

The Kettle Factor

Soup is a great way to increase profits and help food costs, especially these days when the majority of the foodservice industry is battling that very issue. No matter if you are a hospital, university, quick service or upscale casual restaurant; soup will help the bottom line. The Groen steam jacketed kettle is arguably the best way to prepare great soup. The controlled even heat of the kettle is the optimum environment to prepare thicker liquids to avoid scorching or pot watching in the kitchen.

The kettles act like a bain-marie which is an old technique of using water between two surfaces to "gently" heat or help keep a meal hot. Think of a Groen kettle as two heavy stainless bowls stacked one inside the other with a small amount of water and a heating element sealed between the two. When the water is first heated, the steam pushes out all the oxygen between the bowls through a one way pressure valve that is set to release at the amount of pressure designated for the kettle, usually 25 to 50 psi or pounds per square inch.

Water boils at 212° at sea level and that is at 0 psi. Now add 2 pounds of pressure to reach 218°. At 35 psi, you are able to bring the kettle up to 280° and at 50 psi you can reach almost 300°. The more pressure, the higher the temperature inside the vessel. For chefs, having that kind of heat without a "hot spot" makes the vessels extremely valuable in demanding cooking environments.

There are so many advantages using kettles to prepare soup that it is hard to find a reason not to. Lobster Bisque is one of the most popular soups in the world and for great reason. Even though it started out being typically available in fine dining restaurants, the popularity of the soup has become part of the trickle-down effect that has happened with a lot of food trends that become absorbed into popular culture. This soup is now seen on lots of full service menus and even quick service restaurants. I saw a terrific food truck recently with bisque in a paper soup cup! Who would have thought? The idea behind the bisque is to use the lobsters that are not pretty enough to serve whole. Also, given the demand to serve only the tails or claws, the rest of the shells can be used in preparing the bisque. So, with just a few ingredients and little waste, you can turn an otherwise imperfect crustacean into an 80% or better profit item on the menu. And, what better way than using a Groen kettle?



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Groen Small Kettle