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New product saves oil used for deep frying and cuts fat

The oil was dark and old-looking, but the spicy chicken Colin Nishida cooked quickly was light and crispy, not greasy, moist on the inside and delicious throughout.

That's what one would expect from the chef and owner of Side Street Inn on Da Strip (as well as the original, on Hopaka Street), but a secret ingredient was at play here. The paper towels upon which he drained the chicken had only small spots of oil on them, not large pools or blotches.

The secret ingredient extends the life of restaurant deep-fryer oil by as much as 50 percent, reduces cooking time by about 34 percent, cuts the fat and calories in the food being fried and has other benefits

as well for the restaurateur and the diner.

With the surge in news about obesity in America, the timing for such a product is "perfect," said Koji Tomita, president of LTH Corp., which has the exclusive rights to import the Golden Fry Tech oil-saving plate outside Japan.

Golden Fry Tech, which LTH Corp. took from a handmade product to mass production, is a square titanium plate full of pukas, encased in a stainless steel "folder" with pukas that line up with those in the titanium. It sits in the oil and works its magic, saving Nishida about five 35-pound containers of cooking oil a week at his Kapahulu restaurant.

LTH has lined up Hono-

lulu-based Koha Foods as its primary Hawaii distributor.

Nishida is among the happy Honolulu restaurateurs who have bought the kitchen tool for \$1,200. Others include Kokoro-tei and Sushi Izakaya Shinn, Lobster King and Jimbo Restaurant. Others are trying it out.

"According to Jimbo, they'll save about \$4,000" a year on cooking oil costs, Tomita said.

Jimbo cooks tempura for its noodle dishes and other dishes, "and you know how fast, with tempura, the oil dies," Nishida said. "Especially ebi (shrimp), the flavor goes into the oil." However, the Golden Fry Tech also helps reduce flavor transfer, executives say.

Nishida has one fryer dedicated to seafood to make sure his "chicken tastes like chicken" and not, say, shrimp, but other restaurants might not have the luxury of multiple deep fryers.

The Japan-based inventor, which was trying to create a filtration system, had the accidentally invented product tested for various benefits, but LTH Corp. realized it had to build its own



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LTH Corp. President Koji Tomita, left, chef Colin Nishida and LTH Vice President Taki Haneda use the Golden Fry Tech oil-saving plate, a new product that extends the life of restaurant cooking oil.

credibility on U.S. soil.

Honolulu-based Food Quality Labs, formerly a C. Brewer company, was hired to conduct scientific testing.

It found that placing the plate in a 35-pound to 50-pound deep fryer, with proper maintenance, reduces oil absorption, thereby reducing fat and calorie counts. It also reduces cooking time, oil-degrading oxidation and cooks' exposure to smoke rising from old, oxidized oil. It also reduces acrylamide

product to those on its client list.

"A lot of times I'm in the customer kitchens, and I see all this oil being used," said Jonah Miyahira, who deals in seafood sales. "We came across this plate, and if it works for our customers, it's a no-brainer. We're already servicing these guys, and (the plate) is something that can help them save money. We thought that was a good match."

The product has a three-year warranty but should last longer than five years with proper care, Tomita said.

LTH plans to first concentrate on the commercial market and wouldn't mind getting an audience with a certain national chain, but also would like to introduce the product to the school system.

Later on, Tomita said, a smaller version will be released to the retail market for folks who fancy a good crispy deep-fried treat at home once in a while.

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