



Continual growth leads to new premises

Getting bigger all the time and still in the same building it had occupied for 13 years, Austin's Food Design Events needed to move if it was to maintain its high standards. Thus began a two-year search for new premises which has now taken the catering company just a "couple of hundred metres" down the road, but a world away from their previous kitchen and offices. DIONNE CHRISTIAN explores the new premises of Austin's Food Design Events.

Its new home is an expansive multi-storied former warehouse described by general manager Chris Blackman as a great big empty shell that has been converted to meet the company's needs perfectly.

Combining the staffs' accumulated knowledge with years of experience working in commercial kitchens, Blackman says they designed the kitchen set-up themselves rather than hiring a specialist.

"We figured we knew our business requirements best."

Top of the company's list was better flow and greater space to make its operations more efficient.

The former has been achieved by having several entrances in and out of the building. For starters, there are two large docking bays at the front of the building: One for incoming goods; the other for outgoing product.

Incoming goods will go either straight into a spacious walk-in chiller or into the dry goods' larder. Because all dry goods have to be wheeled passed the head chef's office, they will be checked immediately.



Head Chef Brendon Eddington

The building also has a back door where trucks can pull up, deposit dirty dishes, soiled uniforms and empty containers. These are then wheeled up a ramp straight into a purpose-built dish wash room where only cutlery, glasses and crockery are washed.

Commercial Catering and Southern Hospitality outfitted this room with Starline dishwashers and a Galaxy Tunnel Washer specially designed for washing this type of equipment.

"The different type of chemicals needed to clean chefs' equipment can damage glasses and crockery," explains head chef Brendon Eddington. "This means all our actual cooking equipment will be washed and cleaned downstairs, while this room will be strictly for the glasses, plates and cutlery."

Continued on page 8 ▷



G-Whiz! Unique controls!

The new industry standard

New Starline G Series GL plus GLV and UD commercial dishwashers have convenient OneTouch top mounted controls. Choose from 1, 2, or 3 minute cycles at the touch of a button. Enjoy proven Starline reliability and design innovation. Ask about your nearest supplier.



Phone: 09 829 0930
www.starline.co.nz

STARLINE
PROFESSIONAL WASH SYSTEMS

WAS0037B_OP



Continued from page 7 ▷

Once washed, it will be immediately taken to the vast neighbouring equipment/store room. This room also includes moveable shelving – the type more often found in libraries – where all uniforms and linen will be kept.

The kitchen itself has been divided into two main areas. The first is where equipment used most often is permanently placed and where the bulk of the food preparation takes place.

A T-shaped bench arrangement allows the sous chefs to face three or four stainless steel benches where other staff work from.

“I wanted a sociable environment where people face one another and can talk rather than working in isolation,” says chef Eddington.

The second region of the kitchen is for things used frequently but not on a daily basis, as well as large equipment such as a

commercial gas barbecue for searing food.

There’s also a built-in drain for pouring away water so it doesn’t pose a safety risk as pans are carried across a room to be emptied.

A purpose-built patisserie kitchen has also been included where chef Christian Herbulot intends to craft exquisite desserts – something previously limited by lack of space. Chef Herbulot says an emerging trend is for tasting platters – sweet treats – rather than elaborately constructed desserts.

At the opposite end of the kitchen is a sizeable temperature-controlled room for meat and seafood preparation. This will allow for more preparation to be done in-house rather than relying on outside suppliers.

“We couldn’t fillet our own fish before but now we have the facilities in which to do that safely.”

Austin’s is using its former equipment but

the kitchen has been “spiced out” for new equipment should the need arise.

The new kitchen is already creating efficiencies.

“We finished a job 1.5 hours early the other day and then spent the next few minutes going through the job sheets to check everything had been done and ticked off. We couldn’t believe how much faster we got through the work.”

It’s all good news to Chris Blackman who won’t discuss the exact costs of the project but admits it cost more than they expected.

“That seems to be the story with most building projects, doesn’t it? Your budget seems to become a starting point but it will be worth it because of the labour efficiencies and the reduction in things like breakages because of better storage and access.

“Most importantly though it means increased capacity to create bigger and better events for our clients.”

**Finger food that doesn't interrupt a business meeting.
At prices that are good for business.**



Patties “home-baked” mini meat pies and sausage rolls; assorted Quiches and vegetarian pasties.



SUPPLIERS TO AUSTINS. Available through Creans and Gilmours.
Enquiries to Foodtrenz. 09 413 5027 www.foodtrenz.co.nz

TEL 5589