

**Master Chef
Secrets...
Buying Kitchen
Equipment:**

**Tips and Tricks to Help You
Save Money**

INTRODUCTION

You sit down to cook a meal but get frustrated. You spend a whole looking for the right kitchen utensils. After a few minutes of frustration you realize that the reason why you are spending so long looking for tools is that you do not have exactly what you need. You are in need of some new kitchen equipment.

The problem is, your kitchen needs a major overhaul, and this can be expensive. You need to find a way to save on kitchen equipment or else you will get frustrated every time you try to cook something.

Every great chef understands that having the best equipment you can find is essential to your success. They also know that if you have too many appliances and gadgets in your kitchen, it can get overwhelming and confusing, not to mention expensive.

In this special report, you will learn how to save on kitchen equipment. Here are some things that the report will cover:

- The equipment you need for a well stocked kitchen.
- How to take inventory of what you already have so you don't waste money.
- Read reviews and ask others what they think so you can purchase high quality equipment.
- How to be wary of the latest fads in cooking equipment.
- Learning the difference between inexpensive equipment and cheap equipment.
- Discover the difference between "needing" and "wanting".
- How to comparison shop so you can find what you need for less.
- How to find the best deals.

There are several things to keep in mind when you set out to purchase kitchen equipment for less. This special report will help educate you on how to find the best deals. It will also show you that inexpensive does not mean that it is good quality. When it comes to kitchen equipment, you often want things that are built to last.

THE WELL EQUIPPED KITCHEN

Before you get started purchasing things for your kitchen, it is important to understand what you really need. But before you can do that, you need an idea of which items make up a well equipped kitchen. Here is a basic list. Keep in mind that you can add and subtract items depending on your cooking habits. But, it is important to get this list written down before you start buying things. It will help you save money.

- **Basic Kitchen Utensils**

- Mixing bowls
- Measuring cups, spoons, and glass measuring cup for handling liquids
- Soup ladle
- Whisk
- A really food knife set
- Can opener
- Potato masher
- Wooden spoons
- Vegetable peeler
- Colander
- Rubber spatulas

- **Appliances**

- Blender
- Mixer
- Toaster
- Food processor (helpful, but not necessary)

- **Baking Dishes and Pans**

- Dishes for baking and cooking things in the oven such as cookie sheets ceramic baking dishes, and cake pans.

- Roasting pan for larger meats and one for smaller meats.

- A good, standard pan set that includes everything such as pots, sauté pans, and fry pans.

- Large soup pot and other pots and pans you may need that are not included in the set.

It is important to write down how you envision your kitchen. Think about what you need in your kitchen at the bare minimum.

TAKE INVENTORY

Once you have an idea of which appliances, pots, pans, and utensils are essential in your kitchen, the next step is to take inventory. Not only do you need to see what you have, but you should also assess the condition it is in.

This step may seem unnecessary at first glance. However, if you take inventory you will potentially save money. This is because a lot of people waste energy purchasing things they may already have. People buy things and then forget about them almost constantly. After going through your things you may realize you don't need as much as you thought. This means that you will save money. Here are some tips:

- Make a list of exactly what you have.
- Compare that to your list to determine what you need.
- Also determine if any of your items are old and need to be replaced.

If you do those three things, it will give you an idea of exactly what you need to buy.

MAKE CALCULATED PURCHASES

When people go out to buy kitchen equipment, they often find themselves at the store in a state of confusion. Even something that seems so simple as buying a saucepan can get complicated quickly. You have a choice as to what material the pan is made of, the grip, the size, and the brand.

Most people make their purchases based on certain criteria, such as price. Or, they'll talk to the sales staff and make a decision based on their recommendation. While these methods certainly represent great reasons to buy something, it does not reveal the true picture.

The kitchen is one of the most used rooms in the house. And in a lot of households, the kitchen and the various appliances and cooking supplies are used multiple times a day. This means that if you purchase the wrong equipment, or things that are not built to last, then you could end up

replacing it within just a few months. That is why buying the least expensive kitchen equipment in the market is not always a good idea. You end up spending more in the long run because you need to replace it often.

So, as you shop for kitchen items, remember that the least expensive product may not suit your needs. You need to be able to make calculated purchases and find a balance between reasonably priced items and those that are built to last.

GATHER INFORMATION

An easy way to help you make calculated purchases is to gather product information. There are several ways you can do this.

- Gather information and product specs from the manufacture. Visit their website or look on the box.
- Ask others what their favourite kitchen appliances and utensils are. Talk with your friends and family members and you can also find the information online.
- Read product reviews. You can find them online and in consumer magazines. There are a lot of people out there who take the time to review the various kitchen tools and appliances and share their findings with others.
- Attend product demonstrations and test out the products on your own. That way, you can see first hand how a product functions.
- Which products do professional chefs use? They are committed to finding equipment that will last. This is information will be important for those items that you use often.

Once you find the information, you can make educated decisions about what you would like to buy. This step may not seem as if it is directly related to making money. However, if you make calculated purchases and gather as much information as you can, you will not waste money by purchasing things that are unnecessary.

Plus, if you go to a store and already have knowledge about what you want to buy, this will help you converse with the sales staff in an educated manner. If you are torn between several products, they can actually help you make a decision. If you were to arrive at the store without knowing what to

buy, the chances of you ending up with something you don't like or don't need is an easy way to waste money.

BE WARY OF THE LATEST TRENDS

It would be hard to find someone who at one time or another did not fall prey to the latest trends in kitchen equipment. A special blender to create smoothies. A gadget to help you chop vegetables. A knife set whose manufacturers claim can saw through metal. We all have at least one "wonder gadget" collecting dust in our kitchens.

The truth is, these gadgets seldom live up to their claims. The commercials, while not overtly deceiving us, somehow manage to make the product look and seem a little better than it is. So we buy it and in the end we waste our money.

If we embrace the latest trends in cooking gadgets whenever we see something that we think will make our lives easier, we end up spending more money than we need to. This is not a cost effective way to stock our kitchens with helpful and useful tools.

Your best bet is to stock your kitchen with tools and appliances that are time tested. Your goal is to spend your money on the basics. You will learn that a high quality chef's knife, for example, is one of the most versatile tools in the kitchen. The smoothie blender, on the other hand, will likely collect dust.

However, that does not mean that you should not purchase a kitchen tool that you feel will make your life easier. There is a time and a place to purchase these items. But you run the danger of making a bad decision and wasting your money. So, it is a good idea to *only* buy these items if you already have a well stocked kitchen. The error is when people think they are going to *replace* the need for a high quality knife because they purchased the latest shopping gadget.

If you look at the kitchens of top chefs, you will likely only see the basic tools and equipment that have been time-tested and are incredibly durable. This is something that you should consider as you feel yourself being swayed by the hype.

Your goal is to save money. A good way to do that is to steer clear of the latest trends and purchase only those things that are absolutely necessary. And, if you spend all of your money on gadgets, you will not have enough left

in your budget to purchase durable things that are higher quality which will actually help you save money in the long run.

INEXPENSIVE VS. CHEAP

There is a big difference between cooking equipment that is inexpensive and equipment that is simply cheap. The market is filled with a variety of different items. Some are professional grade tools that the top chefs use. Others are high end items that are designed for the serious amateur chef. And then there are those things that are inexpensive and designed for people who are concerned about their budget. These inexpensive items may or may not be made with quality in mind.

Cheap equipment is not only low in price, but it is made of shoddy materials. This may translate to a smaller dent to your wallet, but in the long run, it actually costs you money. How many times have you purchased inexpensive pan sets only to realize three months later, that you need to throw it out? You made the mistake of putting price above quality and you ended up spending more money in the long run.

Inexpensive equipment, on the other hand, is not necessarily cheap. There are plenty of manufacturers who create higher quality products for less money. For example, you can find inexpensive frying pans and sauté pans that are sturdy and durable but are also inexpensive. Your goal then is to find these items. For those who are on a budget, finding the inexpensive kitchen tools that are also of a fairly good quality is the goal. Here are some tips:

- Educate yourself on the difference between items that are of a good quality and those that are not. You can visit a kitchen store and speak to the sales staff, or you can read reviews and information online. Attending cooking demonstrations and classes is also a good way to get information.
- Research the companies that have a reputation for making things that are a good quality but that also have reasonable prices.
- Test out several products before you make the final purchase. If you are looking to buy a kitchen knife, for example, ask the store if you can hold it and test it out. A good store will let you sample the tools and utensils if that will help you make the purchase.

It is also important to note that not all expensive equipment is of a good quality. With some companies, you are paying for the name and the advertising, not the integrity of the product.

NEEDING VS. WANTING

There is a big difference between “needing” something and “wanting” something. We may want the newest gadget because we think it will make our lives easier. However, we probably do not need it. Learning the difference between the two is an important concept that will help save money in the kitchen.

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

The items that you need will depend on the how often you cook and the type of cooking that you do. If you cook a lot of Asian foods, for example, then you will need a wok to help you prepare them as authentically as possible. However, a wok is an unnecessary item in a kitchen where Asian foods are only prepared occasionally. In this case, a regular frying pan or sauté pan can be used as a substitute.

Think seriously about the following questions:

- How often do you cook?
- What kind of cooking do you do?
- What do you already have?

The answers will help you determine what you actually need and will help you save money.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

When it comes to kitchen equipment, it is easy to mistake your “wants” for your “needs”. You do not necessarily need the latest cooking gadget. However, there is nothing wrong with splurging and buying something fun for the kitchen that may not be a necessity, such as a stove top espresso maker or an ice cream machine.

If your number one goal, however, is to save money, you should not give into these urges. You can still have a well equipped kitchen. There just will not be any unnecessary items.

However, you have to decide if buying the gadget will help you save money in the long run. For example, if you are going out for ice cream constantly, a home ice cream maker will help you save money because you will not be going out for ice cream as often.

COMPARISON SHOPPING

Comparison shopping is an essential skill that will help you find the best deals when it comes to purchasing kitchen tools and equipment. You may find that in one store, the price for a set of knives is \$10 more than the same set is at another store. Finding these kinds of deals is what comparison shopping is all about.

Here is a list of all the different places you can purchase kitchen equipment and tools.

- Online stores and auction sites
- Classified ads
- Yard sales and flea markets
- Retail stores

After you research and make a list of the things that you truly need, you will have an idea for exactly what you want. At this point, you are ready to begin the process of comparison shopping.

To make your job easier you may want to have a notebook or a spreadsheet devoted to keeping track of your findings. In fact, this is one of the tricks to effective comparison shopping.

Once you determine your system for keeping track, you can visit stores and search online to find the best deals. Before you make a purchase, you will want to do your initial research by determining the price. By comparison shopping you can easily save money.

While you search online and in the stores, you may want to look for specials and clearance items. You may be able to find coupons and special deals, as

well. Also, don't be afraid to bargain. In some instances, the sales staff may be aloud to bargain with their customers.

Some stores may also have a system where they will match the price of any of their competitors. So, if you like to do business with a certain company or store but they don't have the kinds of prices that you want, you may be able to do business with them after all.

HOW TO FIND THE BEST DEALS

Comparison shopping is just one method for finding the best deals. However, this type of shopping pretty much only takes into account the everyday price of an item. Some places have lower prices than others. However, comparison shopping does not take into account the special situations that may arise such as discount sales or clearance items.

There is a danger, however, that you may feel compelled to buy something just because it is at a good price, regardless of whether or not you need it. This is something that you need to be careful of. You do not need a new mixer, for example, if your current one functions just fine.

To prevent yourself from spending money that you do not have, return to your inventory list and the list of items that you truly need. If the item that is on sale is on the list of items that you need, then it is okay to buy it. Also be careful that you are not compromising quality by purchasing the items for sale.

Here are some tips to help you find the sales and discounts:

- See if you can find a coupon for the store you would like to shop at. You can look online or in your local paper or any coupon books you may have.
- Look at the sales flyers that you get in the mail and that can be found in the paper. These do a good job at alerting you to any particular discounts.
- There are certain stores websites that focus on close-out items that other department stores did not want. The items are still of a good quality, they are just not part of the store's stock anymore. This means that the closeout stores are able to charge less for the items they sell.

- There are certain times of year where clearance sales are common. Find out when these times are and visit the stores at that time to see if you can find any deals on your kitchen equipment.

Finding great deals is an art. When you do find a deal, compare it to the prices you were finding when you were comparison shopping. The deal is truly good if you can find the items for less money than the cheapest of your comparisons.

FINAL THOUGHTS ON FINDING DEALS

By now you should have a pretty good idea of what it takes to save money in the kitchen. As you can see, it extends beyond the obvious of buying the cheapest items you can find. In the case of kitchen equipment, the cheapest is not necessarily your best choice because it will cause you to spend more money in the long run.

In summary, here are the basic points for saving money on kitchen equipment:

- Understand which items are needed in a well-stocked kitchen
- Take inventory of the items you already have.
- Make a list of any items you need to replace and all of the items that you need to purchase.
- The best way to gather information about which items you should buy.
- How to avoid the latest fads and save money in the process.
- The difference between items that do not cost a lot but are still high quality versus items that are inexpensive because they are made with sub par materials.
- How to tell when you truly need something and how to avoid wasting your money on purchases you don't need.

- Develop the ability to comparison shop and find additional deals through sales, discounts, and coupons.

One last thing is that you may want to set a budget. If you exceed the budget, consider returning those items that are not true necessities.