skilled manufacturing team.

**New and improved**

New to the market, the Kromo Hood 140 Premium<sup>2</sup> HR is a slick, technologically superior version of the brand's standard model. Improved features include reduced hourly heat loss and an exit air temp of 25°C, down from 55°C, creating a healthier working environment.

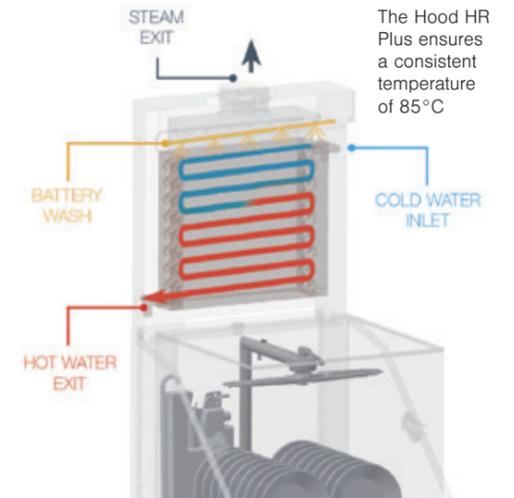
Rafaëlle Allot, sales area manager of Kromo, draws further comparisons, explaining that if both models are fed with cold water, the HD 140 Premium<sup>2</sup> HR "takes advantage of the steam produced by the machine to preheat the water going into the boiler." It can then reach "the correct temperature faster than a basic machine fed with the same water." This increases the output from 34 racks an hour to 55.

As a company looking through a sharpened sustainability lens amid concern over soaring energy bills, Allot says that "saving 6kW per hour means hundreds saved per week, thousands per year; the return on investment is seen within a few months."

Then there's the brand's Plus rinsing system and, as Allot is keen to point out, Kromo has invested time to save energy in this fast-flowing space.

"The Plus system draws water from the boiler, with a booster pump ensuring correct pressure at the rinse jets and operation, regardless of [external] water pressure and temperature," she says, explaining that the boiler only refills at the end of the rinse cycle, which prevents fresh water and heated water from mixing, and ensures a consistent temperature of 85°C.

According to European standard EN1717, this has been rated as an "AA maximum effectiveness



**“THE RETURN ON INVESTMENT IS SEEN WITHIN A FEW MONTHS”**

Rafaëlle Allot

system," preventing pollution of drinking water by mains water backflow.

**Customer feedback**

Allot cites the brand's communication with customers, and care taken to share experiences, as pivotal to success. "Training sessions in our factory, both in sales and technical, are a wonderful time to chat about what our customers – and their final customers – expect from our machines." This is an exercise that helps Kromo reassess levels of performance and technical assistance.

Controlling settings and functions remotely with its state-of-the-art tech makes life easier. With a connected online portal behind the action, technicians can check an alarm, set temperatures, cycle times and detergent dosage, saving a visit in person. "This system saves technicians from driving hundreds of kilometers to check an alarm or slightly modify a dosing system," she says.

In addition, customers can be certain their data is secure by logging into this online portal, extending data privacy to cover client names, serial numbers, assistance and parts.

Going forward, Kromo is set on a cycle of investment in R&D in order to meet shifting customer expectations – a program that's certainly worked so far. ■

## 04 Innovation

# Cool connections

Savvy businesses looking for smart solutions to refine their ice-making journey will be impressed by Icematic's most recent line of products. Catering to a host of outlets with differing needs, the brand's new app carves out a clear-cut case of why it pays to be connected, Icematic's **Paolo Dalla Tor** tells Isobel Clark



Paolo Dalla Tor of Icematic (left) says the My Ice app's user-friendliness is a huge benefit to operators



**T**wo years ago, Italian manufacturer Castel MAC took a cool, appraising look at its range of Icematic icemakers and decided it was high time to tweak the tech a little in order to avoid being frozen out of an ever-evolving landscape.

With over four decades in the sector, there was no disputing the brand's longevity and success, and this track record informed its intuitive timing of a more customer-centric creation. "We had to deliver a new idea, allowing the customer to adapt the machine to their seasonal production needs, depending on consumption and usage levels," says Paolo Dalla Tor, R&D manager at Icematic.

And so an invigorating wave of targets was set in motion, with one of the first challenges being how to replace the existing electronic platforms with one single solution. R&D turned its attention to a new app and software, drawing up plans for revised models, and, crucially, the process of product certification and patents.

Particular attention was paid to the updated tech in the new iterations. For example, beneath their shiny, stainless steel exteriors, they're now also available with the more environmentally friendly R-290 gas. This offers a wider choice of solutions, with lower energy consumption but equal or better ice production.

While developing fresh designs, components have been unified across the collections where possible, thereby reducing service costs. This includes evaporators being protected by a new NSF-approved application to help scale back any metal contamination.

"Water-cooled machines are equipped with high-efficiency condensers, reducing the water consumption when compared to past models," explains Dalla Tor.

The integral parts of the icemakers are protected from limescale build-up and harsh descaling products by applying the brand's Rainbow Technology® nano-technological treatment.

"Additionally, this innovative treatment displays an antibacterial action, reducing the

**"THE ADVANTAGE IS THAT THOSE SOLUTIONS GRANTED BY THE NEW APP ARE EXTENDED AND ACCESSIBLE FOR LARGE AND SMALL BUSINESSES"**

risk of ice contamination," he says.

Dalla Tor adds that as the Italian Industry 4.0 model takes root in areas such as large retail chain channels, it can be seen to "increase efficiency by reducing resources and product waste."

This focus on interconnectivity, digitalization and sustainability set the scene for the brand's own technological aspirations.

"The main advantage is that those solutions granted by the new app are extended and accessible for everyone, in large and small businesses. Our commitment is to collect, elaborate and fulfill our customers' requests, ranging from small bars to large restaurants, from small bakeries to large retail chains," he says.

And after over two years of hard work, Dalla Tor says the company aims to make all four new ranges available by late 2022.

#### An app to meet all needs

Configured to detect and connect to all of its new icemakers, whatever the range, the My Ice app replaces some of the services previously carried out by a technician. From setting ice cube dimensions, humidity and storage bin levels to initiating a sanitizing or washing cycle indicating the water hardness, it's all at the user's fingertips. "Thanks to its user-friendliness, it represents a valid ally in every working day," he adds.

Bypassing a technician's hourly rate spent setting up and

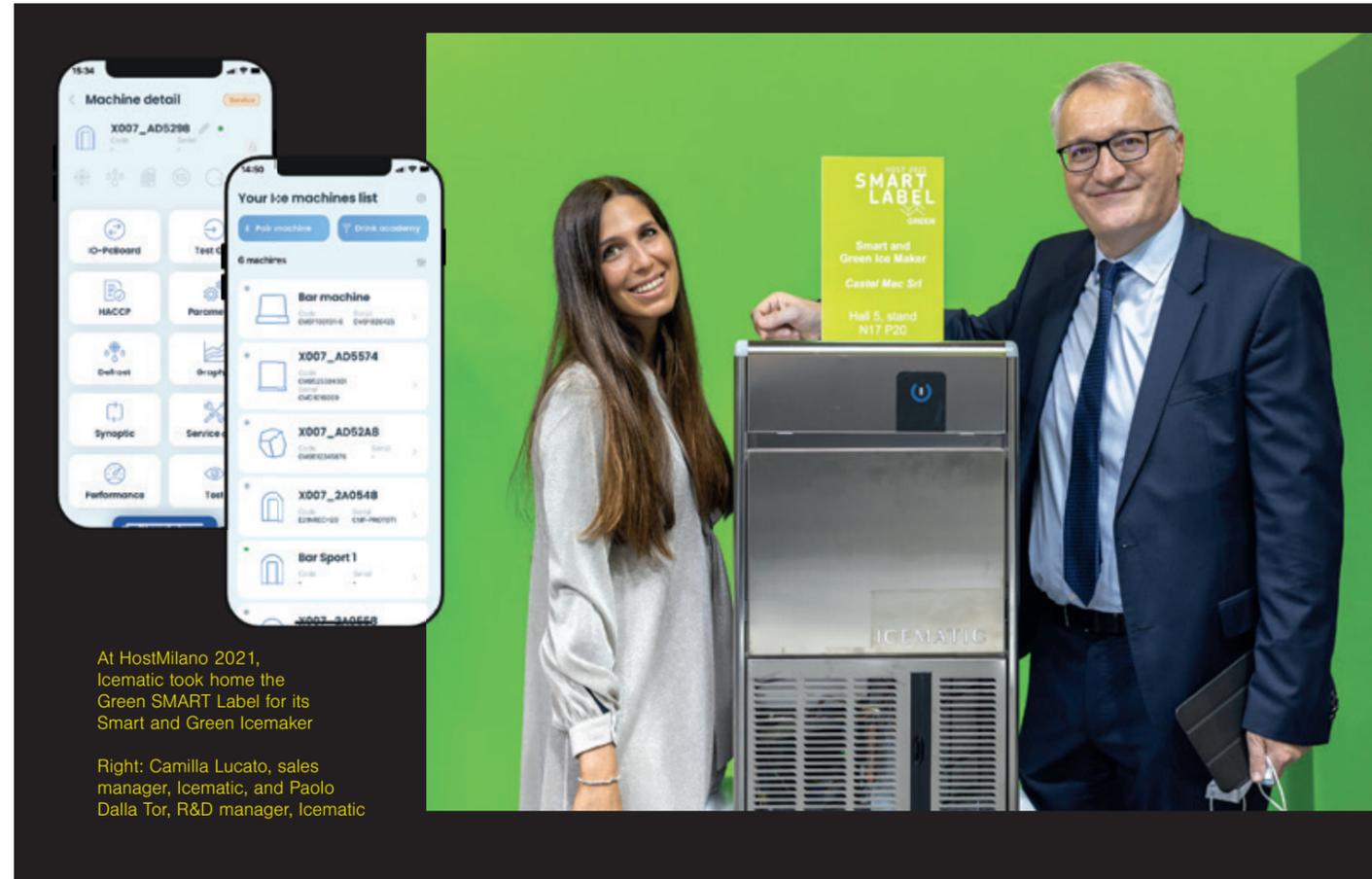
**"WE GRANT THE MACHINE CONNECTION VIA BLUETOOTH AND THE CLOUD TO CONTINUOUSLY MONITOR THE APPLIANCE'S STATUS, EVEN REMOTELY"**

monitoring machines, and finding alternative solutions to issues such as alarms and maintenance, saves on both time and cost.

"Customers will no longer have to adapt to the machine; the machine will adapt to their needs," Dalla Tor asserts.

Green by design, it has the ability to "produce ice in a defined pre-set quantity at a certain time or date, provides energy and water savings, while increasing the quality of the ice by avoiding melting," he says. Customers benefit from programmed ice production, safer ice with ozone sanitization, waste reduction and reduced electrical and water consumption.

The ice professionals have built a system to meet a broad



At HostMilano 2021, Icematic took home the Green SMART Label for its Smart and Green Icemaker

Right: Camilla Lucato, sales manager, Icematic, and Paolo Dalla Tor, R&D manager, Icematic



An optional extra on Icematic's icemakers is the use of Rainbow Technology nano-technological treatment to protect from limescale build-up

spectrum of needs, be they small eateries, supermarkets, hotels or large distribution companies.

Ali Group's collective learning in cloud-based innovation has led to the development of pioneering IoT connectivity now used by many of the company's brands. Icematic benefits from that continued development, with the future likely to bring the integration of many different appliances. "We grant the machine connection via Bluetooth and cloud access to continuously monitor the appliance's status, even remotely," says Dalla Tor. "The connected kitchen concept is not that far away."

**A place to trade ideas**

HostMilano, the biennial international trade show running

various events and competitions organized by Italian company Fiera Milano, is dedicated to the foodservice and hospitality industry. Providing businesses with a snapshot of key trends, it offers a place for the whole supply chain – from equipment and tableware to cook-offs and renowned chefs – to engage. "The main reason we attended was the opportunity of presenting new ideas and solutions dedicated to energy-saving and environmental compatibility to a large audience," says Dalla Tor.

Design and innovation are highly valued at the show, so HostMilano and POLI.design offer a series of SMART Label awards to give to the exhibition's standout suppliers.

**“THE AWARD REPRESENTS THE CONFIRMATION BY AUTHORITATIVE VOICES IN THE BUSINESS THAT THE CHOICES WE MADE WERE THE RIGHT ONES”**

Products and projects are celebrated for their functionality, technology, sustainability, ethics or social implications. And as a company that prides itself on cutting-edge product development, it was Castel MAC's turn to garner an award at last year's event, with Icematic taking home the Green SMART Label for its Smart and Green Icemaker.

Dalla Tor reflects on the resolution of a job well done, yet is mindful of the work involved in incorporating integrity into its hardware: "The award is, of course, important but also the final part of this long journey, as it represents the confirmation by authoritative voices in the business that the choices we made were the right ones." ■

**BRAND WATCH**  
**ICEMATIC**  
BE COLD WITH STYLE

**1963**  
Icematic is a division of Castel MAC, Srl, which was founded in 1963

**107**  
The company exports to more than 100 countries

**ISO 9001**  
Icematic received its ISO 9001 in 1995, a testimony to its commitment to quality

[icematic.eu](http://icematic.eu)



**STRONG CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS**

Based in Camposampiero, near Venice in northern Italy, Alberto Canton (pictured, below left), owner and chef of the renowned restaurant Bocon Divino, discusses its strong relationship with Icematic.

**Tell us about your operation. What is your unique selling point?**

I've been working with Icematic for more than 30 years, and I use machines of different sizes based on the quantity of ice needed, for every activity from bar to brewery, even at home and still today in my restaurant.

**What is it that you like so much about Icematic products? Why are they a good fit for your operations?**

You can find the ideal ice maker for every need, durable, lasting for years, with perfect bright ice suitable for a cocktail or a glacette, and possibly with a prestigious sparkling wine.

**What specific features in the new Icematic product line do you like the most and how are they helping your business?**

I believe that the new Icematic range is the result of years of experience. They are quick, efficient machines, and they never let you down. A very strong feature is that they are user-friendly for me and for all my staff.

**Why is this a good brand to partner with?**

Because this brand is reliable, historical and long-lasting.

04 Innovation

While Tecnomac's refrigeration, proofing and chilling solutions continue to be popular with bakers, their versatility and connectivity are opening up new markets, general manager Chiara Favero and R&D manager Paolo Dalla Tor tell Victoria Green



# Beyond baking



**T**ecnomac specializes in refrigeration systems and retarder proofers: high-performance machines combining maximum efficiency with low energy consumption. An Ali Group company since 2013, the Italian company exports to more than 100 countries.

"From the Americas to the Far East, the quality of our products is appreciated by thousands of customers, who recognize in our brand a reliable working partner," says general manager Chiara Favero.

At HostMilano in October, Tecnomac unveiled a new logo. With characteristic attention to detail, the 'E' in the company name was styled to look like a thermometer. "Many of our units combine a cold setting, which users can adjust at will, with a hot one," explains Favero. "This versatility allows us to be established in every sector, meeting their needs while also customizing products based on their requirements."

This is what differentiates Tecnomac from other companies in the marketplace, believes Favero. "Our flexibility is our strong point," she says. "This makes us the ideal partner for high-technical-value projects and in every situation where the quality of the product is essential. Every day our team works to achieve the best results in terms of innovation and quality, because the customer's satisfaction is our priority."

**State-of-the-art connectivity**

This approach is evident in Tecnomac's latest innovation, a new range of retarder proofers. Its 7-inch touchscreen control panel allows users to fine-tune the proofing process through a single electronic control card.

"All new machines' main components allow you to adjust chilling, warming, humidity and air speed, compared with previous ones that were just on/off," says R&D manager Paolo Dalla Tor.

"This tailored adjustment will make a significant contribution to energy savings and water savings during the humidification phase."

As well as being more sustainable, it means the retarder proofer can be adapted to a variety of applications beyond baking, such as drying



**Customer testimonial: Perotti Forneria**

The Perotti Forneria (Bakery) in Brescia, Italy, has been using Tecnomac machines for 30 years. It started using blast chillers and freezers when high customer demand made it otherwise impossible to produce sufficient stock.

"Tecnomac have very user-friendly products," says Roberto Perotti, owner of the bakery and president of the Richemont Club Italy baking association. "They help my business a lot because, with the cold technique, I can organize my night work efficiently." Without them, Perotti, believes he would need additional night workers.

As for the new line of retarder proofers, its best feature is "the very intuitive and easy-to-use touchscreen," he says. "There are so many options, you can always find the right feature for any product."

But it's not just the equipment that makes Tecnomac an excellent brand to partner with. "Their customer assistance is a strong point," Roberto adds. "At any hour and for any problem they are available – and for this job that is very important."

**"OUR AIM WAS TO ADD MORE PROGRAMMING FUNCTIONS TO BROADEN THE FIELDS OF USE AND HAVE THE ABILITY TO VENTURE INTO NEW MARKETPLACES"**

Paolo Dalla Tor

fruit, making yogurt, or maturing cured meat.

"Our aim was to add more programming functions to broaden the fields of use and have the ability to venture into new marketplaces," says Dalla Tor. "State-of-the-art connectivity will allow us to promote our machines worldwide, and to integrate them into the most complex systems."

Dalla Tor is particularly proud of how this multifunctionality anticipates customer expectations. "Previous solutions never anticipated marketplace needs, even if they were equipped with high-level content," he says. "They had success in the bakery field but could not aspire to enter into other sectors." ■

**Ultimate control at your fingertips**

Tecnomac's latest range of retarder proofers offer a multitude of functions in a single 7-inch control panel.

"The new series has two main innovations," explains R&D manager Paolo Dalla Tor. Industry 4.0 connectivity enables integration with a variety of kitchen management systems, while flexible programming means the machines can be used for more than just proofing dough.

"Temperature, humidity and ventilation control have begun to interest other sectors too, like maturing processes for cured meats and cheeses," says Dalla Tor.

"The new control board enables the user to program customized cycles, expanding the use possibilities of the equipment."



**BRAND WATCH**

**TECNOMAC**  
our technology, your taste

**35+**  
Tecnomac offers its clients more than 35 years of experience

**2013**  
Tecnomac joined the Ali Group in 2013

**ISO 9001**  
Tecnomac's devotion to quality in its products has been globally recognized with the ISO 9001 certification

tecnomac.eu

# Perfect taste



BLUE CHEF, the latest piece of deep-freezing equipment from CFI, offers artisanal food producers a helping hand with food safety, great-tasting products and the bottom line, says award-winning pastry chef **Frédéric Hawecker**

**F**rédéric Hawecker is a renowned French pastry chef, chocolatier and confectioner.

In 2019, his company was awarded the *Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant (EPV)* label, a mark of recognition from the French State to reward French firms for the excellence of their traditional and industrial know-how. Hawecker relies on CFI technology to help run his successful business. Producing original and tasty delicacies such as pralines, macarons, petits fours, savory tarts, ice creams and showstopping cakes, Hawecker emphasizes that taste and texture are paramount and working with the BLUE CHEF from CFI helps him preserve these two elements.

"The ventilation is ideal," he says, enjoying the certainty that his products will not deteriorate, dry out or get wet again. The temperature consistency also passes muster. "As far as the cold is concerned, it's perfect: no frost, it's regular and without fluctuations, it doesn't dry out, it's just perfect."

"On some appliances, we could see that the temperature rose to -15°C if we used it often. With the BLUE CHEF we see it stays at -19.5°C even if we open it often. In the morning when we take out all the products, it takes us about 10 minutes and it's always regular. The equipment has no trouble coming down in temperature."

From an aesthetic point of view, the new design offers ease of cleaning and Hawecker appreciates the intuitive handling of the new V-TOUCH control. "It's dedicated to cycle management and the advantage is that it's more visual: when you

enter the lab in the morning, you can see the temperature right away," he explains.

### Adapting to the pandemic

The project to develop this latest freezer-preserver from CFI started in June 2020, just a few months after the Covid-19 pandemic hit the world. Sébastien Audras, marketing manager at CFI (below) explains that this had an impact on the development of the BLUE CHEF, citing staff absences and the difficulty of procuring electronic components from the Asian market as an example of the challenges faced.

"The R&D phase lasted six months and a prototype was launched in April 2021," he says. "The product was installed with the first customer as a pre-serial test in July 2021 and two other items of equipment were tested in the field with users before it became available commercially in February 2022. So, the project lasted a year and a half, which is not so bad considering what was happening in the world during that time."

The team is proud of the BLUE CHEF's key technical attributes. There have been improvements in the touch control and specific ventilation system, along with improved construction and better ergonomics. The evaporator is more efficient and compact, and the design gives better access to critical parts. The design of the panels makes the connection better thereby avoiding leakage, which makes the equipment up to 10% more efficient and reduces energy consumption. The touchscreen allows access to maintenance or supervision with connectivity benefits.

And as Hawecker (top right) has discovered, the BLUE CHEF works well for his sector of



**"BLUE CHEF IS FOR PASTRY CHEFS – THEY KNOW A GOOD DEEP-FREEZING CYCLE PRESERVES THE TASTE AND APPEARANCE OF THEIR BEAUTIFUL PRODUCTS"**

Sébastien Audras

food production, just as it was designed to do.

"The BLUE CHEF is dedicated to pastry chefs as they know that a good deep-freezing cycle preserves the taste and appearance of their beautiful products," says Audras. "They know the way their pastries look helps to sell them. Keeping the appearance and taste – and being able to anticipate the production – gives them a big advantage in their business."

An important aspect of the success of the BLUE CHEF is the balance of form and function in its design. "The exterior comes directly from the BLUE MOON design, the proofing cabinet line of CFI," says Audras.

"We paid attention to the choice of colors and shapes, but we wanted to show the customer the robustness of the equipment by using metallic hinges and strong handles. We know that these components are the most stressed and customers don't like to see any weakness in parts they touch every day."

Audras has been delighted with the reaction of customers to BLUE CHEF. "We have been presenting this equipment during the annual bakery and pastry fair in Paris and our visitors were very keen on the BLUE CHEF," he says. "It looks good for the future. It will help to make the artisanal food industry healthier, safer and profitable." ■

### BRAND WATCH



**1979**

CFI was established in 1979 in Lavaveix-les-Mines, France

**2004**

The company joined forces with Pavaille and Bertrand Puma in 2004

**2007**

That group, S.E.B.P., became part of Ali Group three years later [froid-cfi.fr](http://froid-cfi.fr)



# Falcon



Falcon

Catering for All

Hydrogen-Ready Appliances

Approved by bsi.

in conjunction with EnerTek International



## Falcon delivers a greener future for foodservice

With a new range of convection ovens, an induction top, and a suite of hydrogen-powered products, Falcon Foodservice Equipment is at the cutting edge of sustainability. Douglas MacLachlan discusses why being green is the company ethos

**F**alcon Foodservice Equipment can trace its history back more than 200 years. Formed in 1819 in Falkirk, Scotland, as the Falkirk Iron Company, it began life as an iron foundry manufacturing cast-iron goods ranging from lampposts to railings. In the 1850s, it produced its first cooking range, beginning a story of innovation that continues to this day. Today, as part of the AFE Group, which itself is part of Ali Group, it operates from Stirling, in the heart of Scotland. Falcon continues to build on its reputation for reliable, innovative, and efficient products for the commercial catering industry. "To remain in business for 200 years, we have needed to evolve to meet today and tomorrow's customer demand," says Douglas MacLachlan, technical director at Falcon Foodservice Equipment.

"To evolve, we have had to understand the market needs by listening to our customers and working closely with industry bodies to enable us to continue to produce innovative, reliable, high-performing and affordable products for use now and in the future." Today, understanding customer demands means putting sustainability at the top of the agenda, and that is precisely what Falcon has done with its new range of convection ovens, a brand-new induction top, and a suite of hydrogen-powered products. "Our new products, particularly our hydrogen appliances and solid induction top, are the result of understanding that energy efficiency and lowering carbon footprint was something that was always going to move higher up everyone's agenda so we needed to have more products that will help those operators who want to improve in this area," MacLachlan says.

**"OUR NEW PRODUCTS ARE THE RESULT OF UNDERSTANDING THAT ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND LOWERING CARBON FOOTPRINT WAS SOMETHING THAT WAS ALWAYS GOING TO MOVE HIGHER UP EVERYONE'S AGENDA"**

Douglas MacLachlan

Left: Douglas MacLachlan, technical director at Falcon Foodservice Equipment

**Going beyond convention**

Falcon's development kitchen, where professional chefs rigorously test new products, has been busy of late. Part of its job has been to assess the four new models of convection ovens, comprising two oven sizes, manual and digital controls, and a host of features that make them suitable for any kitchen or front-of-house application.

"With an ever-changing catering and hospitality industry, heavier demands are placed on kitchens and services," says MacLachlan. "Adding to our existing range of convection ovens seemed the best route to help the industry tackle these challenges head on. The new models give greater flexibility within a reduced footprint and can be placed virtually anywhere."

"We have a committed team

of engineers working alongside our product development chef to design, develop and engineer efficient ovens, both in energy consumption and performance," he adds.

Two models have a digital controller enabling tighter temperature control, one has a bi-directional fan to distribute heat more evenly across the chamber, and another has a smaller chamber with an improved baffle to create even heat distribution. The FE3D and FE4D can also be connected to Falcon's Connected Kitchen, which enables measuring energy use and usage patterns. Falcon's new induction top is also part of the Connected Kitchen. It combines the usability, versatility, and power of a gas-solid top with the energy efficiency, increased controllability, cleanability and safety of induction technology.

**"ADDING TO OUR EXISTING RANGE OF CONVECTION OVENS SEEMED THE BEST ROUTE TO HELP THE INDUSTRY TACKLE THESE CHALLENGES"**

**Douglas MacLachlan**

It features multiple zones of different size and shape, with different power ratings from 7.5kw to 3kw, which allows the use of everything from a 49L, 400mm diameter stock pot down to a 0.5L, 140mm small saucepan.

"These zones have adjustable power levels, which will allow the user to heat the food product on the larger zones quickly and then move the pot or pan to a smaller zone to maintain temperature," says MacLachlan. "This allows greater flexibility while also offering the opportunity to reduce energy use."

"Induction is the most energy-efficient technology an operator can have, but the traditional circular zone models have limitations and don't provide the necessary flexibility many busy restaurants need," he adds.



**Hydrogen on the horizon**

For Falcon, sustainability means more than refining existing technologies. It also means taking bold steps into the future. In the UK, around 80% of all heat comes from gas, and the existing electricity grid currently does not have capacity to absorb high-scale transitioning from gas to electric. Now, foodservice businesses have the option to transition to a zero-carbon gas – hydrogen – with minimal disruption to their business.

Falcon has created a new hydrogen-powered product portfolio, including a new variant of the award-winning Dominator Six Burner G3101 Range, plus chargrills, griddles, grills and fryers - all designed for both on- and off-grid use.

Gas network operators are now working together with the UK Government and regulatory OFGEM to decarbonize the gas grid, and hydrogen pilot networks are being set up in parallel with increased production of low-carbon hydrogen.

"Having hydrogen appliances available at this early phase is essential for these pilot projects to go ahead," says MacLachlan. "From a catering equipment perspective, there are many benefits for cooking on hydrogen. This is a humid cooking method. Electric cooking is dry cooking."

"Some benefits were clearly identified when cooking on a 6-burner hydrogen range, as opposed to natural gas, with the flame profile encouraging better and more efficient heat distribution under the pots and pans, thus reducing heating

**"HAVING HYDROGEN APPLIANCES AVAILABLE AT THIS EARLY PHASE IS ESSENTIAL FOR THESE PILOT PROJECTS TO GO AHEAD"**

**Douglas MacLachlan**

Above: Falcon has created a new hydrogen-powered product portfolio

up and boiling times," he adds. "Naturally, with hydrogen comes the additional advantage of chamber humidity when cooking inside static ovens. This is especially beneficial for braising or roasting methods as it adds moisture into the chamber.

Early introduction of hydrogen-ready appliances will ensure gas appliance manufacture and supply will not be exposed to disruptive market forces such as anxieties amongst end-users that gas will not be available in the future.

While it is still early in the hydrogen journey for dealers or operators, Falcon is confident it will be a big part of the future of foodservice.

Making existing technology greener while looking at the future of sustainability is what Falcon does best, and the proof lies in its new offerings. ■



**BRAND WATCH**

**200+ years**  
Falcon was formed in 1819 in Falkirk, Scotland, as the Falkirk Iron Company

**ISO 9001:2015**  
Falcon's products are built in accordance with the internationally recognized ISO 9001:2015 quality management standard

**ISO 14001**  
Falcon was among the first equipment manufacturers to be awarded the prestigious ISO 14001 certification

[falconfoodservice.com](http://falconfoodservice.com)

04 Innovation

# FORM AND FUNCTION



There's no one-size-fits-all approach to kitchen design, and that's why the new M1 range can be tailored to any foodservice business's needs, **Mareno's Adriano Cenedese** tells Vicky Coulthard

**T**he modern commercial kitchen needs to work for its staff, offering peak performance and a layout that allows the food production line to flow seamlessly from prep to pass. Of course, no two kitchens are the same, so any equipment you install needs to be adaptable as well as functional, particularly if space is an issue.

The M1 range by Veneto, Italy-based firm Mareno, is a complete kitchen solution, combining refrigeration, preparation and ovens in a modular unit that can be tailored to the needs of the

business and kitchen itself. The range is the result of rigorous testing and detailed analysis of customer feedback, combining functionality, technicality, and ergonomic excellence.

"Mareno doesn't usually launch new products frequently," says Adriano Cenedese, general manager of Mareno.

"We believe in launching a new product when we're sure that its functionality, reliability and use are confirmed by many hours of field testing. In the case of the M1 line, we wanted to listen to feedback

Mareno's M1 range is a complete kitchen solution, tailored to the needs of users

**"WE BELIEVE IN LAUNCHING A NEW PRODUCT WHEN WE'RE SURE ITS FUNCTIONALITY AND RELIABILITY ARE CONFIRMED BY HOURS OF FIELD TESTING"**

collected from our customers all over the world. The result was interesting from many points of view: with functionality, we've implemented new models capable of improved performances; with technicality, we've made it easier to install, maintain and protect the internal components as much as possible from potential stress situations; and with ergonomics, we've made our kitchens beautiful, comfortable to use and easy to clean," he says. ▶

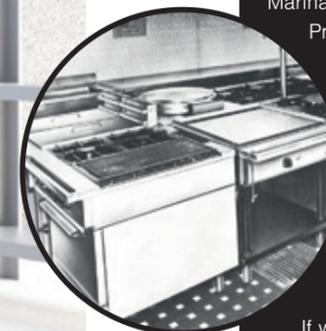
## MARENO'S ADRIANO CENEDESE CELEBRATES ITS 100-YEAR HERITAGE

Mareno's origins date back to 1922, under the name Gribaudo Domenico Cucine. It was founded by the entrepreneur Domenico Gribaudo in the Italian city of Turin. In 1962 the Gribaudo family decided to move the entire company to Veneto, to a small town named Mareno di Piave, from where they adopted the name Mareno Industriale.

This move proved to be an important turning point for the company in terms of its production. In that year Mareno Industriale decided to devote itself entirely to the professional foodservice kitchen sector in all aspects.

The 1970s saw the creation of the company's internal divisions dedicated to marine kitchens (Mareno Marina) and prefabricated and field kitchens (Mareno Pre-fab System). After a commercial expansion that began in Italy and spread abroad, in 1996 Mareno was acquired by the Ali Group – a watershed moment that saw increased investments in production and the renewal of product ranges. This led to the creation of the Star modular cooking series. In October 2021, we launched the new Mareno M1 cooking range.

If we had to highlight one characteristic that continues to define the company, after 100 years of history, that certainly would be the capacity and vocation to take care of kitchens as a whole: from refrigeration to preparation, from cooking to distribution. Originally Mareno produced the entire range of product which is indispensable and functional for chef's work: from ovens to spits, from refrigerators to the various modular kitchen functions. Although today Mareno no longer produces such different products in-house, for reasons of specialization and production efficiency, thanks to the help of its Ali Group partners it is still possible for Mareno to go to market with the same strength as 100 years ago, to design each installation with the same reliability and competence that have always distinguished Mareno as a brand.





**ANDREA BORGHI OF BEBI  
ON A WINNING PARTNERSHIP**

We chose to start our collaboration with Mareno when, a few years ago, we were at a crossroads: to continue in our day-to-day business as multi-brand resellers of medium-level professional kitchen brands, or to step onto the path of top-level installations, which would allow us to raise the quality standard of our offer. We decided to follow the latter path, which turned out to be full of opportunities.

From the very beginning, Mareno trained our staff, supported us in developing and designing layouts and offers and always focused on the real needs of our customers in terms of quality, flexibility, profitability, and performance in increasingly smaller spaces and with ever decreasing availability of electrical power.

Mareno's strong point in recent years has been its combination of Power Guardian and MyTutor, which puts technology in the hands of our customers. Using 50% of the energy required, our kitchens are always performing. They communicate with each other and optimize performance. They are always under control by our technicians and kitchen staff. They send feedback for maintenance and record operating temperatures. The HACCP data storage section is particularly useful for our customers to comply with relevant regulations. Our customers are extremely satisfied. In addition to the enormous advantages mentioned above, they have access to the Italian tax benefits and can provide considerable financial savings by recovering 40% of the investment made and drastically reduced energy costs.



**Hygiene and flexibility**

With hygiene in mind, the M1 worktop features a raised anti-flow edge so any liquid or dirt remains on the worktop instead of dripping on to the equipment and its controls. In addition, special sealing gaskets prevent seepage and dripping of dirt and liquids between each block of the unit. "At the very heart of M1 project are two concepts and characteristics that are as simple as they are essential and universally appreciated in the world of catering: hygiene and flexibility," says Cenedese. "One important feature is

undoubtedly the worktop with anti-overflow edge. The same task is carried out laterally by the shaped gaskets. Although simple, these are solutions that solve problems that are a daily routine in kitchens all over the world and restore value to a modular cooking solution, which is otherwise too often preferred to monobloc cooking suites or solid tops precisely because of an alleged lack of hygiene." In terms of functionality, the worktops, while standard 900mm height, offer a wider preparation surface without impacting on space. A rear technical

compartment accommodates the electric cables, gas, and water pipes so the power supply is protected from dirt and accidental damage. "The design has been revised in a minimalist and modern, but always functional way," says Cenedese. The technical benefits of the M1 range can be enhanced by the addition of its Power Guardian and MyTutor energy control systems. "The first allows the energy used by electrical equipment to be reduced by up to 43%, while the second monitors its operation, notifies a service centre of any

The M1 range can be enhanced by the Power Guardian and MyTutor energy control systems

**"THESE SOLUTIONS SOLVE PROBLEMS THAT ARE A DAILY ROUTINE IN KITCHENS ALL OVER THE WORLD AND RESTORE VALUE TO A MODULAR COOKING SOLUTION"**

malfunctions, schedules periodic maintenance and makes the actual energy savings accrued legible," says Cenedese. Given the rising cost of energy, which affects fixed costs and ultimately the final price of each dish, both pieces can be useful to the success of a foodservice business. "They create a healthier working environment, with significantly more comfortable working temperatures and consequent savings on the costs of airing and cooling the kitchen itself," says Cenedese. "The result? A smart, connected, safe and more economical kitchen." ■

**BRAND WATCH**



**1922**  
Mareno celebrates its 100th anniversary this year

**1996**  
The company joined the Ali Group 26 years ago

**100%**  
Mareno products are entirely manufactured in Italy  
[mareno.it](http://mareno.it)



## 04 Innovation



# MONO takes deck ovens to new heights

MONO's new Fan-Assisted Double Depth Deck Oven takes convection into the commercial baking arena, bringing major savings in time and energy. Jim Banks talks to **Simon Moon** and **Roy Kitley** about its development

**T**ime is money, especially when energy prices are soaring.

Foodservice equipment manufacturers have worked hard to improve energy efficiency in recent years, but coupling more efficient heating processes with shorter bake times is a win-win when it comes to lowering costs and improving results.

This is exactly what MONO has achieved with its latest innovation, the new Fan-Assisted Double-Depth Deck Oven. As one of the leading designers and manufacturers of bakery equipment in the UK, MONO has a long history in the development of rack, convection and deck ovens. Its latest innovation combines two areas of expertise to deliver efficiencies beyond any expectations.

"It is an idea that our development team came up with a few years ago," says Simon Moon, MONO Equipment's UK sales director.

"We wondered what the benefits would be if we added convection technology to a traditional deck oven to make it bake faster. The prototype delivered shorter bake times, which is a real advantage, and then we did some energy testing and that really caught our imagination," says Moon.

The new oven features two perfectly balanced fans that circulate hot air evenly around the products during the bake cycle. The result is shorter warm up and bake times, and a huge overall improvement in energy efficiency.

Independent testing showed that the oven typically warms up 40% faster than a traditional deck oven, and bake times can be up to 25% shorter. The result is potential energy savings of up to 50%.

"An average bloomer bakes in 22 minutes rather than 35 minutes," says Roy Kitley, senior marketing manager at MONO Equipment.

"We expected it to do as well, but not to exceed competitors in terms of quality, but blind taste-tests showed that products baked in our fan-assisted deck oven were consistently marked higher for aroma, flavor and texture."



MONO's new oven features two perfectly balanced fans that circulate hot air evenly around the products during the bake cycle



**"BLIND TASTE-TESTS SHOWED PRODUCTS BAKED IN OUR FAN-ASSISTED DECK OVEN WERE CONSISTENTLY MARKED HIGHER FOR AROMA, FLAVOR AND TEXTURE"**

Roy Kitley

### Significant energy efficiencies

The new model is the result of a two-year collaboration between MONO and one of the UK's leading supermarket chains. The goal was to deliver significant energy efficiencies, cut baking times and improve overall bake quality and, therefore, yield.

"We took our concept to a number of our major retail customers and one in particular saw the potential and wanted to work with us," says Moon. "We have the technical

expertise, and they could help with bake quality and experience in their bakeries. For instance, they did not want to turn trays around in the oven during the bake cycle."

This collaboration led to many new features being incorporated into the design. For example, the open steam generator is far easier to maintain, and a higher bottom deck and a lower top deck loading height greatly improves operator handling.

With its touchscreen interface and pre-programmed settings that make it easy even for a novice to use, the oven is ideally suited to MONO's large retail customers.

At the same time, however, operators can customize all settings, so artisan bakers can create their perfect, bespoke products.

"We have done a full year in the supermarket environment and now we are ready to offer it to the bakery world, whether they are a large retailer or a small artisan baker," says Moon.

"It fits in every bakery in the country, so who wouldn't want it?" ■

## BRAND WATCH

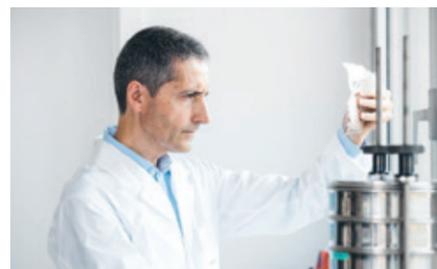


**1947**  
MONO Equipment was founded 75 years ago in UK

**300+**  
MONO has more than 300 products in its standard range

MONO is the UK's leading designer and manufacturer of bakery equipment  
[monoequip.com](http://monoequip.com)

04 Innovation



# Certified to deliver the desired flavor

Rancilio Group listens to its customers in its quest to keep its professional coffee machines on top. Now the Specialty Coffee Association has certified the Rancilio Specialty RS1 Espresso Machine so Rancilio Group customers can serve their clientele with the coffee that keeps them coming back



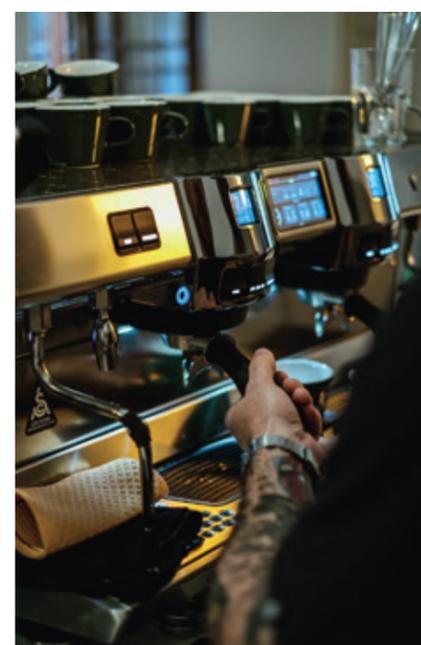
Above: Carlos González, Rancilio Group's coffee competence manager

**S**erving the best coffee has always been important in Italy. It is also catching on around the rest of the world, even in traditional tea drinking countries, such as Japan and China, as people everywhere wake up to the fact that a well-brewed cup of coffee is a delicious way to start the day. As a manufacturer of professional coffee machines, Rancilio Group has played a part in spreading the popularity of coffee. The good news is that the Rancilio Specialty RS1 has passed Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) tests and is now an SCA-

certified espresso machine. Rancilio Group CEO Ruggero Ferrari said: "We are proud of this prestigious recognition and of becoming one of the few SCA-certified espresso machines, with our Rancilio Specialty RS1." Thanks to the patented Advanced Temperature Profiling technology, the RS1 allows customization of each espresso recipe by adjusting different temperature profiles, as well as regulating pre-infusion and post-infusion. The barista can increase or decrease the water temperature during the extraction phase by up to 5°C (9°F). By adjusting the temperature, variable results can be achieved in terms of sweetness, acidity, body,



The Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) has certified the Rancilio Specialty RS1 Espresso Machine



**BRAND WATCH**  
**RANCILIOGROUP**

**115**  
 Rancilio Group manufactures and sells professional coffee machines in over 115 countries

**7**  
 Rancilio Group has seven branch offices, two R&D centers, an Extraction Lab and a global sales and service network

**4**  
 With four brands, Rancilio has a wide range of products for every customer need

[rancioliogroup.com](http://rancioliogroup.com)

bitterness, and astringency. Carlos González is Rancilio Group's coffee competence manager, working in the Extraction Lab in Milan. "The Rancilio Specialty RS1 features patented Advanced Temperature profiling technology," he says. "During extraction we can adjust the temperatures and process for the desired flavor profile."

**"WE CAN MODULATE THE TEMPERATURES AND ADJUST FOR THE DESIRED FLAVOR PROFILE"**  
 Carlos González

**Aromas and tastes**  
 González works closely with the sales team to create proposals and test roasters' coffees to enhance the sensory profile of their coffee during extraction. The team can then pass on to customers the best way to make their coffee with Rancilio equipment. "Different countries enjoy their coffee in different ways. From the US to Italy espresso is something different," he says.

"In Italy the roasting and brewing is set to bring out the pastry nuances, such as vanilla, cocoa, hazelnut. Other countries i.e., UK, north Europe, prefer a more fragrant acidic taste – a lighter coffee. The preferred profile in the US is a juicy, sweet, rounded flavor."

One of González's favorite parts of his job is meeting customers to demonstrate the reliability of Rancilio's machines and how the performance can be adjusted to their needs. It can lead to long-term collaboration. "For me the most interesting moment is when a new customer says they're satisfied with our products, based on the results in the cup," he says. "I'm fortunate to work in something where I learn something new every day."

**Profiling and pre-infusion**  
 Profiling up – increasing the water temperature during the extraction phase – enhances washed and delicate coffees. There is more body and a greater

complexity. Profiling down is when the water temperature is decreased when the main extraction phase is exhausted. This helps to keep bitter and astringent flavors under control.

The barista can vary the water pressure during the initial (pre-infusion) stage of the extraction process. This endows the cup of espresso with the following advantages:

- dampens the ground coffee puck evenly all over
- reduce the risk of channeling
- ensures more oils are transferred into the cup
- forms a good crema on the espresso shot
- enhances baristas' skills and helps them work with all types of coffee

The coffee-making process is subject to many variables, from the circumstances in which the bean is grown and harvested to roasting, grinding and brewing. Using a Rancilio professional espresso machine such as the RS1 provides control, resulting in stability and precision in the cup. However, a machine does not smile when handing the coffee to the customer. Nothing can replace the importance of human relationships.

As González says: "If I'm drinking an espresso prepared with a specialty coffee, I want the barista to explain to me what I can expect in the cup – introduce me to the specialty espresso." ■

## 04 Innovation



# A slice of life

When it comes to pizza, it's best served hot from the oven – and the Helios 530 can serve 70 an hour, OEM's **Michele Guccerelli** tells Vicky Coulthard



**T**he perfect pizza, according to Italian chef Giorgio Locatelli, is a balance between a thin, crisp base and a softer garnish. The perfect pizza oven, meanwhile, is a balance of aesthetics and powerful performance.

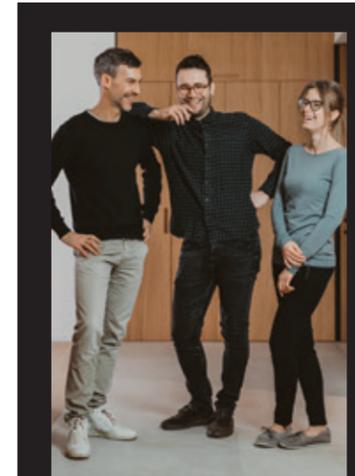
In its quest for perfection, Mantua, Italy-based firm OEM has collaborated with industrial design group Whynot Design to conceive the new Helios 530, a professional electric pizza oven with a rotating plate that can bake up to 70 pizzas an hour. The challenge for Whynot – which has offices in Milan and Venice, and clients including Carpigiani, Esmach, and Iceteam 1927 – was to style the product to combine visual excitement with the emotional draw of a traditional pizza oven.

The result is a high-performing and adaptable product with a strong, clear identity.

Michele Guccerelli, sales director at OEM, says, “Helios is the Greek god of the sun, and we have been inspired by that because of the heat – Helios can reach 530°C – and its rotating plate, like the earth rotating around the sun.”

The rotating 19mm refractory stone plate offers effective, even baking without the need to move the pizza while it's cooking – including for the thin yet chewy Neapolitan-style pizza. This is due to its single chamber, like a truncated prism, which optimizes heat distribution and heat output.

The Helios is also shaped in such a way that it can be recessed into a wall or positioned in a corner if kitchen space is



OEM worked with the team at industrial design group Whynot (above) to create the Helios oven (left) and spiral mixer (right)



### IN THE MIX

OEM's new spiral mixer is another adaptable design collaboration with Whynot. “The main guideline is to have a spiral mixer that is suitable for all types of dough: the classic dough with a hydration between 50% and 60%, but also the high-hydrated dough that can reach 90% hydration,” says OEM's Michele Guccerelli. “Our target is still the pizza restaurant, which in recent years has enlarged its offerings. There is a demand for a spiral mixer capable of handling different types of products.”

limited – making it ideal for staff canteens, small pizzerias, and restaurants and diners with a dedicated pizza preparation area.

Guccerelli asked the Whynot team to free themselves from the cold and technical style associated with professional kitchen appliances that are characterized by elementary shapes and stainless steel.

Francesco Costacurta, senior industrial designer at Whynot, says: “The basic idea arose from the study of the pizza oven market in which we found a strong contrast between total stainless-steel products and more traditional handcrafted products made as unique masonry pieces.

“Our goal was clear right from the start: to create a product capable of combining these two extremes,” he says.

“The choice of material was decisive. Starting from the advantages offered by sheet metal, we chose to create the

**“OEM APPRECIATED OUR ABILITY TO LISTEN AND ADAPT TO CUSTOMER NEEDS. OEM HAS A VERY COMPETENT R&D DEPARTMENT THAT CAN UNDERSTAND THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF A GOOD DESIGN PROJECT”**

Francesco Costacurta

furnace dome by exploring new and more elaborate metal finishes for a precious and warm result in contrast with the cold technicality of steel. This allowed us to give the product a much more human and emotional touch, which undoubtedly gave a strong identity and a recognizable style to Helios.”

Guccerelli is pleased that both form and function were addressed in the finished product. “The most appreciated characteristics are the design, which allows Helios to be installed in very different types of restaurants, and its performance

and simplicity of use,” he says.

The entire project, from initial design to completion, took approximately eight months. “A successful project is born from a mix of skills,” says Costacurta.

“However, a close-knit team and maximum trust between the various professionals are needed. I believe OEM immediately appreciated our ability to listen and adapt to customer needs. For its part, OEM has a very competent R&D department that's able to understand the strategic value of a good design project.” ■

### BRAND WATCH

**80+**  
OEM's products are marketed in more than 80 countries worldwide



**2,000+**  
ovens are sold every year, plus 1,200 prep items

**49 years**  
Founded in 1973, OEM will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2023

OEM is one of the world's leading manufacturers of pizza equipment.  
[oemali.com](http://oemali.com)

## 04 Innovation

# Kitchen sync

When the team at Hotel Ludwigshof went in search of a talented supplier to take on a high-tech kitchen renovation, Olis came up with an unbeatable combination of practical know-how, topped off with a significant dusting of finesse, the hotel's owner Christian Ludwig tells Isobel Clark



**N**estled in the South Tyrolean lowlands of northern Italy, under the majestic gaze of the Dolomites, Hotel Ludwigshof occupies a prime spot in the Trudner Horn Nature Reserve. From its lofty perch of 1,100 meters, it has long attracted hikers, climbers, mountain bikers

and even motorbikers – such is the allure of the mountainous embrace of the area. Since 1979, a steady flow of guests has passed through the hotel's doors, prompting the extensive renovation carried out in recent years. The 60 bright, well-equipped bedrooms are available for 10 months out of

12. The hotel also serves fresh, contemporary dishes of Italian and South Tyrolean cuisine. So, naturally, its catering facilities – and how best to do justice to the kitchen – needed careful consideration. The owner of Hotel Ludwigshof, Christian Ludwig, was extremely thorough in

his quest to secure the right partner. It was not until Ludwig was introduced to catering manufacturer Olis, through supplier company Novacold, that he felt a connection. "We began to discuss and refine the project, in a constructive way, solving issues as they arose," says Ludwig.



### THE SERVICE POINT OF VIEW

Alessandro Stefani, service manager, Olis, has closely followed the evolution of the Olis Cloud system. "Olis Cloud has been made possible thanks to interaction with the equipment and report monitoring from various installations around the world, as well as collaboration with dealers, importers and service centers. The goal is to become more customer-driven and retain partners with cutting-edge services and technologies, which facilitates work and improves performance," he says.

### A meeting of minds

A starting point of tentative negotiation ensued between the two parties, with Olis doing its utmost to meet the criteria. According to area sales manager Igor De Martin, this resulted in "the moment of greatest professional growth because it allows us to collect the real needs of the market."

"Specifically, the availability of equipment that can be connected, monitored and controlled remotely was from the first moment the center of the whole project," he adds. But it was several months of honing the finer details before the renovation actually began.

Components and sensors were used to connect the company's 4.0 Ready series of cooking equipment. Primed for access via the Olis Cloud, it focuses

on customer safety, low energy consumption and improved working conditions.

High levels of tech and quality control ensure temperature and other parameters can be programmed and monitored securely, both remotely and on the machine itself. The range also conforms to the Industry 4.0 technology transfer center certified by the Italian Ministry of Economic Development.

Marco D'Ambrogio, general manager of Olis, explains why this compliance is future-proof. "The possibilities offered by data management are many; the advantages go beyond the performance and reliability of the equipment."

The cloud not only helps with routine maintenance and software updates but also "the monitoring of working

**“THE POSSIBILITIES OFFERED BY DATA MANAGEMENT ARE MANY; THE ADVANTAGES GO BEYOND THE PERFORMANCE AND RELIABILITY OF THE EQUIPMENT”**

**Marco D'Ambrogio**

mode and resource optimization in the kitchen," while portal access is user-friendly, allowing for varying levels of ability.

### A dream for the team

For the food and beverage team, ease of cleaning and the overarching control panel conserve both time and energy.

Data previously hidden is visible. "Our team has a high-quality kitchen, easy to use and very responsive," says Ludwig.

"It was a wonderful discovery and allows us to work in a different way."

An unexpected powerhouse turned out to be an intuitive piece of hardware called the Fit Pan Multifunction, which covers everything from boiling and braising to slow cooking.

"We can do excellent sous-vide cooking at low temperatures at night or during the dead times of the day," says Ludwig, who considers it to be a "wild card that supports us if there is a need for small and quick preparations: a real discovery."

With such a positive outcome, Olis can be confident in its scope to meet the ever-changing face of market demand. ■

## BRAND WATCH



*we*innovate cooking

**1972**

Olis celebrates its 50th anniversary this year

**150+**

4.0 connectable equipment units available in the standard Olis catalog (cooking and refrigeration)

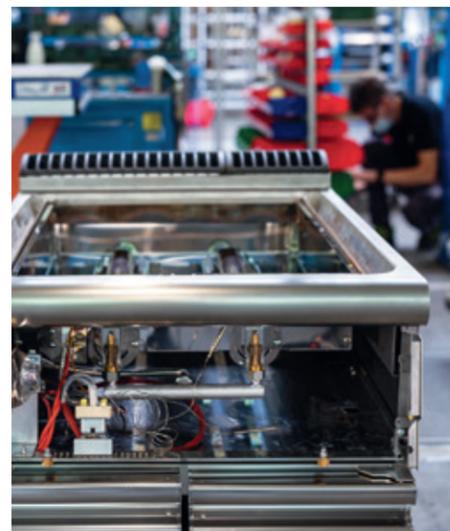
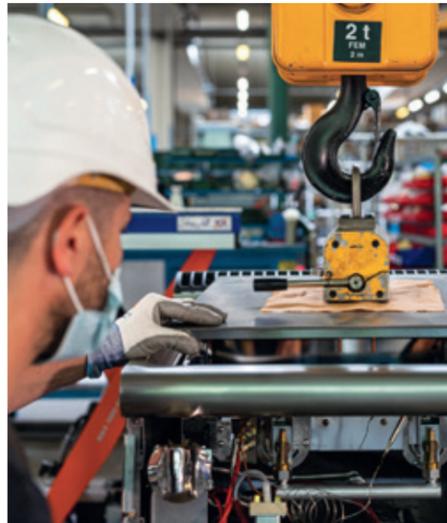
**2021**

Last year, Olis put on the market a complete range of 4.0 connectable products for the HoReCa world with Olis Cloud System

[olis.alibelluno.it](http://olis.alibelluno.it)



## 04 Innovation



# All in the details

By listening to its customers, Baron has created an innovative range of chef-friendly tools, the company's **Marco D'Ambrogio** tells **Vicky Coulthard**

**C**leaning is one of the most important tasks in any working kitchen, and the more efficient the process can be, the better. But it helps if the equipment is easy to keep clean in the first place.

Baron's Fry Top has clever design details that facilitate improved cleaning of the cooking area and reduce heat loss from the plate itself. What's more, because the plate has gas burners underneath, the temperature can rise rapidly, and there's a more uniform heat distribution thanks to the particular configuration of the plate and the position of the thermal groups.

Marco D'Ambrogio, general manager at Baron, says: "Cooking on the plate is a tradition that's widespread in practically all cultures. The Fry Top was born from a market need, which required a product with new characteristics and performance. The research and development stemmed from listening to partners and chefs. At trade fairs and events, we presented prototypes that

gradually improved and adapted to the real needs of the sector," says D'Ambrogio.

### Temperature adjustment

The development wasn't straightforward by any means as the Covid-19 pandemic paused progress on the Fry Top project until March 2021. Adamo Zoccolan, operation and R&D manager at Baron, explains: "From that date, our R&D department started working at full capacity to develop the first working machines to be tested in the laboratory and then presented them at the prestigious Host 2021 show in Milan."

Among the technical aspects that make the Fry Top appealing

**"A MIX OF SIMPLE TECHNOLOGIES AND EXCLUSIVE SOLUTIONS MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN A VERSATILE AND MULTIPURPOSE PRODUCT"**

**Marco D'Ambrogio**

are its tilted plate, which slopes towards a perimeter channel in order to drain fat, sauces and dressings into the wide collection drawer designed just for that purpose; stable flame burners with piezo-electric ignition; and adjustable temperature variable power tap or thermostat, to be chosen according to the type of cooking.

### The small details

"This set of innovations has allowed a significant improvement in comfort for the end user, thanks to a decrease in the heat transmitted outside the cooking area," says Zoccolan.

"The floodable perimeter channel also guarantees a better outflow of cooking fat and greater simplicity when cleaning the plate. These are small details that create a chef-friendly tool.

"The way it was conceived and manufactured, the product has also made any maintenance of the equipment extremely simple, thanks to the presence of the removable plate that allows for an easily accessible space for all needs, including cleaning and maintenance," he says.

D'Ambrogio adds that custom additions are also available. "We offer accessories that make the product even more unique: a water-filling kit to fill the grease collection duct with water and a continuous drain for cooking residues."

### Exclusive solutions

With the success of the Fry Top, Baron is now working on an oven for horizontal cooking. Zoccolan explains: "Due to its application and technical characteristics, it is an innovative product that reconciles a series of specifications aimed at developing a versatile, performing product, with particular attention to aspects

related to cleaning. It's already piqued the attention of our partners, who have perceived how much it will help the kitchen brigades to organize themselves in an even more efficient way."

The Super Grill is another project that has engaged the Baron R&D team in the past months, which Zoccolan says has led to another "unique result." The Super Grill has four types of griddles available – including cast iron and stainless steel – for cooking meat and fish. Smoking can also be installed on certain models to add a barbecue flavor. "It's a mix of simple technologies and exclusive solutions that has made it possible to obtain a versatile and multipurpose product," says Zoccolan.

"We're proud of these innovations, of the solutions we have found and of the new opportunities we offer to the market. The Baron team is, once again, unique." ■

## BRAND WATCH



**1995**

Baron began designing and manufacturing professional kitchens in 1995

**70+**

Countries in the world where Baron is exported

**1400+**

Different products in the Baron catalog produced in its Belluno plant

[baron.alibelluno.it](http://baron.alibelluno.it)

## 04 Innovation

# Completing the green circle

Art Huisjes, international sales manager at Rendisk, tells Vicky Coulthard how the firm's food waste and dish handling technology is providing smart, sustainable and efficient solutions for hotels, schools and hospitals



Rendisk's waste-handling products can reduce organic kitchen waste to about 7% of its original volume, turning it into fertilizer or fuel



**W**ith more than one million visitors every year, the 160-plus resorts operating on the different atolls of the Maldives have their work cut out catering to their tourist clientele.

What's more, climate change means the majority of its islands are at risk of flooding as sea levels continue to rise, which means the government has had to take drastic measures to ensure the atolls' survival – including a sustainable waste management plan and an ambitious goal to reach net zero by 2030.

Rendisk, the Netherlands-based food waste management

and dish handling specialist, is currently working on a project in the Maldives to help it tackle its garbage problem, caused by organic and food waste being disposed of in the turquoise waters surrounding the islands.

Art Huisjes, international sales manager at Rendisk, explains: "All the hotels and resorts have to be self-supporting because there is no infrastructure at the base.

"An enormous amount of organic waste is created in the kitchens of these hotels, in combination with the leftovers from hotel guests, and dumped into the sea – with all the consequences that has. The local fishing industry, for

example, is suffering as a result. The government of the Maldives has now determined that all hotels and resorts must come up with a solution for this food waste problem."

### A positive impact on the footprint

Rendisk's waste-handling products can reduce organic kitchen waste to about 7% of its original volume and turn it into something more useful – for instance, fertilizer or fuel. "Just the fact that you can go from 13 containers of waste to one full container already has an enormous positive impact on the footprint that we leave behind," says Huisjes.

"Rendisk has systems whereby the ground food waste is used to generate biogas, which can then be used to provide gas for your own facilities or, in the case of smaller systems, to heat the dishwasher, for example."

One Maldives resort for which Rendisk has developed a solution consists of individual buildings that house several kitchen areas. There are also four waste locations where guests' leftovers are collected. In these stations, the organic waste is ground, and this residue is transported through a 50mm PVC pipeline to a collection unit. The pipelines are mounted along the ceilings,

walls and floors, and buried under the ground to connect to the other buildings. "Rendisk systems use a very simple piping system for this purpose, so it can easily be fitted into existing buildings at any time and in any setting," says Huisjes.

From the collection unit, the residue is then further dewatered and dehydrated to produce a dry mass, which is mixed with all the green material from the gardens (such as branches and leaves). "This is shredded and then applied to the flowerbeds and borders as fertilizer." "This completes the green circle," says Huisjes.

Rendisk's waste stations can be integrated into almost any

**"THE FLEX TRAYBOT IS A PERFECT ADDITION TO THE LOGISTICAL SYSTEMS THAT RENDISK ALREADY OFFERS. THE BIG ADVANTAGE IS THAT STAFF NO LONGER NEED TO REPEAT THE SAME ACTION"**

Art Huisjes

dishwashing and conveying technology, including its own Flex TrayBot, an automated logistics solution that loads and unloads food trays for washing. It's ideal for use in large organizations such as hospitals and hotels where meals are offered three times a day.

"The Flex TrayBot is a perfect addition to the logistical systems that Rendisk offers," says Huisjes. "The advantage is staff don't need to repeat the same action over and over and can be deployed in a better and more efficient way. Moreover, this system always works. It's never sick and always shows up. It doesn't know what a bad Monday morning looks like." ■

### BRAND WATCH



**1973**

Rendisk was established nearly 50 years ago in Ruurlo, the Netherlands

**7%**

Rendisk's waste-handling products can reduce organic kitchen waste to about 7% of original volume

**1**

13 containers of waste can be reduced to just one full container with Rendisk's waste-handling solution

[rendisk.com](http://rendisk.com)

04 Innovation



# CENTURY OF

This year, commercial kitchen equipment specialist Metos is celebrating its 100th anniversary. To mark the occasion, marketing director **Juha Björklund** takes Victoria Green through the company's progress from small family business to market leader

## 1922

**Metos supplies kitchen equipment for the Helsinki Summer Olympics, but the games are called off due to World War II**



**Aare Leikola and partners found Oy Metalliteos**

## 1940



# CHANGE



Metos' production remains based in two sites in Finland: Kerava (pictured, left) and Sorsakoski

**A** hundred years is a long time in business: Milestones of this significance aren't reached simply by chance. Looking back at Metos' long history validates the maxim that the most successful, sustainable businesses are those that have the agility and the foresight to move with the times.

The company that would become Metos formed in 1922, not long after Finland gained independence from Russia, and in subsequent decades it would contend with war, recession, and many other challenges. It would develop from a family business started by Aare Leikola into a listed company and later part of the Ali Group.

"The company's legal name may have changed over the years," says marketing director Juha Björklund, "but the brand,

Metos, has established itself as the number-one expert in the professional kitchen industry and one of the largest European companies in the field."

Production remains based at two sites in Finland: Kerava, which manufactures equipment and appliances – primarily food kettles, pressure cookers, cold counters, refrigerated drawers and kitchen trolleys – and Sorsakoski, which makes stainless steel kitchen furniture.

"Our main product group is Metos Proveno combi kettles and their accessories, which can be used to integrate the kettles into larger-scale food production," says Björklund. "In this sector, we are one of the pioneers on a global scale, pointing the way for the development of a modern professional kitchen."

That pioneering spirit was evident from the beginning, says Björklund, who compares Metos' origins to the start-ups of today. "In 1922, the founders did not



have much capital, but they had ideas and perseverance."

Stainless steel was the revolutionary new material of the time, and Metos was one of the first to learn how to work with it. Starting with miscellaneous jobs such as producing metal buttons for soldiers' uniforms, by the mid-1920s Metos was making kitchen furniture and appliances, although "professional kitchens were quite modestly equipped" in those days, says Björklund, with many still relying on wood-burning stoves.

Gradually, though, Metos grew into Finland's largest stainless steel processor. Its status would appear to be confirmed when it was commissioned to supply equipment to the 1940 Olympic Games in Helsinki – but then war was declared, and Metos pivoted to supply the army instead with (among other things) generators, fireplaces, mine shells, parts for gas masks and skis. (The postponed games were finally held in 1952, with Metos as kitchen equipment supplier.)

**Postwar expansion**

The decades following the war were a time of optimism and reconstruction. It was during this period that Metos made some key innovations that continue to define its culture today.

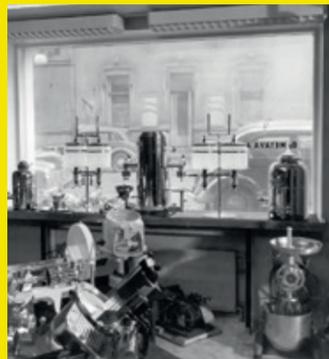
One was a focus on training. In the 1950s Metos launched maintenance training, set up a vocational school to plug gaps in expertise, and helped produce teaching materials for schools.

Then, in the early 1960s, Metos created a new maintenance service unit to accommodate a major change in the company's business model.

"Instead of selling individual ▶

**"METOS IS THE NUMBER-ONE EXPERT IN THE PROFESSIONAL KITCHEN INDUSTRY AND ONE OF THE LARGEST EUROPEAN COMPANIES"**

**Juha Björklund**



Metos' involvement in M&A saw the company grow into one of the largest in the industry in Europe

# 1950

The Helsinki Olympics are finally held, with Metos as kitchen equipment supplier

# 1959

Metos begins expanding abroad, establishing a subsidiary in Sweden

# 1982

Metos merges with competitor Hackman to form Hackman Metos Oy

# 2002

The Ali Group acquires the Hackman Group and its subsidiary Metos

Metos launches its customer magazine *Metos Uutiset* (News), which is still published today

# 1952

Metos is acquired by Instrumentarium Oy, becoming part of a listed company

# 1972

Metos' exports overtake domestic sales

# 1994

Metos Center built in Kerava

# 2004

appliances, we started selling the entire kitchen – so, we started talking about kitchen projects,” says Björklund. “With the development of kitchen planning and other services, Metos was required to play the role of expert instead of just supplier of equipment. Particular attention was paid to the competence of staff, and this was reflected in both recruitment and training.”

By the time Metos began to offer full kitchen-planning services, it had begun developing a sales department much like the one that exists today, opening sales offices throughout Finland. In the 1970s, Metos began to expand abroad, establishing a subsidiary in Sweden and acquiring a refrigeration factory there, as well as buying a stake in a Norwegian company. “By 1982, Metos’ exports were higher than domestic sales,” says Björklund.

A key growth area at this time was the shipping industry, and a separate marine department was established to cater to the growing number of luxury cruise ships equipped with Metos kitchens. The Finnish dining sector also took off, and Metos created a division to serve the new customer base of privately owned restaurants and cafes.

“The timing was right,” says Björklund. “Towards the end of the 1980s the Finnish restaurant market began to develop rapidly.” The company started building kitchens for the retail sector, chiefly grocery stores. This period of expansion came to a halt in the early 1990s when the Finnish economy suffered an unprecedented recession due to changes in the financial markets and a stagnation of trade in the Soviet Union – a key market for Metos, which saw the market for commercial kitchen appliances fall as public and private sectors reined in investment.



Above: the Cold Drawer Metos Classic. Below: Jarkko Ahlsten, CEO of Metos Group

### Investing in the future

A solution was found in 1994 when Metos merged with a competitor to form Hackman Metos. “This created a company large enough to have the resources to go international and export Finnish professional kitchen know-how to the world,” says Björklund. It also gave Metos the opportunity to be actively involved in mergers and acquisitions (M&A). The company quickly grew into one of the largest in the industry in Europe, thanks to a series of acquisitions starting in the 1990s.

In the new millennium, now part of Ali Group, Metos invested heavily, not just in acquisitions but by building the Metos Center in Kerava – Europe’s largest sales exhibition and training center for the commercial kitchen industry.

Metos employs 750 people and is the market leader in the Nordic, Baltic and Benelux countries. Its business rests on three pillars – equipment and project sales, services, and manufacturing – which combine to offer a complete solution for commercial kitchens. “We can

### BRAND WATCH



### A market leader in Scandinavia, the Baltics and Benelux

One of the main brands in the hospitality sector in Europe, Metos has more than 100 years of experience and vast technological competence to supply professional kitchens capable of delivering the best results, improving its clients' workflow and profitability.

[metos.com](http://metos.com)



serve our customers throughout the lifecycle of the kitchen,” says Björklund. “The regular maintenance services we provide maintain the reliability of the kitchen and thus help to save on operating costs. Our intelligent information systems, which act as cloud services, also help our customers run daily routines – for example, digital HACCP and food waste monitoring, real-time service history, operating instructions and user instruction videos in the online services,” says Jarkko Ahlsten, CEO of Metos.

Much of Metos’ innovation extends beyond individual product launches to processes covering the entire kitchen. “It’s not enough these days just to have the best kettle. Alongside the products, we have developed our services in kitchen planning, training, project deliveries and maintenance, so we offer customers a comprehensive, cost-effective package supporting the sustainable development of the kitchen. With these investments, we are increasing our market share in our second century, which has just begun,” says Björklund. ■

**“THE REGULAR MAINTENANCE SERVICES WE PROVIDE MAINTAIN THE RELIABILITY OF THE KITCHEN AND THUS HELP TO SAVE ON OPERATING COSTS”**

Jarkko Ahlsten

# 05

Aliworld



## Ice-O-Matic HATTIE B'S: ICE, SPICE, AND ALL THINGS NICE

Spicy chicken demands to be paired with an ice-cold drink – and in the Southern US, only the best ice will do. That's why Hattie B's, a family-owned Nashville hot chicken business, loves its Ice-O-Matic GEM2006 Pearl Ice Maker, dubbed the Pearlstorm.

Thanks to the Pearlstorm, a neat machine only 2.5ft wide, Hattie B's is able to deliver around 2,000lbs of ice a day for its cold drinks.

For Brian Morris (pictured above), vice president of culinary, learning and development at Hattie B's, this fantastic equipment is helping to propel the business's growth: "The faster we can grow our incredible team at Hattie B's and pour into them the right tools and development and technologies like this awesome Ice-O-Matic chewable ice, the faster we will be able to scale that experience," Morris enthuses.

[iceomatic.com](http://iceomatic.com)



Above: The Pearlstorm keeps drinks at Hattie B's ice cold



## Belshaw Donuts drive demand for Dutchman Hospitality

Through its restaurants, inns, and even a theater, Ohio-based Dutchman Hospitality is not only sharing Amish and Mennonite traditions but also cultivating demand for its donuts, specially prepared with Belshaw equipment.

Mike Miller, vice president of operations for Dutchman Hospitality, says: "Fans come from all over the state and surrounding areas due [not only] to the quality, but also the massive size, of our donuts."

Of Belshaw, company president Mike Palmer says: "Their service department has served us well. We have been able to access key folks within the Belshaw organization for assistance when needed."

The donuts are proving so popular that the company now sells them in markets and convenience stores, creating greater visibility for the brand, driving more customers to its bakeries and restaurants.

[belshaw.com](http://belshaw.com)

## Beverage-Air Creating a new image

LA-Mex restaurant chain El Pollo Loco knew exactly where to look when redesigning its kitchens. But finding custom refrigeration might have been a challenge given the high temperatures produced by its grills, which fire huge quantities of chicken every day.

It quickly became apparent that Beverage-Air, which has been an equipment provider to El Pollo Loco throughout its 45 years in business, had the perfect options for its various-sized sites. "Beverage-Air's equipment always fits our needs well," says Brian Carmichall, chief development officer. "The company makes solid, durable equipment at a fair price, and this hit a sweet spot for us [with the new prototypes]."

Diane Lyons, senior designer of TriMark Orange County, to whom El Pollo Loco outsources kitchen design, adds: "Beverage-Air products have been great for El Pollo Loco as these units are available for us, priced well, great value, and hold temperatures reliably."

[beverage-air.com](http://beverage-air.com)



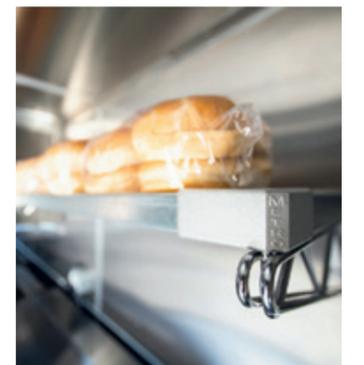
Left: Beverage-Air's refrigeration units hit a sweet spot for El Pollo Loco (above)

## Metro REEF Technology and Metro – great things come in small packages

"We had to think of some new solutions to help them get as much as they possibly can in this tight space – every inch counts," says Lauren Noreika, national strategic accounts manager for Metro, of the challenges of designing ghost kitchens for REEF Technology. REEF has opened a series of delivery-only restaurants that operate out of shipping containers no larger than four to six parking spaces – otherwise known as ghost kitchens.

Ghost kitchens reduce overhead costs for businesses as there is no need for front-of-house space, but the limited size of the container posed challenges for the kitchen designers. With REEF, Noreika and the Metro team developed an innovative vertical SmartWall® shelving system. This means no space in the compact kitchen is wasted, and customers can enjoy great food fast, from the comfort of their homes.

[metro.com](http://metro.com)



## Silko BY THE SEA

Set in the Italian seaside area of Milano Marittima, Filo di Vento is managed by Raffaella Saragoni along with her husband and son. Creating this family-run restaurant has been the fulfillment of their dream, and their dedication is evident in the food they serve. The kitchen is entirely equipped with Silko-branded products thanks to dealer representative Mazzotti, who knew the design and quality of all-Silko branded equipment would satisfy this dedicated client. Filo di Vento has chosen all Silko equipment, relying on its design and quality, and the new Sliding Ergonomics, a distinguishing design philosophy driven by final user-experiences and able to assure a more comfortable, efficient and safe way of working in the cooking areas.

[silko.it](http://silko.it)



## Scotsman Tea for Texas

Curt Pohlmeier, vice president of project development at Texas-founded franchise HTeaO, knows the importance of the quality of the ice in the tea: "Ice is so important to our brand. I like to think of it as the big three: tea, water and ice. That's our brand."

HTeaO has seen rapid expansion, with 50 units in 13 states and plans for another 200 more. Maybe it's the 27 different flavors that are driving the demand, or maybe it's the Scotsman Ice Systems the company stands by. "They're the best," says HTeaO's CEO and co-founder Justin Howe of the machines. "We've had locations where, when our new store operations team arrived, the ice machines were a different brand. We made them replace them all."

The Scotsman ice is so popular HTeaO now sells it to customers in 10lb bags. For HTeaO, then, success doesn't just smell sweet; it tastes cold.

[scotsman-ice.com](http://scotsman-ice.com)



## Victory FORT KNOX FOODSERVICE GOES FOR GOLD

"We rely on reliability," says Dana Womack, installation food program manager/contract officer's representative at Fort Knox, Kentucky. "When you're talking about feeding up to 20,000 soldiers, we have to make sure we have the equipment to support us."

When the US Army base needed to replace its refrigeration units, it looked no further than Victory Refrigeration. Since there was no room on site to store the equipment, the fort essentially had to complete nine separate installations. Oscar Villa, president, Ali Group North America – Refrigeration Division, says: "Everyone in our organization, from the executive offices to the assembly lines, is proud to have our equipment in Fort Knox. We have a number of veterans in our workforce, so it's very exciting to be able to assist the military in feeding our troops. We feel privileged to be part of the project." [victoryrefrigeration.com](http://victoryrefrigeration.com)



## Burlodge THE LOGIKO UNLEASHED

Ever since its launch in October at HostMilano and subsequent rollout to markets worldwide, the Logiko meal distribution trolley has received an overwhelmingly positive response.

Buyers include Adef Residences, a French non-profit association, which quickly realized that the Burlodge product could meet its specific needs. Other customers include Holy Name Medical Center, an acute care medical center in Teaneck, New Jersey, where the Logiko's active temperature-boosting and maintenance system replaced insulated dome and base tray delivery, causing a sudden leap in room service quality.

Robert Ashe, the center's director of food and nutrition, was an immediate convert. "This generation of Burlodge technology allows us to enhance our patients' dining experience," he says. "The Logiko meal delivery system exceeds anything on the market today for maintaining both quality and temperature. Meals help heal, and this new delivery system allows us to better serve our patients."

[burlodge.com](http://burlodge.com)

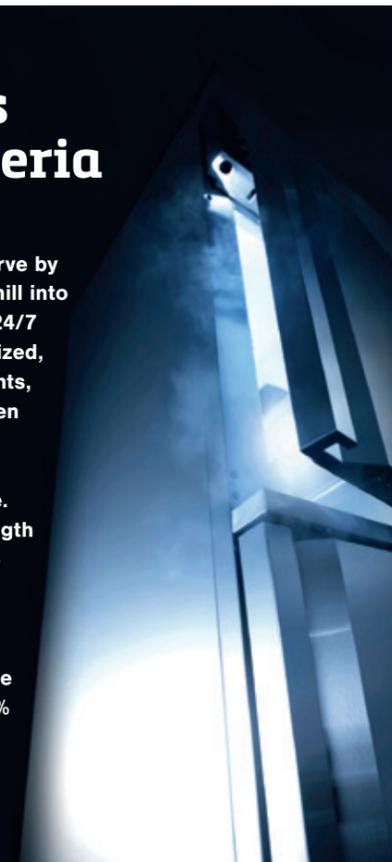


Above: Director of food and nutrition Robert Ashe says the Logiko enhances patients' dining experiences

## Williams HK SanitChill destroys 99% of known bacteria in refrigerators

Williams Refrigeration remains ahead of the curve by integrating new sanitization technology SanitChill into all its refrigeration products. The system runs 24/7 and keeps all areas of the respective unit sanitized, from the evaporator to the storage compartments, actively minimizing cross-contamination between chambers and ensuring they are in the most hygienic condition possible.

The key to the SanitChill technology is simple. Oxygen and water react with a specific wavelength of UV light produced by the refrigeration unit to catalyze a chain reaction that breaks down the structure of contaminants quickly and actively, preventing the growth of mold, slime, mildew and yeast throughout the chambers. In tests, the SanitChill system was found to destroy over 99% of known viruses and bacteria, demonstrating the company's status as an industry leader in food standards and safety in refrigeration. [williams-refrigeration.com.hk](http://williams-refrigeration.com.hk)

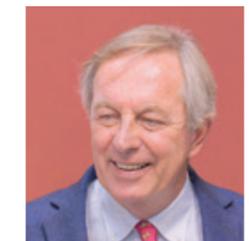


## Iceteam 1927 True partnership

Massimiliano Zucchi, executive general manager of Rimini-based La Romana dal 1947, wanted to expand the brand and have a laboratory in every gelateria. "He was looking for a reliable and high-performing machine that could deliver the entire ice cream production cycle," says Giuseppe Tonelli, brand representative for Iceteam 1927.

The solution was Iceteam's Coldelite Compacta, used in Zucchi's first gelateria in 1995. Since its launch then, La Romana dal 1947 has grown to 51 stores around the world – and there are plans to open seven more this year alone. "It is stimulating to see a company that you have been following for almost 30 years grow like this," says Tonelli. "The relationship between La Romana and Iceteam is solid," adds Zucchi. "Iceteam are a reliable partner and in Giuseppe we have a friend as well as a consultant. His advice is always welcome. Mutual trust is the key to the success of this collaboration."

[iceteam1927.it](http://iceteam1927.it)



Massimiliano Zucchi (middle picture) of La Romana dal 1947 has valued Iceteam's Compacta range of equipment since 1995; Above: Giuseppe Tonelli, brand representative for Iceteam 1927

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burlodge  
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Vistas Rui Silvestre  
restaurant has magnificent  
views over the golf  
course, forest and,  
on the horizon, the sea



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Through its subsidiaries, the Ali Group designs, manufactures, markets and services a broad line of equipment used for commercial food cooking, preparation and processing. With 75 manufacturing sites, over 14,000 employees in 34 countries and 103 brands, it gives life to the most extensive product portfolio in the industry, operating in every hospitality and catering sector.

[aligroup.com](http://aligroup.com)