



**How it works:** Available at your neighborhood lab-supply shop or on eBay, a rotary evaporator is a small distillery: It extracts intensely flavored syrup from almost any food. Just put your ingredients—say, strawberries and black pepper—in a glass evaporation flask, which heats them by rotating in a bath of hot water. A vacuum pump reduces the air pressure in the flask, which drops the boiling point of the water inside to as low as 112°F. As moisture seeps out of the strawberries and reaches a boil, vapor rises into a condenser. There it cools, collects as a clear liquid, and drips into another flask. The distillate adds flavor to dishes without changing the color or texture



Cooks in a bag to lock in juiciness

**How it works:** Seal your raw steak with a pat of butter and a sprig of parsley, and drop it in a bath of hot water for a juicy cut done perfectly throughout. The vacuum-packing traps moisture, while the thermal circulator maintains the water's temperature to within a tenth of a degree and keeps it moving to prevent hot and cold spots. The low-temp cooking also keeps the meat's cell membranes from bursting and letting out precious moisture and flavor.

**On the menu:** Skirt steak as tender as filet mignon, cooked ocean trout with a raw texture—A.W.



Applies an instant deep freeze

**How it works:** The Anti-Griddle maintains a constant temperature of  $-30^{\circ}\text{F}$  by pumping a refrigerant through a compressor to remove heat from the smooth steel surface. The result: Liquids, creams and gels get a frozen crust in 30 to 90 seconds, while staying creamy inside.

**On the menu:** Crème-anglaise lollipops, whipped-cream pancakes—A.W.



Hardwood flavor in your hand

**How it works:** Sprinkle hardwood sawdust into a pipe on the top of this device, light it up, and poof!—instant smoke you can infuse into your roast, pot of vegetables or vacuum bag for smokehouse flavor without the hazy kitchen.

**On the menu:** Smoked salmon, peachwood-smoked mushrooms—A.W.



Goes where tinfoil can't

**How it works:** This translucent paper can withstand temperatures up to 445°F (but not direct flame). Wrap up a roast with veggies, cinch it at the top, and toss it in the oven to cook in its own juice. Cut the top off the bundle tableside, and serve it in the bag.

**On the menu:** Monkfish and shrimp with vegetables, mango-jalapeño ragout—



Makes food soak up flavor like a sponge

**How it works:** Think of the Gastrovac as a crock pot, vacuum pump and heating plate in one. Suspend your food—pear slices, for example—in a basket above a flavorful liquid, such as wine broth. Seal the machine, and hit a button to turn the cooking chamber into a vacuum. The low-pressure environment pulls all the air out of the food, compressing it like a squished sponge. Near the end of their cooking, drop the pears into the broth and restore the pressure. The liquid rushes into the cells, infusing the fruit with an intense wine flavor. And no oxygen means no oxidation—so instead of turning brown, fruit comes out as brightly colored as it was when first sliced.

**On the menu:** Mint-infused apples, coconut pineapple, meat-flavored mushrooms—A.W.



**Meat, Your Maker**

This vacuum tumbler cuts marinating time by hours, first extracting air to expand the meat's fibers and then spinning it so that every area is exposed to your sauce of choice. Probably doesn't beat a good long soak, but perfect for when barbecue inspiration suddenly strikes.—Abby Seiff



Having trouble finding sushi-grade chicken in your town? Alternately exposing raw meat to a vacuum and a natural solution, this machine claims to kill up to 99.5 percent of common yet dangerous impurities such as E.coli, listeria and salmonella. As a bonus, while stripping your meat of choice of microbes, the machine simultaneously tenderizes and marinates

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