

CLIFTON'S DEMO KITCHEN BRINGS SOUS VIDE TO LIFE

The best way to experience sous vide is by seeing it up close and testing it with ingredients that go into everyday menus. That's something that Clifton Food Range can do courtesy of a state-of-the-art demo facility that continues to provide value to operators.

Social distancing restrictions have put the brakes on face-to-face contact this year, but once life does return to normal then Clifton Food Range will be delighted to start welcoming the sort of footfall through its doors that it was used to before the pandemic.

The company installed a demonstration kitchen at its premises in Weston-Super-Mare way back in 2006, just as the sous vide technique was really starting to gather momentum in the UK market.

At the time, it was finding that many chefs and operators didn't really know too much about the benefits its system could bring. They understood the advantages of great tastes and textures, but Clifton needed a facility to illustrate the huge financial benefits that could be gained by implementing the process and the fast returns on a modest investment as a result of greater yield, reduced running costs and accurate portion control.

"Our demonstration kitchen at Clifton Food Range in Weston-Super-Mare in Somerset is an important facility to help people see how the system works and, being away from the normal everyday pressures of their own kitchens, visitors are able to ask questions in an informal and relaxed way," explains managing director Melvin Dickson (pictured right with daughter Charlotte).

"We are on hand to demonstrate the products and run through the principles of the process and then if they wish, we can leave the chefs and operators to spend time on their own talking through how the system will benefit their own particular set-up."

With vacuum packing machines on hand, visitors are able to test all models and styles of baths and circulators. They can bring dedicated ingredients and menu items to simulate their own potential sous vide systems, cooking direct or indirect for later service using the 'cook, chill, regenerate' method. The demo kitchen has been expanded over the years and can now



accommodate up to 20 visitors at once. It has played host to everyone from leading chefs and restaurant groups to the Royal Navy. For many, the facility has provided a valuable platform for training and menu development before implementing a wider roll-out.

Clifton remains intensely proud of being an independent third generation family business. As a British manufacturer of high quality temperature control scientific equipment, it belongs to the 'Made in Britain' campaign and visitors that make it to Somerset are also invited to tour its factory to see the equipment being manufactured.

"Seeing the factory where the products are manufactured gives our visitors the added confidence of a quality product with local support," insists Dickson.

The use that Clifton has got from the kitchen over the years more than justifies its investment. And although the pandemic is forcing people to work and interact in new ways, it remains a vitally important part of its future. **FEJ**

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