



Top 5 Signs Your Restaurant Needs an Oil-Management System

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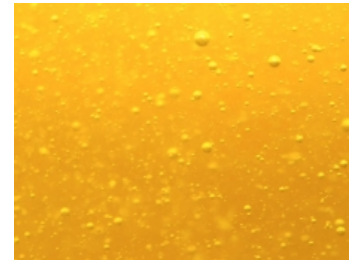
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Is your waitstaff tired of lugging around hot cooking oil? Are your once golden fries now a bit darker and almost sandy? It might be time to look into an oil-management system.



Oil THINKSTOCKPHOTOS.COM

Executive chef Anthony Leonhardi of Salut Bar Americain shares tips with *FSR* on when to upgrade your restaurant to an oil-management system. From his experiences at Salut Bar Americain, a casual French/American bistro in the Twin Cities, Leonhardi learned how an independent, full-service restaurant can benefit from automated oil management. Here he outlines the top 5 signs that indicate your restaurant may need an oil-management system and shares suggestions for success:

1. Your menu is filled with different fried foods.

“You can’t have your chicken tenders tasting like fish fry. Properly managing your oil will maintain the quality and taste of your food no matter how much you’re frying,” Leonhardi says. “Regular filtering will preserve the original flavors of the food.”

2. Kitchen morale is low.

“Ask your employees what their least favorite task is in the kitchen, and I bet filtering and removing used fryer oil is one of the most common responses,” says Leonhardi. “While an oil-management system won’t solve all your employee morale issues, eliminating the need to haul hot cooking oil and having a cleaner and safer kitchen sure can help.”

An automated oil-management system will fill and empty the oil with the push of a button, eliminating any complaints about hauling around 35 pounds of oil.

3. Your kitchen floor can double as a Slip ‘N Slide.

If your desk is full of workers’ comp claims from slipping on oil, it is time to rethink the process. “Manually dumping fresh oil into hot fryers from jibs or boxes, and hauling used cooking oil to the outside dumpster, can create very slippery floors,” Leonhardi says. “In 2012, we didn’t spend a dime on workman’s comp and I think that’s a real success for us.”

4. Your food is covered in sediment.

“If you are using dirty oil, you can see it. Fries should be pale-blondish brown in color. If they’re not coming out that way, your fries may be burning on the outside before they are cooked properly on the inside. Filtering your oil will help solve this issue,” Leonhardi says. An automated system makes filtering easy, and returns food to the perfect color and cooking consistency.

5. You aren’t filtering every night.

“Daily filtering is really the way to go. If you don’t, you’ll end up with a giant, goopy mess at the bottom of your fryer,” Leonhardi says, which is a fire risk. Daily filtering extends the life of the oil and preserves the flavor of the food. An automated system will track filtration behaviors, maximizing efficiency.

Salut uses the Restaurant Technologies oil management system. “Remember: Look at something you do every day and ask why you do it that way. Is there a better way to do it? For us, automated oil management is the ‘better’ way to go,” Leonhardi says.

By Kirsten Ballard

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