

FINANCIAL TIMES

When the UK agent for German company Vorwerk contacted me about the launch of a new version of a kitchen device called Thermomix – “available only from home demonstrators”, “incredibly popular in Europe” (apparently it’s owned by a bonkers proportion of Spanish households), “the first updated model in 10 years”, “secret weapon of hundreds of restaurant kitchens” – it sounded like a lot of blah.

Except that it turned out to be for real. Thermomix genuinely has a cult following in Europe, especially in Spain. (“My mum has had every model,” emails my Madrid contact. “It is fantastic, a lifesaver – everybody has one.”) And it genuinely is used by top restaurants – The Waterside Inn, for example, and The Fat Duck. Mrs Technopolis and I have tried it, and though we were not best disposed at first, I can report that it truly is astonishing.

What is the Thermomix TM5? It’s a blender at heart – a very powerful one. But it’s also multifunctional: it can weigh, chop, whisk, emulsify, blend, grate, stir, knead and, after all that, cook and steam too. It does all this in one bowl with a single blade and a minimum of attachments. So the same machine can, say, grate nutmeg or Parmesan, peel garlic and chop vegetables; then it can produce from absolute scratch anything from amazing sorbet and ice cream to bread, cakes, soups, mayonnaise and casseroles. It’s a complete revelation and labour-saving in the extreme, as well as fun and satisfying. Being a new digital model, it has a touchscreen and a digital recipe book that really delivers.

OK, you have to meet the Thermomix halfway and learn how to use it. But the view from Technopolis Towers is that the only thing better than a TM5 would be two. Or even more – as many, many professional kitchens have.

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