

## RIISING TECHNIQUES

While many options are available, there seems to be a growing demand for induction as well as cooking methods that make meal preparation healthier.

"One type of technology that is continuing to increase in popularity is that of induction cooking. With faster and more precise heating, unparalleled power and standout simmering results, induction cooking is a method we can expect will continue to trend upward," says Sandoval.

Sweet also sees a lot of excitement around induction, and expects induction to continue trending as homeowners gain a better understanding of the technology and how it works.

Rockstroh says, "Induction continues to gain mindshare as well, and we expect it will become mainstream in the near future." He adds that people are beginning to explore steam cooking as well, which helps maintain nutritional value while sealing in flavor, but notes that it's not yet a top choice.

Busy lives and a desire for healthier preparations also impact cooking methods. "People are creating kitchen environments that inspire them to make healthy, gourmet-style meals, but [they don't] always have a lot of time," says LaRon Doucet, national training manager for Fisher & Paykel based in Costa Mesa, CA.

This desire for healthier meal preparation has inspired innovation in products, sometimes incorporating elements that have primarily

demonstrate the functions, features and technologies for many of our next generation products," he maintains, including a smart new interface with capabilities to provide a guided cooking experience via automated functions and a library of recipes.

Although Dowling agrees that smart appliances are a big trend, he's not sure consumers are really looking for this feature. "Do consumers really care if they can connect by Bluetooth so they can change their appliance settings without getting up from their favorite show? Do they want a fridge that can keep track of inventory and create a shopping list? Probably not, but if they do, it's available. They should keep in mind that the more technology they have, the more things they have to break down," he says.

Larkin sees smart technology with Wi-Fi enabled products continuing to gain momentum in 2019, such as smart cooktops and tabletop guided technologies. But simply offering connectivity isn't enough. "Consumers want real technology they can use vs. gimmicks, and technology without support won't work," Larkin believes.

## COLOR CREEPS IN

Stainless steel will always be in style, and many designers and consumers naturally gravitate toward the timeless finish. That said, manufacturers agree that color is beginning to show up in more lines

Of course, personalization is key, so we also love to see how designers create their own unique expression with custom panels," she adds.

Rockstroh says, "Stainless steel remains the dominant material, but we're seeing a higher adoption rate of color and alternative finishes, with homeowners seeking hues that harmonize with their kitchen style, rather than providing stark color contrasts."

Finishes are evolving, he adds, with color and texture pairings that create an increasingly experiential, tactile experience, whether matte textured tones, glossy enamel or porcelain inspired. "White has seen a particularly strong resurgence, as it had seen a lower adoption rate but is gaining further popularity," he notes.

"Architecture and kitchen design trends globally are increasingly featuring black finishes as a feature, external cladding, hardware/fasteners, lighting fixtures, then into the more refined black kitchen and bath fixtures and sinks – the materiality, the finish, the level of quality is important," says Mitchell. "Black, executed well, is timeless."

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

The range of cooking styles and finish options illustrates a larger need: the ability to integrate products that reflect both design style and lifestyle of the end user. "Personalization is a trend everyone seems to agree on, not only in terms of aesthetics but also functionality," says Sweet.

been standalone appliances into the range. "Launching in May of 2019, Frigidaire has taken one of the hottest trends in cooking and integrated it into its new Frigidaire Gallery Front Control Ranges. These ranges are the first on the market to include Air Fry – at the touch of a button," says Natalie Walsh, senior brand and product marketing manager for Electrolux Major Appliances North America based in Augusta, GA.

## CONNECTED IN THE KITCHEN

Manufacturers say that technology, particularly the rise in connectivity, is increasingly important in cooking appliances just as with other facets of modern life.

"Smart appliances have been steadily infiltrating the market over the past few years, with new technology, smartphone apps and Wi-Fi connectivity," Sandoval says. "As kitchens continue to evolve, connectivity in the kitchen is becoming more prevalent."

Prescher agrees: "The connected home is continuing to emerge at the forefront of the home appliance industry. As such, the demand for cooking appliances that not only feature sleek and timeless design, but also offer efficient, convenient and easy-to-use operation is stronger than ever."

Geoff Mitchell, senior product manager, North America at Fisher & Paykel says one of the noticeable trends at KBIS this year was appliances with apparent technological features. "The show allowed us to

than ever. Whether a new take on a tried-and-true favorite, such as black stainless finishes, or a pop of intense color, new options emerge all the time.

"Traditional stainless steel continues to dominate dealer showrooms and sales, but more colors are definitely appearing from more manufacturers," says Dowling. "The colors range from subdued darker shades and pastels, to bright bold tones like Candy Red, Tropical Blue and Robin's Egg Blue." Elmira is receiving more calls for custom colors, he says, and has expanded its offering to the full range of 1064 automotive tones offered by Axalta coatings.

"In the premium segment, we have seen the color trend grow each year," Larkin adds. "Even if consumers don't want to commit to a full colored kitchen, many are going with color for the heart of the kitchen – the range – a fun place to make a bold statement." Orange, red and blue finishes have been the most popular for Hestan, he adds. "Dramatic custom hoods are also a popular way to customize the cooking area and make it a focal point."

"While kitchen design in general varies from a sleek, modern aesthetic to more traditional styles, stainless steel remains a highly popular finish for cooking appliances," Sandoval states. "In addition to stainless steel, metallic glass – with gray or silver finishes – and vibrant color displays are showing up more frequently in the latest cooking appliance innovations.

"Homeowners are increasingly moving away from the standard kitchen design model of the past and customizing the space to reflect their own lives. For instance, those who like to entertain are more likely to incorporate specialty appliances like a Wolf warming drawer or install a larger capacity oven, whereas busy families are looking for appliances that save them time, like the new Wolf speed oven," he says.

"As consumers become more design-savvy, demand for design that matches their personal style and sense of self is higher than ever," states Prescher. "While the general trend in cooking product finishes remains traditional stainless steel and, increasingly, black stainless steel, consumers also appreciate the ability to customize the look of their appliances to match kitchen cabinetry and their overall design aesthetic."

Larkin notes, "Thoughtfully integrating appliances into consumers' kitchens in a unique and customizable way, while focusing on the way they cook and entertain for family and friends, continues to be a big trend. Consumers want to enhance their experience in what continues to be the epicenter of the home – the kitchen. There are considerable options today to incorporate functionality with gorgeous design features – whether it's blending concealed elements into a sleek, minimalist design or doing a full kitchen in a signature color or finish." ■