

WARM UP

1 Quickly read the text and match these new cooking techniques with their pictures.

- 1  vacuum cooking
- 2  Gastrovac

GLOSSARY

sealed  
*sigillati ermeticamente*

## New cooking techniques

**Vacuum cooking** at low temperatures cooks food in sealed containers with the air partially extracted. This reduces oxygen content, preventing oxidation, which spoils foods, and enables us to preserve food for a long time.

You can use this technique with all food types except for dried pulses, which do not absorb enough water and remain hard.

Green-leafed vegetables need to be blanched and put in appropriate packaging to stop them going brown. Both red and white meats can be vacuum cooked, but delicate meat cuts require short cooking and less tender meat cuts should be cooked long and slow. Vacuum cooking is particularly good when boiling or stewing, as it keeps meat tender and tasty and preserves nutrients. You need to brown meat separately as it is not possible with this method. Vacuum cooking fish means we can preserve it for a period of time impossible with other methods, but it is too dangerous for frozen or deep-frozen fish. It is a simple and safe way of preserving the aroma, taste and colour of vegetables as they cook at only 90-92°C.

First pre-heat the vacuum-cooker, then foods are cooked at the required core temperature of 60°C for 30 minutes or 65°C for 15 minutes. Food is sterilised by bringing its external temperature to 75-85°C for just 1 minute.

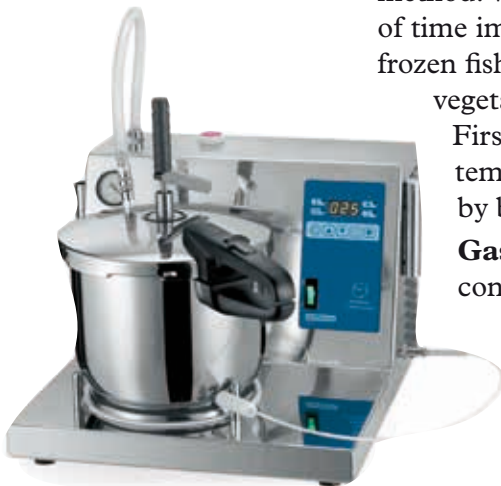
**Gastrovac or impregnation cooking** uses a special appliance, which consists in a casserole dish equipped with a thermostat, inside which you can reduce the pressure, thus lowering water boiling temperature and creating particularly tender and delicate textured food.

Meanwhile, the re-injection of air into the casserole dish generates a sponge-effect, so-called impregnation. As atmospheric pressure is restored, the food reabsorbs oxygen and the liquids around it, allowing an infinite combination of flavours. Red and white meats, tubers and fish can all be Gastrovac cooked and the process is simple. First bring the appliance to a temperature of 72°C, meanwhile browning the meats in a side casserole, removing the cooking fat. Next put the food in the Gastrovac casserole dish and add aromas (juices, herbs, sauces, bases, wine, essences and spices). Seal the Gastrovac, creating a vacuum and cook for the necessary time.

Re-inject air, remove the product and keep it hot. Finally reduce the remaining base at a high temperature and filter it through a conical sieve.



B



A

ACTIVITIES


READING COMPREHENSION

2 Read the text again and answer these questions with VC (vacuum), G (Gastrovac) or B (both).

Which cooking technique...

- 1 allows an infinite combination of flavours? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 can cook all types of meat? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 can help preserve fish longer? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 cannot be used for dried pulses? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 cannot be used to brown meat? \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 cooks at low temperatures? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 is filtered through a sieve before serving? \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 preserves the aroma, taste and colour of vegetables? \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 requires the removal of cooking fat? \_\_\_\_\_

LISTENING

**3**  **8** You will hear somebody describing a recipe they followed for prawn cocktail using vacuum cooking (VC) and a recipe for lettuce sautéed with smoky bacon using a Gastrovac (G). Decide which sentences belong to which recipe.

- a G I cooked them for 55 minutes at 50°C and then allowed them to cool and drain well.
- b    I cut the lettuce hearts in half.
- c    Finally I seasoned with salt, freshly-ground pepper and orange zest.
- d    I cooked the prawns for 15-35 minutes at a temperature of 55.6°C.
- e    I placed the meat stock, bacon, onions, carrots, rosemary and lettuce hearts into the Gastrovac.
- f    I salted and peppered the raw prawns.
- g    I served them in a blended sauce of tomatoes, garlic, peppers, honey, lime juice and some tomato purée to thicken it.
- h    Once the prawns were ready, I took them out of the bag and let them first dry and then chill.
- i    I placed a little melted butter and sugar in a frying pan, with the lettuce hearts flat side down and fried until golden brown.
- j    Then I sealed them in a bag with some rendered fat for flavour.

**4**  **8** Listen again and put the instructions to both recipes in the correct order.

Vacuum cooked prawn cocktail		Lettuce sautéed with smoky bacon	
1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>f</i> I salted and peppered the raw prawns.	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>