



CASE STUDY // WAGAMAMA

WILLIAMS REFRIGERATION

WAGAMAMA

REFRIGERATION MANUFACTURER “GOES EXTRA MILE” TO GUARANTEE EACH RESTAURANT HAS THE BEST EQUIPMENT

Since first opening back in 1992 wagamama has become one of the UK's most successful restaurant chains, with over 121 branches in the UK and a growing number of restaurants in other countries too.

Staines is one of the latest towns to get its own wagamama's, with a new restaurant that's proving as popular as ever. “We've been serving over 3,000 customers a week since opening,” says executive chef Steve Mangleshot, “As you can imagine, it gets pretty busy!”

Drawing inspiration from ramen noodle bars, wagamama's menu offers authentic Asian food inspired by the flavours of Japan with a focus on using the freshest ingredients.

Steve explains: “Our aim at wagamama is to provide fast, fresh food and provide our customers with great value for money. Williams Refrigeration plays a huge part in helping us achieve that.

“We've been working with Williams ever since I started here and for over 20 years in total. We've got a great relationship with them, they've been a huge boon in helping to grow wagamama.”

The Staines branch has a wide range of Williams products, including bottle coolers and bottle wells, counters fitted with doors, drawers and wells, an upright refrigerator, a blast chiller and a dual compartment cold room.

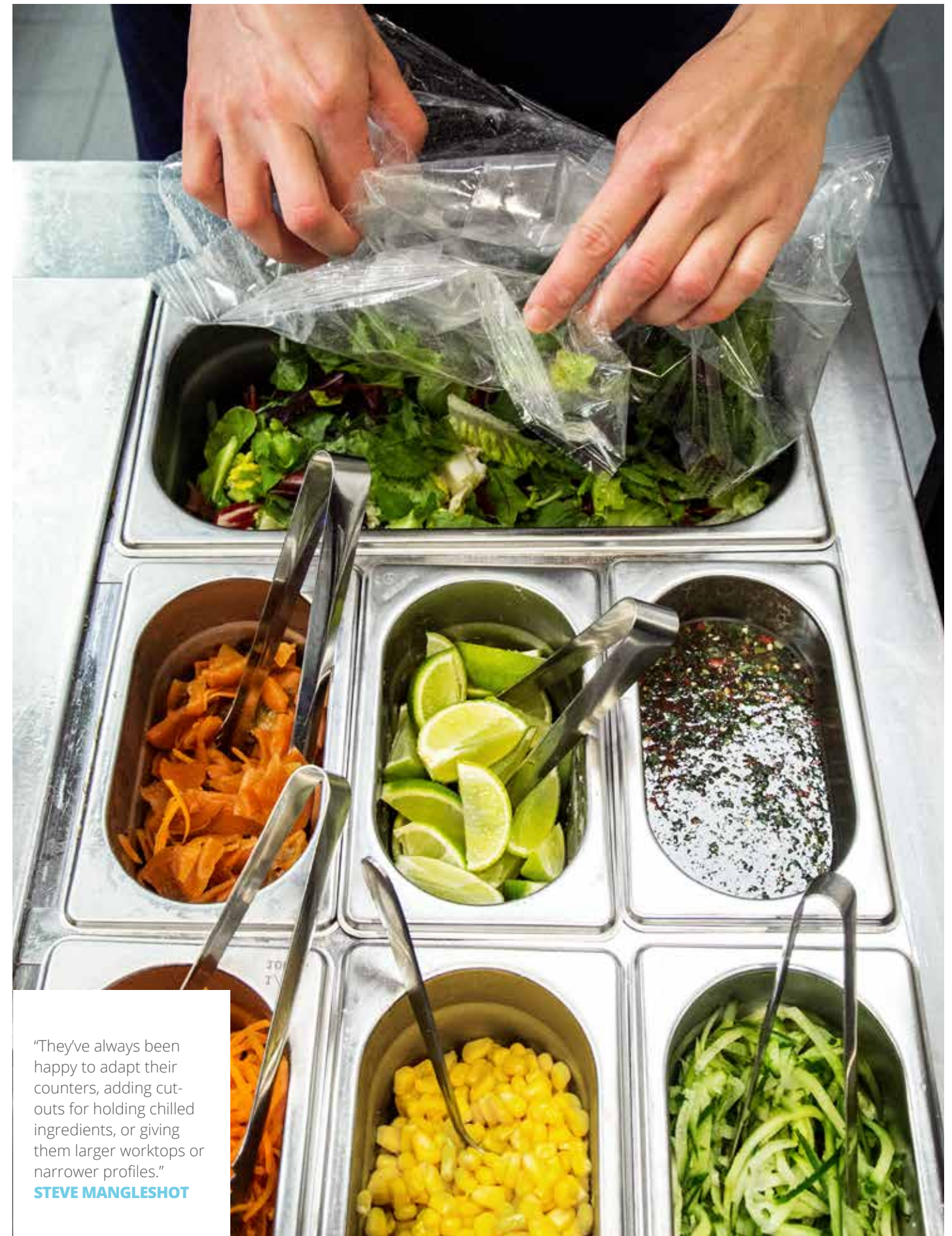
“Williams products are used at every stage of the production process,” says Steve. “They get used hard too, at peak times the doors are being opened every few seconds.”

With freshness of ingredients being one of the most important factors this could be a problem, but Williams designs its equipment to work in high ambient environments while quickly recovering their operating temperature.

From robust self-closing doors and heavy duty gaskets to the advanced CoolSmart controller, Williams products are capable of standing up to the kind of conditions found in busy professional kitchens like wagamama.

One of the challenges facing restaurant chains is the need to create a consistent customer experience in different locations. Each restaurant needs the same type of equipment, but will have a different amount of space to put it in. “This is another reason why our relationship with Williams is so important,” says Steve.

“They've always been happy to adapt or develop their products according to our requirements. For example they've been able to adapt their counters, adding cut-outs for holding chilled ingredients, or giving them larger worktops or narrower profiles.”



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This willingness to change and adapt is what makes Williams and wagamama such good partners. The Japanese concept of 'Kaizen', meaning good change, is a key part of the company's philosophy. "Basically it means that we're always looking for new and better ways of doing things," says Steve. "Williams are definitely Kaizen in their approach, although they may not call it that!"

Another great example of Williams' Kaizen approach is the dual compartment coldroom installed in the Staines branch. "Staines is lucky in that it's large enough to have a coldroom and separate fridges and freezers," explains Steve.

"The coldrooms are flexible enough that they can be installed virtually anywhere, including outside. This means that smaller locations are able to have chilled and frozen storage, even if there isn't room for more traditional equipment.

Williams always goes the extra mile to make sure each location has just the right equipment." Williams coldrooms can also be fitted with movable interior partition walls, allowing operators to adapt their needs according to seasonal menu variations.

Regardless of size many kitchens will eventually encounter problems of storage, especially with a menu based around fresh ingredients. "We have to keep our seafood fresh and unfrozen," says Steve. "To save chilled storage space we cook our meat in batches and then use the blast chiller to chill it quickly, which lets us store it in the fridge in perfect condition until it's needed."

The Staines wagamama has a WBC20, a blast chiller with 20kg capacity that can reduce the temperature of food from 90°C to 3°C in just 90 minutes.

"Williams has always been very supportive of wagamama," says Steve. "They listen to what we need, and they do everything they can to make sure we get the right equipment. And it's well-made, hardworking equipment that does what we need it to do!"





Design Excellence : Cool Technology



www.williams-refrigeration.co.uk

Installation of all Williams products requires adequate ventilation.

Williams reserves the right to modify the design, materials and finish in accordance with its progressive development policy.

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