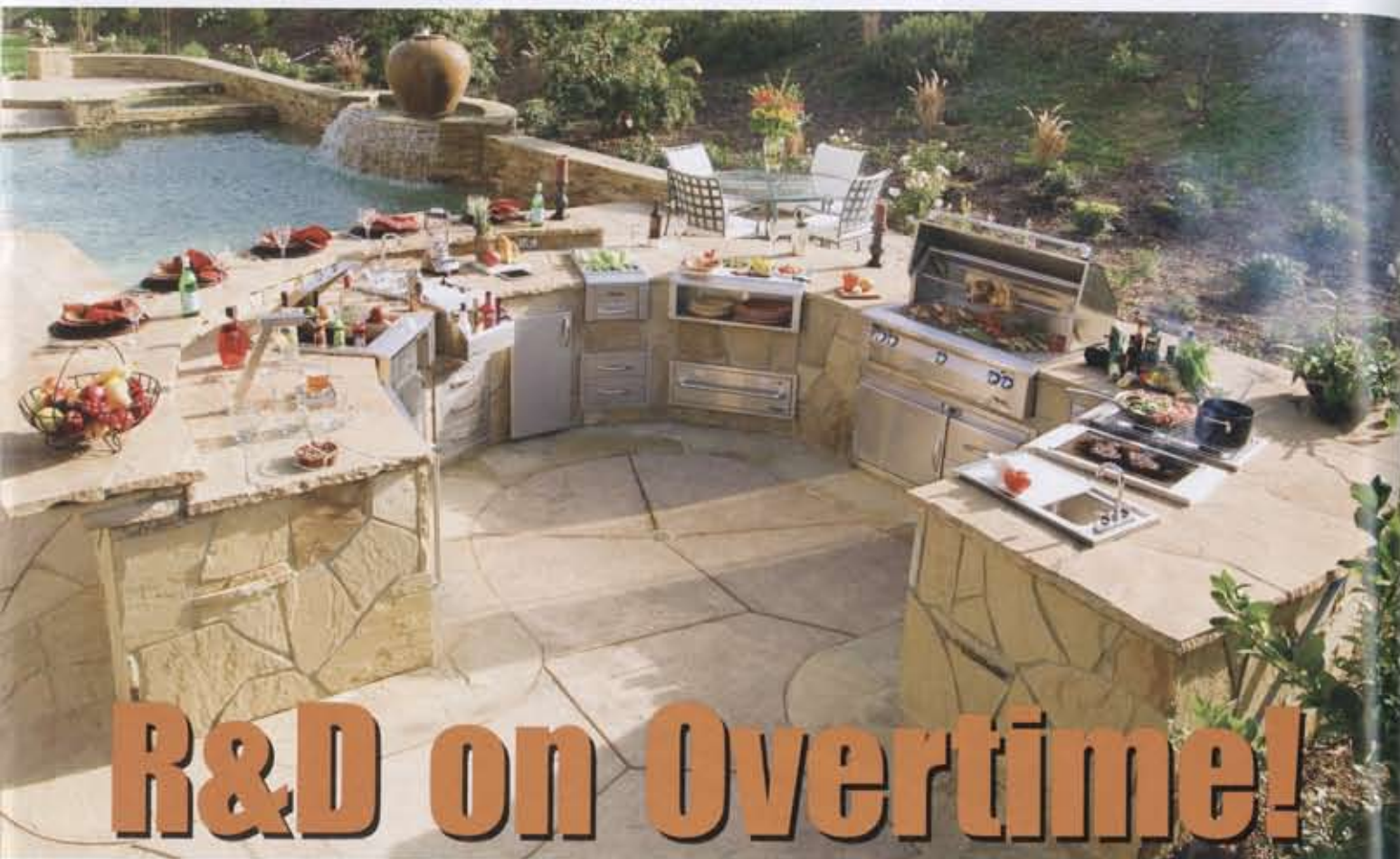


new barbecues for 2008

by Lisa Readie Mayer

A sizzling array of new barbecues/grills awaits dealers and consumers in the coming year.



R&D on Overtime!

Exactly what's new? Well, that depends on how much time you have?

The question dealers enjoy asking manufacturers is, "What have you done for me lately?" That familiar refrain keeps manufacturers on their toes and constantly striving to introduce products that are new and improved, that will peak consumers' interest, fulfill a need or catch a trend.

The 2008 season will be no exception. In fact, based on the apparent increase in new product introductions for next year, it is obvious that R&D teams have been putting in a lot of overtime lately.

We're seeing two emerging trends for next year: an increase in electric grills (could this stepchild finally be coming into its own?), and the intro-

duction of Japanese Teppanyaki-style flattop grills, on which food cooks on a griddle-like surface and is not exposed to an open flame at all.

Here's a look at what manufacturers will be bringing to the market next spring.

Advanced Outdoor Concepts

Advanced Outdoor Concepts is unveiling the Outdoorchef City Grill, a compact gas kettle barbecue. The City Grill features an interior funnel that flips, giving users two cooking options. With the funnel flipped up, the heat from the gas burner rises in a convection pattern for indirect barbecuing and baking. With the funnel turned down, the versatile unit offers direct grilling at very high tem-



ABOVE: Alfresco backyard barbecue.
BELOW: City Grill by Advanced Outdoor Concepts.

peratures or with a cast-iron griddle.

This unique design virtually eliminates smoke, and its compact size makes it ideal for tight spaces. The \$199 City Grill can sit on a tabletop or in an upright stand. Already popular abroad, company president Chris Holloway, "expects the same buzz in the United States." For more information call 1-800-593-8244, visit www.portableGrillStore.com or circle reader service number 100.

Alfresco

Alfresco's latest addition to its family of grills is the LX2. Available in 30-, 42- and 56-inch sizes, the new luxury grill includes such innovative features as flip-down control panels, protective air curtains, hidden integrated rotisserie, work lights and the Neverstore warming rack. The Neverstore rack, re-engineered in response to market feedback, has four adjustable height positions and a unique "up" storage position that allows rotisserie use without having to remove the rack. Other coordinating products in the Alfresco outdoor kitchen line include refrigerators, sideburners, trash centers, warming drawers, storage drawers, infrared sear zones and more. For more information call 1-888-383-8800, visit www.alfrescogrills.com or circle reader service number 101.

Cook-N-Dine

Cook-N-Dine is introducing its Teppanyaki table grill, inspired by the Japanese method of cooking directly on a solid flattop surface. The brushed stain-

less-steel, rectangular cooking center is electrically powered, reaching 430-degree cooking temperatures while other spots have lower temps for keeping food warm. When hot, the cooktop is slightly concave to contain all cooking juices. With the heat switched off, the center reverts back to a completely flat and even table surface.

The table's dining area surrounding the cooktop always stays completely cold. The German-engineered, patented Cook-N-Dine system comes in various shapes and sizes. For more information, contact importer Cook-N-Dine International at (305) 893-1560, visit www.cookndine.com or circle reader service number 102.

Crown Verity

New from Crown Verity is a built-in outdoor kitchen island. While the heart of the island is a five-burner, 36-inch, built-in, stainless-steel grill with roll-dome, the unit also includes a front-breathing U-Line refrigerator to keep cold drinks at the ready. The island features a gorgeous 1/2-inch polished, Quebec granite countertop and base constructed from 1/2-inch solid plantation-grown IPE Brazilian Walnut, which is naturally weather resistant. For more information call (519) 751-1800, visit www.crownverity.com or circle reader service number 103.



Built-in Outdoor Kitchen Island by Crown Verity.

The Design House

Heat is a unique barbecue created by Danish designer Henrik Petersen. Its minimalist simplicity and clean architectural lines are truly an example of form meeting function. The unit boasts four powerful burners, (one of which can be used for a wok) four separate heat zones, including a sear zone reach-



The Design House Heat Table.



Teppanyaki table grill by Cook-n-Dine.

ing 450-degree cooking temperatures, and one-touch, electronic ignition. The exterior cabinet is offered in powder-coated steel or stainless steel, and the internal components and cooking grid are made of stainless steel. An integrated, fold-away, work side-table and hidden LP tank storage in the base add to the clean look.

Another new product from The Design House is the Heat Table, a portable gas barbecue that sits directly on the table. Available in stainless steel or powder-coated finishes, the 14,000 Btu grill reaches 350-degree cooking temps and comes with a sleek lid. When closed, the compact, low-profile unit is

like in restaurant kitchens and high-end steakhouses," says company vice president Rett Rasmussen. "Infrared approximates hot coals, but with convenience. It comes down to the fact that people want to create a restaurant experience at home and this is how to do it."

Napoleon also has invested heavily in infrared technology and now claims to offer the widest range of infrared grill models and price points in the barbecue industry.

"Our infrared products are the fastest-growing products we offer," notes Scott. "We first launched the Gemini (a two-headed grill with infrared burners under one hood and traditional burners under the other hood) two years ago and the demand has been exceptional. We can't produce enough."



52-inch
Model PSQ52RBI
with Infrared-Zone by Capital Cooking
Equipment.

Since then Napoleon has introduced full-sized infrared grills ranging in price from \$999 to \$6,000, and offers an all-infrared, portable unit called the Freestyle for \$300. "For many years, infrared was available only at the highest price points," says Scott, "but now we're opening up the market."

The latest addition to the line is an Ultra Chef grill with infrared searing burner; it is priced at \$1,000. "Sales have been fantastic since it was introduced mid-year in 2007," Scott notes. "This is an excellent, high-performance grill from a North American manufacturer at a reasonable price point."

Infrared offerings such as this have become a "huge marketing advantage" for Napoleon, according to Scott. "Our goal is to differentiate ourselves from the competition. The dealers who have been most successful and are getting the highest margins are the ones who emphasize the restaurant-style cooking



ABOVE: Ultra Chef grill with infrared searing burner by Napoleon.
RIGHT: Combination infrared burner with tube burner.



experience and don't just sell on price."

Naysayers, who thought infrared was just a fad or a gimmick, have been forced to eat their perfectly seared words as they watch the category grow and consumer awareness and demand increase.

"Infrared is a proven technology," insists Scott. "It's definitely not a fad or a gimmick. It has become an exciting segment of the barbecue market."

"Infrared is a growing trend and there are so many advantages to talk with customers about," adds Rich Kalsi, president of Capital Cooking Equipment. "The grill heats up very quickly. In fact, you can take a com-

pletely frozen piece of meat and start cooking almost immediately. The searing on an infrared grill locks in juices and produces less smoke and grease because of the high temperatures. These are the benefits that get people excited about infrared."

Even manufacturers such as Bull

Outdoor Products, who were longtime infrared holdouts, have recently begun to offer infrared options. "We introduced (infrared) last summer," says Frank Mello, vice president of sales and marketing at Bull. "We had seen a spike in the number of our dealers interested in carrying and offering this type of burner. To meet this demand we have introduced our own infrared burner that simply slips in and replaces one of our cast burners. It is our belief that infrared burners are here to stay."

This type of "slip in" or "plug and play" infrared burner has become the



42-inch infrared Solaire Island by Rasmussen.