PRESS RELEASE

A cooker in the hood

Cooker hoods are an integral part of any kitchen – they help rid the space of cooking vapours made from a mixture of grease, moisture and odours. Mercia de Jager from leading kitchen appliance manufacturer, Miele, offers some tips on how to choose the best cooker hood for your kitchen.

18 June 2015, Johannesburg: A cooker hood will make cooking more pleasant by filtering out any fat molecules, conducting away the steam and neutralising smells to keep the kitchen clean, fresh and odour-free. Says Mercia: "Aside from making an impressive visual statement by forming the stylish centrepiece of your kitchen, cooker hoods also offer the practical service of removing any airborne vapours, odours and grease generated via cooking to keep your kitchen environment as pleasant as possible."

She explains that there are five main types of cooker hoods available on the market, including integrated, wall-mounted, island, downdraught and ceiling cooker hoods. Whichever type of cooker hood you choose, they will need to perform three main tasks in the kitchen - these include:

- **Grease removal:** Fats and oils are an important element of cooking in general – they are the transporter of flavours, and they act as heat conductors. The downside of fats and oils is that they often spit and sizzle, and in doing so, they release fat molecules into the air. If these molecules are not filtered, they end up settling and forming a sticky, greasy, unhygienic film on everything in the room. Cooker hoods are able to remove grease from the air with the help of grease filters. Says Mercia: "Miele's 10-layer metal grease filters are incredibly effective at reducing grease build-up in the kitchen, and they can be quickly and easily cleaned in the dishwasher."

- **Moisture removal:** Water is another essential cooking ingredient, and when it gets heated to above 100°C, it becomes steam that rises. Once steam saturation is reached in the air, the excess steam settles on walls and windows as condensation, which can discolour the walls and mark the windows. Excess moisture in the room also encourages the formation of mould and it is detrimental to your overall wellbeing. Mercia explains: "Extraction cooker hoods are great at reducing moisture in the air."

- **Odour removal:** Any kind of cooking will produce odours, and however appetising they may smell whilst you are cooking, any lingering odours can be unpleasant, especially if they move through to your home's living areas. Since they are made up of various molecules, they can also end up clinging to various soft furnishings and textiles. Recirculating cooker hoods are able to neutralise these odours using charcoal filtration systems. Says Mercia: "Aside from the grease filters, Miele's cooker hoods also boast active charcoal filters that not only capture the odours

produced whilst cooking, but neutralises them as well, ensuring that any lingering odours are kept to a minimum."

No hood without a hob

The type and size of your hob will to a large extent, dictate what kind of cooker hood will best serve your needs. Says Mercia: "What kind of hob you select will have an enormous impact on the size of cooker hood you should choose. The two appliances should work hand-in-hand – you can't purchase one without considering the other."

All cooker hoods need to be positioned centrally over the hob in such a manner that it covers it sufficiently. To decide what cooker hood width will best suit your hob, you can draw an imaginary straight line upwards from the edge of the hob through to the lower edge of the cooker hood. An angle of 5° outwards for wall-mounted hoods is advisable, while for island hoods the angle needs to be at least 10°. Hence, the height of the cooker hood will determine the width required.

The recommended distance between a hob and a cooker hood is around 65cm to 75cm, and as such for a hob measuring up to 75cm, will require a cooker hood with a width of 90cm, while a hob measuring up to 90cm wide, will require a cooker hood with a width of 100-120cm. Mercia explains that the major exceptions of this rule includes cooker hoods with multi-zone edge extraction, and cooker hoods servicing gas hobs, which can both be the same size as the hob below, while island cooker hoods always need to be larger than the hob below.

Extraction versus recirculation

Mercia notes that there are three options for effective kitchen air filtration, namely extraction, extraction with an external motor, and recirculation:

- **The extraction system:** Extraction cooker hoods draw in the cooking vapours, filter out the grease particles, and then the filtered air, along with any excess moisture and cooking odours, is directed outside via extraction ducting.
    - **Pros:** Excellent efficiency and moisture extraction
    - **Cons:** An opening in a wall or roof is required for the ducting to vent outside, which is not always possible.

- **Extraction mode with an external motor:** These cooker hoods are exactly like extraction cooker hoods, with the only difference being that they are combined with an external motor that can be installed on an outside wall, roof, or in a ceiling to reduce the noise in the kitchen to a minimum.
    - **Pros:** Excellent efficiency and moisture extraction, and very quiet operation.
    - **Cons:** An opening in a wall or roof is required for the ducting to vent outside, which is not always possible. They are also more expensive and time consuming to install.

- **Recirculation mode:** These cooker hoods do not require ducting or a wall or roof vent, as they merely draw in vapours, pass them through various layers of filtration to remove the grease and odours, before returning the clean air to the room.
    - **Pros:** They are incredibly easy and quick to install, and do not require any ducting, so they can be installed anywhere.
    - **Cons:** The air circulation occurs within a closed room, and recirculation cooker hoods are not great at removing excess moisture.

Silence is golden

When choosing your cooker hood, Mercia recommends that you check out the noise levels of the unit: "This is especially important today, where kitchens often double as the social hub of the home – you don't want the noise of operation of the cooker hood to interfere with any social discussions." Cooker hood noise generally stems from the motor and the moving air throughout the unit, however, Mercia says that both these factors can be influenced: "Any good quality cooker hood should have a noise level of less than 60dB (decibels). Miele's cooker hoods for example, boast multiple layers of insulation, which helps to dramatically reduce noise levels. Miele's extraction mode cooker hoods boast a noise level of 40db, which is very low if you consider that the noise level of a normal conversation is around 60dB, and a clock ticking is around 20dB."

Energy efficiency

With the ever rising cost of electricity, it is important to consider energy efficiency when selecting your cooker hood, says Mercia: "A good quality cooker hood should offer excellent energy efficiency, without compromising in terms of power and efficiency. All of Miele's cooker hoods for example are rated A+ or A for energy efficiency." She says that in general the fan and the lighting account for the bulk of any cooker hood's energy consumption, so you should look out for models with LED downlights, and ones that boast a DC motor.

Another feature to look out for is inter-hob-cooker hood communication as this is not only a very convenient feature, but it can also play a major role in reducing energy consumption. Says Mercia: "When you are cooking, your focus should be on what you are doing, and not on operating your cooker hood efficiently. Miele's Con@cativity 2.0 is able to achieve optimum extraction of kitchen vapours and odours, while also saving energy. It is a technology that enables the cooker hood to communicate wirelessly with the hob via RF technology, gather information from the hob and transmit it to the cooker hood controls. The Miele cooker hood will then use this data to automatically select the correct fan setting to ensure optimum room microclimate at all times. This allows you to concentrate entirely on the cooking process – you don't even have to remember to switch off the appliance. With the automatic run-on control, the cooker hood will switch itself off automatically after you have finished cooking so that you do not use any more energy than is necessary. Of course, manual operation is also possible."

Cooker hood customisation

With the eternal quest for uniqueness and customised solutions, your cooker hood should also be able to be as individual as your individual taste preferences. Today, you can customise your choice of cooker hood to best suit your needs. Miele for example offers the following customisable solutions:

- **Customised telescopic chimney:** Miele can make your cooker hood fit perfectly into the architectural constraints of your kitchen. For instance, by making the chimney section longer or shorter to fit a specific ceiling height. It can even be cut at an angle to fit perfectly under a sloping ceiling.
- **Customised widths:** The cooker hood canopy can be specially customised to suit particular requirements. For instance, it is no problem for Miele if your cooking area has more Miele CombiSets than a conventional cooker hood would cover, as it can supply cooker hoods that measure up to 210cm wide.
- **RAL colour lacquering:** All Miele's appliances in the Generation 600 range are available in four standard colours – Brilliant White, Obsidian Black, Havana Brown and Clean Steel. However, you can further personalise your cooker hood in almost any other colour your heart desires – turning it into a colourful feature in its own right. Miele allows you to select a colour finish from the high quality RAL powder coated finish, which is available in a spectrum of 213 different colours.

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