


KITCHENS :

counter collaborators

Everyone needs a helping hand in the kitchen at this time of year, and these clever appliances can supply it

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KitchenAid's Stand Mixer (left), the enduring workhorse of the countertop, has received yet another attachment update, with the introduction of the new 'Spiralizer', \$199. Now you can core, peel and transform vegies into spaghetti-like tresses – just like a pro.

THEY MIGHT TAKE up prime real estate on your kitchen bench, but certain small appliances go above and beyond mere gadget status to really earn their keep and help you entertain with ease. Whether you are a seasoned home cook or you shudder at the sight of a saucepan, today's appliances can simplify steps, save time and inspire success. They are also designed with style in mind, so there's no need to hide them away. From powerful chop-and-blend devices to more sophisticated all-in-one automated cookers that will serve up succulent meats, fast finger foods, curries, soups, risottos, desserts and more, you'll find a whole host on the market. Here's our selection of the benchtop marvels that can ramp up your kitchen repertoire and help you create a feast to impress.



Pleasant brew

The Nespresso Delonghi 'Lattissima Touch', \$649, is able to create six variations on a coffee theme – from ristretto to macchiato – at the touch of a button to satisfy the palate of even the most demanding after-dinner guest. It also has an automatic cappuccino function for perfect frothy coffee – or even just your bedtime hot milk. Using pre-measured Nespresso capsules, this machine produces consistent, cafe-standard cups at home.



LIGHT AS AIR

Kambrook's 'Air Chef', \$169.95, will "air fry," with little or no oil, a variety of foods (fresh or frozen) including chips, tasty nibbles and even risottos, teriyaki, quiches and cakes. Simply add your ingredients and set the timer.

Today's gourmet gadgets combine *good looks* with *easy-clean efficiency*, so you'll be happy to leave them on display

Rock-steady blending

The high-powered KitchenAid 'Magnetic Drive' Blender, \$999, can crush fruit, nuts and ice, create creamy bisques and sauces, juice whole fruits and vegetables, pulse, and work from a list of one-touch, preset recipes. The pitcher locks into place at the front using magnetic drive technology – no more holding down the lid. >



THE BIG FREEZE

Cuisinart's 'Ice Cream Maker with Compressor', \$599, will have even beginners scooping out luscious gelato and ice-cream. With a commercial-quality compressor-freezer, this baby lets you prepare batches of up to 1.5L and use its "keep cool" function when entertaining. Choc-chip, anyone?



Mix it up

Smeg's 1950s-style Stand Mixer, \$799, will sit sturdily on your benchtop while making light work of big mixing jobs, with a 4.8L-capacity bowl, 800-watt motor and 10-speed control. It comes with a wire whisk, flat beater and dough hook, and optional accessories to roll and cut pasta. Its retro-inspired lines are worth showing off, too.



ULTIMATE MULTI-TASKER

The Thermomix, \$2089, brings together 12 appliances in one, allowing you to mix, beat, blend, whip, weigh, steam, stir, cook, knead and more. There are thousands of recipes adapted to the Thermomix method, which you can access online or via the Recipe Chip – opt for "guided cooking" or take control and go it alone.



HANDY FOOD APPS

These days, no cook's kitchen is complete without a smartphone and a handy app or two. Try these on for size:

Healthy Desserts by Green Kitchen (\$4.99)

Naturally sweetened treats complete with stunning images. For iPad/iPhone.

Yummly Recipes & Shopping List (free)

Brings recipes of the world to your fingertips and shopping trolley. For iPad/iPhone/Android.

Paprika Recipe Manager (\$6.49)

Find, create and save recipes, cross off steps and time cooking. For iPad/iPhone/Android.

Meat Cuts (free)

This will have you selecting and cooking beef, lamb and veal cuts like a master butcher. For iPhone/iPad/Android. **hb**

It's never been easier to achieve *professional* results
at home, with *technology* that was once only available to chefs