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The best of Hospitality Week

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Jackie Mitchell considers the highlights from the Hospitality Week conference in a snowy Birmingham

Snow didn't keep people away from this year's Hospitality Week, held at NEC Birmingham, England. Most exhibitors I spoke to reported a steady stream of visitors, despite the thick snow visible outside the exhibition centre.

The latest equipment could be found at the [CESA](#) (<http://www.cesa.org.uk>) Innovation Zone. CESA's Keith Warren said "It's easy to miss something at a show like this, but having the innovative products clustered together makes it easier for visitors."

The Innovation Zone included [Jestic](#) (<http://www.jestic.co.uk>) Foodservice Equipment, which showed for the first time at a UK trade exhibition, Marrone catering equipment. This Italian company custom builds stainless steel cooking ranges according to requirements. Jestic's Michael Eyre explained that the Marrone range on the stand had been built for a test kitchen and included a gas burner, pasta boiler and induction hob. Jestic also displayed the Jospier charcoal oven, as it is the UK sole agent. Eyre pointed out the advantages of the Jospier. "Flavour, speed and moisture retention."

On the [Airwave Europe](#) (<http://www.airwave.tv>) stand, Carl Rubin from Fingit Technology outlined an innovative system for hotels where guests can control all amenities in their room by using a smartphone. "The system is installed at the Aloft Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand (a Starwood property) where guests are given a smartphone which replaces the room key. Using the phone, they can control the lights, air conditioning, TV channels in the room, receive calls and make contact with all

AUTHOR BIO

Editorial Team

(<http://www.foodserviceconsultant.org/author/admin>)

editorial@foodserviceconsultant.org

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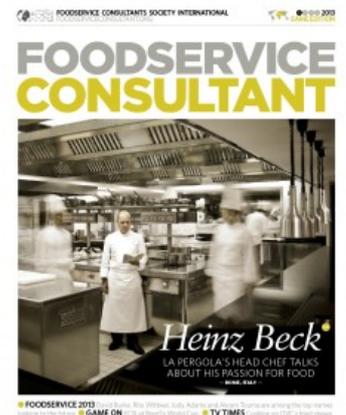
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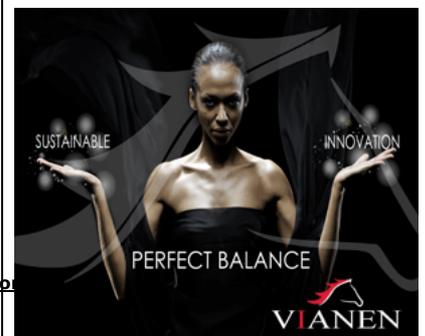
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EVENTS

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the hotel's services," he says.

Crucially, all the guests' preferences are stored in the hotel's system ready for the next visit or for another hotel. "The technology makes it your room rather than just a hotel room and integrates with the hotel's systems," says Rubin.

[Black Rock Grill \(http://www.blackrockgrill.com\)](http://www.blackrockgrill.com) unveiled its new Shabu Shabu stone lidded Japanese hotpot bowls, capitalising on the latest Japanese dining experience. The volcanic rock circular slab at the bottom of the bowl is heated on a gas hob and placed into the pot. In the demonstration, onions and garlic were gently fried on the rock, then the mussels, water and white wine to make Moules Marinière. As Louise Hatter from the company says "It's live cooking at the table and can be used to cook a variety of dishes. Serve customers with a choice of ingredients and they can enjoy making their own dish. In Toyko, pork, chicken, seafood, vegetables and tofu are popular."

Black Rock Grill will be exhibiting with CESA at the forthcoming NAFEM Show in Orlando, Florida, USA.

Swedish company [Wexiödisk \(http://www.wexiodisk.com\)](http://www.wexiodisk.com), which entered the UK market two months ago, showcased its WD-6 Duplus dishwasher which only uses 1 litre of fresh water per cycle. Its automatic hood operation senses when a basket is placed onto the rack before closing the hood and commencing the cycle. The new WD-PRM6 pre rinse machine addresses the issue of conserving water and using less energy, as it uses the waste water from the dishwasher. Wexiödisk's Simon Frost says "This saves four to eight litres of water which would be used if staff manually pre rinsed dishes before they go in the dishwasher. It saves on manpower and staff are free to do something else."

On the [Valera \(http://www.valera.co.uk\)](http://www.valera.co.uk) stand, making its debut was the new Vista chilled display cabinet from Portuguese company Jordao Cooling Systems. "This uses straight glass instead of curved which gives more visual impact," said Pratap Gadhvi from Valera. "It makes the products stand out. It has double glass to keep it insulated and the LED lighting saves energy."

Valera launched the 'Advance' range of Fagor combi ovens. Oier Biritxinaga Lauzirika, Fagor's development chef flew in from Spain to attend the show. He explained how the ovens are easily operated using a touch screen to operate both manual and automatic cooking programmes. The Multi Tray system inside the oven monitors and controls the temperature of each tray independently so different types of dishes can be cooked at the same time. A USB allows for the uploading and downloading of recipe data. "Chefs who don't like technology will find this easy to use with the touch screen operation," he said. "You can create a recipe and upload it. It has a self cleaning system. The ovens are smaller so they can fit into compact spaces."

Jackie Mitchell

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Foodservice Consultants Society International Progressive Customer Publishing

P.O. Box 4961
Louisville, Kentucky 40204, USA

Phone: +1 502 379 4122

E-mail: [info@fcsi.org \(mailto:info@fcsi.org\)](mailto:info@fcsi.org)

Web: [fcsi.org \(http://fcsi.org\)](http://fcsi.org)

7 Carmelite Street, London
EC4Y 0BS, UK

Phone: +44 (0)207 936 6400

E-mail: [info@progressivecp.com \(mailto:info@progressivecp.com\)](mailto:info@progressivecp.com)

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