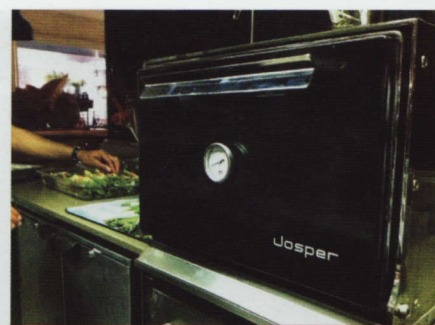




PKL KitchenPod



## Bistro du Vin

The first Bistro du Vin in Clerkenwell, London – a new concept from the company behind Hotel du Vin – offers an all-day menu from breakfast through to late-night dinner until 3am. It site has an open kitchen, designed and supplied by Vision Commercial Kitchens, with features associated with Michelin-starred restaurants and a Jospier Grill (pictured) – the hybrid indoor barbecue grill and oven powered by Bincho-tan “white” hardwood oak charcoal.

# Cater to all needs

Experts provide advice on choosing the right equipment for your bar's kitchen, plus a chance to win a wall-mounted breathalyser

**F**ood provides an opportunity for bars to increase revenue and keep customers longer, which has prompted many operators to add fully equipped kitchens to their premises. Bar owners are often tempted to seek the cheapest deal from online retailers but this may be a false economy, according to Iain Munro, chairman of the Catering Equipment Distributors Association (CEDA). He points out that, when buying new catering equipment or carrying out a kitchen refit, it is best to work with companies with experience and knowledge, such as CEDA members. “Never before has it been so prevalent for those in the market looking to purchase either a single equipment item or a complete new kitchen fit-out to look for the best value from catering equipment suppliers,” Iain says. “Our members are fully qualified to give this cost-saving and expert advice to anyone who needs it.”

CEDA member Chiller Box, a leading designer of commercial kitchens and supplier of catering equipment, was chosen to work on planning, designing and supplying kitchen and bar equipment for Barrio Central in Soho, London, which opened last year. Alongside top-class cocktails, it serves up Latin and Caribbean food, from pinchos to platters, all cooked from fresh

ingredients, using authentic recipes with an added twist. Chiller Box managing director Marios Poupouris said that Barrio Bars opted not to source equipment over the internet because they wanted a higher level of customer service. “Operators shouldn’t be tempted by price deals over the internet especially when it comes to the purchase of crucial pieces of kitchen equipment. After-sales service and a warranty and speedy repair guarantee are critical considerations in the event that your equipment should fail. And when you take into account running costs, apparently-cheap units can end up costing a lot more in the long term.”

Iain Munro at CEDA predicts operators will continue to look at ways to keep costs down. “Although the bar industry appears to be starting to move in a positive direction, budget margin rises will be slow, impacting on the pattern of spending which may switch from complete kitchen refits, and steer more towards renovation and redevelopment projects.”

Mick Shaddock, chair of the Catering Equipment Suppliers Association (CESA), agrees that, when planning a fit-out or buying equipment, seek advice. “Catering equipment manufacturers will be happy to visit you and give you free advice on the basis that you may end up giving them your

business,” he points out. Energy saving has become a key consideration when buying equipment, he adds. “You may pay a little more for an energy-efficient machine initially but this will be offset by the lower running costs.”

For instance, Mick suggests considering induction hobs instead of electric or gas equivalents as they save energy, can reduce ventilation costs and can be safer. Financial benefits may also be possible as interest-free loans from the Carbon Trust are available when buying energy-efficient equipment.

Choosing between an electric or gas deep-fat fryer is one challenge for bars, Mick says. Electric fryers are cheaper for low to medium production, available as free-standing, high-volume units or table-top units that can be plugged directly into the mains. Gas fryers need professional installation and have higher servicing costs but can be cheaper to run as bigger models have a higher output capacity. However, new high-performance electric fryers are now competing over output too, Mick adds.

Manitowoc’s new oil-conserving fryer from Frymaster is available for both gas and electric. The new model uses 40 per cent less oil and 10 per cent less energy while maintaining the high performance of