

Buying Guide: Griddles and Grills

Despite the current cold weather the demand for lighter, healthier food is on the increase. It is good news therefore that griddles, grills and chargrills allow outlets of all sizes to meet that growing demand for lower fat options.

But it's not just about offering grilled rather than battered or fried fish, burgers, sausages and steaks. Griddles and grills are great for crepes, flat breads and even fruit. It is even possible to stir fry directly onto the griddle plate, for example to produce Mongolian-style dishes.

Investing in a griddle or grill can therefore help you to widen your menu offering for a relatively modest outlay. And here are our tips on choosing the right equipment for your business....

General:

- Consider your present and future requirements and always buy the size to suit this need, allowing for future expansion.
- Always talk to your dealer about your requirements; they will be able to offer impartial advice on the best griddle or grill for your particular needs.
- Check that capacities and output quoted are like for like. For example, is the output of burgers per hour for frozen or fresh product? If output is quoted for steaks, what size and degree of cooking?
- Buy from a reputable manufacturer to be sure of compliance with all relevant regulations and to ensure ongoing service and spare parts availability.
- Choose equipment which is easy to clean.

Griddles:

- Griddle plates should have no gaps to allow grease to seep into the body. Look for **fully welded plates** or one-piece castings. Splash guards should be integrated for the same reason.
- Larger units should offer the **flexibility**



and energy saving capacity of a dual heat zone. This allows just part of the griddle to be used in quieter times.

- Major manufacturers offer a wide range of griddle plates including **machined steel, ribbed, half-ribbed and chrome**. Chrome griddles radiate less heat into the atmosphere and so are more energy efficient than steel plate models. This contributes to a more pleasant working environment. Their attractive, easy-to-clean cooking surface is also ideal for theatre-style cooking.
- Check the **drainage channel** – will it be easy to use and keep clean?

Chargrills:

- Choose a chargrill with **power to spare**, rather than running the unit flat out to achieve the heat you need.
- Lava rock can be messy to use. That's why Lincat's chargrills use **innovative heat transfer profiles** to achieve controlled flaring, to give chargrilled food its distinctive taste.



- If gas is not an option or, if adequate ventilation is an issue, chargrilling is still possible with Lincat's **Silverlink 600 electric chargrill**. This features a water bath to retain humidity which makes it a good choice for all kinds of meat and fish.

Grills:

- Safety of operation should be a key issue in your choice of salamander grill. For heavy-duty models is there a branding plate lifting mechanism (like the EasiLift mechanism from Lincat)? And is this included in the price, or is it simply available as an optional extra?
- Choose heavy duty, **cast aluminium reversible branding plates**. These offer high heat retention and both sides can be used for grilling and branding.



- For additional flexibility consider buying an adjustable salamander. The grill hood of Lincat's **AS3 adjustable salamander** can be moved up or down to offer supreme cooking flexibility. Of safe, ergonomic design, with an easy-lift action and wide grab handle, it is perfect for grilling and gratination.
- **Light-duty infra-red grills** offer almost instant heat up and are ideal for cooking pizza and toasting sandwiches.

Lincat currently offers the professional caterer a choice of no fewer than 31 commercial griddles, 7 charrills and 18 grills. These fall into one of three product ranges: the Lynx 400 range of counter-top equipment, the Silverlink 600 range of gas and electric modular equipment and Opus 700, Lincat's stylish and robust range of heavy duty prime cooking equipment. Lincat can therefore provide a griddle, charrill or grill to meet every requirement and budget.

For further product information on Lincat products please visit:

<http://www.lincat.co.uk/products>