

AT HOME



YOU MAY not be Nigella Lawson or

Jamie Oliver, but with the fantastic new Defy range on offer to readers as a celebratory prize for the launch of our new goodlife, you stand a pretty good chance of being much better than just average.

And cooking on such elegant equipment could make you feel just like a celebrity.

Valued at close to R25 000, the prize comprises oven, hob with hood and microwave in stylish stainless steel and mirror glass, see right.

We are giving away the newly launched stylish Defy MGSE oven with multi-function six-stage operation.

"What's that?" we hear you ask. Answer: thermofan baking, fan-assisted baking, conventional baking, conventional grill, turbo grill and defrost. It has two chrome-plated oven shelves, two baking trays and a roasting pan and rack. In addition to all this, the 67-litre oven comes in easy-clean enamel with a removable door to improve the process still further.

The hob boasts five gas burners through glass, one of which is a speciality wok burner. Safety features include automatic ignition and flame failure devices. Naturally, this is in easy-clean, heavy-duty

WIN big with Defy

cast iron.

To top the hob and oven is the elegant curved glass hood with two halogen lights and aluminium filter.

Dream on kitchen goddess, because to complete the picture there is the metal and mirror glass-finish 34-litre microwave with convection grill featuring a range of cooking options.

The good basic down-to-earth information is that all Defy products are guaranteed for two



years and parts and service are available countrywide.

The prize on offer comprises the units only and not the cost of building them in.

So, fingers to the cellphone and get your entry in immediately. SMS the word "Defy" to 33963 and include your contact details. The competition line closes at

11pm tonight.

The lucky winner will be notified in The Mercury goodlife next Friday. (All calls charged at normal cellphone rates.)



Caesar stone is among the trendiest of kitchen countertops at present.

With a wide range of kitchen countertops on the market today, it's a matter of selecting one best for your environment and lifestyle. Omeshnie Naidoo asked the experts for the pros and cons

CHOICE. Any home decorator or contractor will tell you that as much as we love having a variety to choose from, we loathe it when the plethora of options becomes utterly confounding.

Nowhere is the statement more profound than in the home décor industry. These days there is a finish for just about everything in the home. In a space such as the kitchen, let practicality be your guiding principle, since functionality will always outweigh aesthetics.

The in-thing is quartz, which comes in an array of colours. It has consistency in colour and thickness, is available in exact slab sizes (which minimises wastage) and is not as expensive as entry-level granite,

Countertop tips

says interior designer Jocelyn Jones.

"Contrary to manufacturers' claims, lighter-colour quartz does tend to stain," says Kitchen Studio's Vinesh Maharaj. Though fashionable at the moment, it may date.

Granite, which is natural and considered timeless, is easier to process than quartz, he adds.

"Beware that lighter colours can stain if not sealed, and note that thickness and colour vary from slab to slab, which will make matching tops for later additions difficult.

"Look out for imported granite, which has beautiful veins," says decorator Nikki Rolfe. "You don't want flat colour, which is often what you get at the lower end of the spectrum. Let price be an indicator of quality and opt for granite that has life."

Granite is porous and not as hygienic

as stainless steel, which is the most hygienic of surfaces.

Steel, however, scratches easily. Buy poor quality at your peril – it may rust.

"Decent joins are difficult to produce in domestic kitchens," says Maharaj. Cement, on the other hand, is easy to construct and is among the most inexpensive options. And it can be paint-techniqued.

Cleaning can be more difficult, though, and abrasive cleaners will wear away the paint. Tiles look less damp, and offer a cottage look. They are also fairly inexpensive but the grooves can be a nightmare to clean and tiles lift and break at times.

Wood that is oiled requires very little maintenance but is far more expensive. Like granite it will not date but varnished tops require more maintenance.

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