

What's *Hot* in Europe

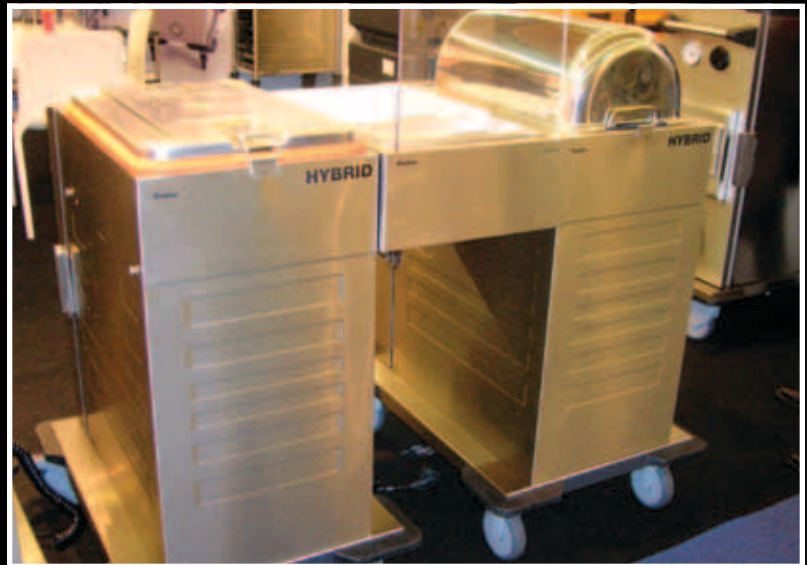
By Mary Esther Treat

Small trade shows seem to yield special gems and France's Equip'Hotel & IPA World Food Process Exhibition, Paris, is no exception. Held in November, 2008, the foodservice equipment portion of the show took only a few hours to walk; small manufacturers from France and neighboring countries are more likely to exhibit at Equip'Hotel than at larger shows like Milan's Host. And often it's the little companies that produce interesting equipment.

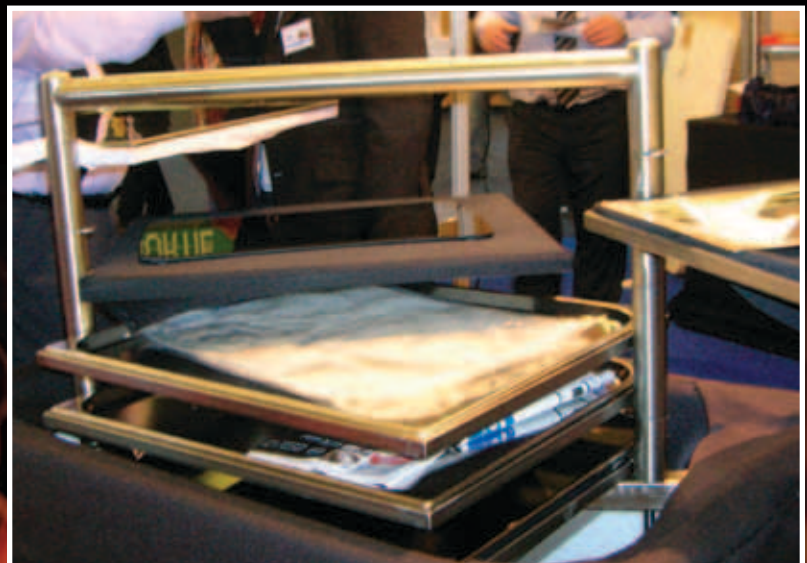
A favorite: a modular mobile cart by **Rieber** (Germany) that could be joined to a second cart by placing a bridge piece between them. The bridge could hold cooking equipment, like a grill or induction hob, as could the cart itself. And the cart's two compartments could be any combination of warm, cold or hot. Very slick. You can see some of Rieber's products at www.rieber.de.

Second favorite was **Magic Buffet** (Belgium), a wonderful example of a good idea executed simply and neatly. Magic Buffet holds six large trays inside a mobile box equipped with eutectic plates that can be frozen and will keep food below 40°F for up to 10 hours. Upon arrival at a catering location, unlock the crate, lift the trays up (there's a hydraulic lift incorporated), swing the trays out in different directions and Magic Buffet has the equivalent of 23 linear feet of serving presentation space. See it at http://www.magicbuffet.eu/uk/magicbuffet_accueil.html.

Granuldisk (Sweden) uses small blue plastic beads (plus water and a small amount of detergent) in their own potwashers to clean the dirtiest pots, pans and utensils. The granules can be used for 2,500 cycles – the



Modular mobile cart by Rieber.



Magic Buffet



top: **Silex** spray oil conveyor.
right, top: **ECP Group's** shredder/
compacter.



right, bottom: **Lighted shelving** by
Vauconsant.



machine keeps count. A new “combi” washer provides both dish and pot/pan washing. It appears to be available in Canada, but not the US. See the website www.granuldisk.com.

We were intrigued by **ECP Group's** shredder/compacter (France). They showed the usual kitchen waste products entering the machine, along with wooden crates, tin cans, soda bottles. www.ecp-group.com

Small cookers that produce easy to prepare/easy to eat snack foods are a potential option for convenience stores that want to provide something unique. **RoboQ** is a compact barbecue that grills skewered meat, fish or vegetable snacks in two minutes. It's simple – it switches on two IR heating elements when a skewer is inserted and turns off when the

grilling cycle is finished. The company offers their own “bamboos” product line of snacks as well and is looking for partnerships with large operators. www.roboq-europe.com. We've seen these in Japan for several years.

Silex (Germany) has a conveyor fryer, SF-360 Fritex, that takes raw or frozen product, sprays it with oil and cooks it using much less energy and oil than traditional frying. The SF-360 Fritex uses 30 liters of oil compared to the 400 liters used by a traditional vat fryer. The company says it can produce 1000 pieces per hour. www.silex-de.com

For good looking displays it is hard to beat the beautifully lighted shelving by **Vauconsant** – the lights are between transparent shelf layers.

And on a larger scale....

A day at the IPA World Food Process Exhibition (food processing equipment), held concurrently with Equip'Hotel, broadens an understanding of other branches of the foodservice industry. The equipment is recognizable – but as you might expect, it is MUCH bigger. Large mixers, extruders, packaging equipment, robotic arms for palletizing goods, robots for peeling fruit and vegetables, chemical and temperature testing equipment, candy-making equipment. Many manufacturers have models small enough for larger commercial kitchens. And the big stuff provides inspiration for labor-saving devices for small kitchens.

Edlund (a Vermont neighbor) had their large automated can cleaner/crusher on display, as well as some of their can opening equipment – including a specially designed unit for opening asymmetrical foils gras cans.

Tipper Tie Alpina, a Dover Industries company, had a new line, Swopper, with a beautiful chopper. All its electrical components are well protected from moisture and grease by being double-boxed. They also have a new “hanging line” which automatically strings 100 sausages a minute and hangs them on poles.

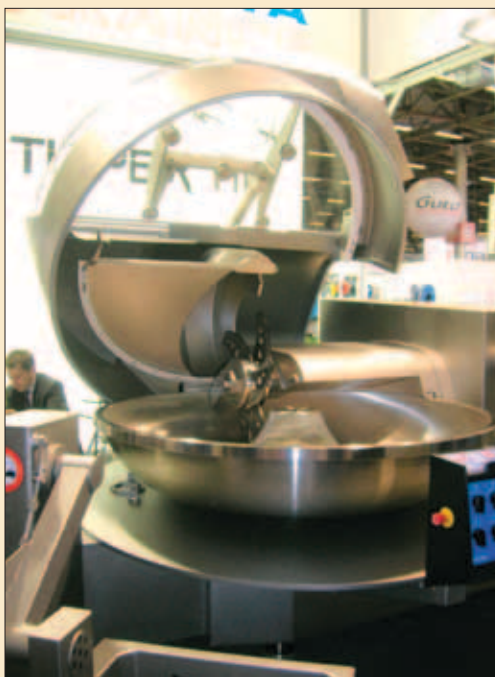
Ytron (on Lake Chiemsee in Germany) makes a mixer with a Venturi-shaped stator, which allows easier addition of powder to liquid. The Ytron-Y rapidly and homogeneously mixes without forming a vortex like conventional mixers. <http://www.ytron.com/english/unternehmen.html>

Another American manufacturer, **Urschel** of Indiana, had food cutters on display. The company was founded in 1910 by the inventor of a gooseberry snipper, is still family owned and has worldwide sales. They have machines that cut nuts, fruits, vegetables, meat, bread, fish and fowl. www.urschel.com

A.B.L. srl of Italy presented their fruit processing machines – they claim to be the first in Europe with apple processing equipment. www.ablcavezzo.it

AFOheat of Belgium uses gas to produce IR and convection heat transfer, with an emphasis on grilling and roasting, to custom design equipment for food processors. Their conveyor grill, the Afogrill, reduces product weight loss and energy consumption, according to the company. http://www.afoheat.be/site_EN/afogrill.asp

Mary Esther Treat can be found at Ideas Well Done (www.ideaswelldone.com)



Swopper, a chopper, from Tipper Tie Alpina



AFOheat's conveyor grill “the Afogrill.”