

# WHY STEAM?

## Why Steam | Changes in Ovens | What else?

### Steam only

One type of steam oven is a steam only oven. This oven has a temperature range of 30C to 100C. This oven is great for low temperature cooking involving steam. So it would be good for cooking fish and vegetables. It would also be good for defrosting and for proving bread.

### Combi Steam Ovens

These ovens are a combination of steam and high heat. Their temperature range is from 30C to 230C. These ovens can be used as steam only, heat only or a combination of both steam and heat. This is really the most versatile of the steam oven choices.

### Steam Assist Ovens

This oven has the feature that steam is injected into the oven during the cooking process, adding moisture to food being cooked.

The amount of steam injected can be varied.

In these ovens you can't cook on steam alone.



## Why use a steam oven?

It's funny how something new comes onto the market and it takes a little while for the full benefits to be revealed. At least for the real innovations that will make a difference to how we cook.

Professional kitchens have been using steam ovens for a really long time. It took a while though for the technology to scale down for use in a home kitchen. Kitchens have also undergone a transformation. Have you noticed how the trend is now for a large open plan kitchen.

Not so long ago "new kitchens" had a wall oven and stove top. Modern kitchens now have the scope to incorporate 2 ovens, stove top, coffee machine and microwave or warming drawer.

All of these appliances have improvements designed to take full advantage of changes in technology and materials. And as a result we have more options on which method of cooking we use in our home.

I predict that in time, and not so far into the future as you might think, all home ovens will incorporate steam.



## How to choose the right oven for you

When we were researching ovens and cooktops we attended a few cooking demonstrations. They answered some of the questions.

The internet is an amazing resource. 4 years ago when I was searching for information there wasn't a lot of information around. It was a little bit like a leap of faith. I knew a steam oven would be good, I just didn't know how or why.

Now there is so much more information available, especially over the internet. There are blogs and websites such as:

- Cookwise
- Cooking With Steam
- Steam and Bake

Oven manufacturers are also providing more information and some have recipes available.

I'm not sure a lot of sales people really understand what a steam oven is. Try attending a cooking demonstration where a technical representative is present along with the chef or home economist presenting the food.

Talk to people who use steam ovens and read forums.

## Are steam ovens worth the price?

Yes, I think they are. When we bought our steam oven there were about 4 on the market to choose from. Bosch, Miele, Gaggenau and Neff were the manufacturers I can remember. Now all oven manufacturers will include a steam oven in their range.

The choice is fantastic and the options you have are amazing. The choice in colours, whether there is a reservoir or the oven is plumbed in and do you include a grill or a pizza setting. At the time we were shopping around, we wanted a grill so we bought one combi steam oven and one standard oven.

The price range now starts at about \$1,300 since Ikea entered the market. all the way up to the top end brands such as Gaggenau, Wolff and Miele.

With any appliance that you buy, get the best model that you can afford.

For making bread alone I would buy a combi steam oven. Now I would also add:

- being able to cook food at the correct temperature and for the correct amount of time
- being able to retain the vitamins in vegetables and good oils in fish

