

# Meet the Panasonic Sonic Steamer

Combining the best of cooking with steam with the plug-and-play ease of a countertop microwave.



**T**raditional steamers have long been workhorses in the kitchen, but they're also big, costly, inefficient and demanding in terms of operations, energy use and maintenance. They're built on water-in-the-tank technology that can require special plumbing, hood vents, drain lines, de-liming and up to an hour's warm-up time before they're ready to work. Who has the time? Who needs the hassle?

Panasonic's revolutionary Sonic Steamer pulls the plug on traditional steamers by applying efficient microwave technology to generate instant, quick-cooking steam from moisture within or on foods. It's become a "killer app" for operators needing fast, high-production steam cooking capability with the plug-and-play ease of a countertop microwave oven.

And since it's backed by the power of Panasonic—an \$80 billion, Fortune 30 company and worldwide leader in quality electronics—operators can trust the Sonic Steamer's reliability and durability.

"The Panasonic Sonic Steamer is exceptional and holds up day after day," says Mike Pereria, Regional Culinary

Director at Ruth's Chris Steak House. "It doesn't matter how much use it gets, it heats the same from the first to the last use."

## More Power, More Capacity

At first glance, a lot of people think Sonic Steamers are microwave ovens, which are now so ubiquitous they've almost become a commodity, says Gino Iacovella, Foodservice Group Manager at Panasonic. "But once they see how the Sonic Steamer works and what it can do, they realize how unique it is. Yes, it's a microwave, but it's more powerful, has a larger capacity, uses less energy and cooks significantly faster than traditional methods, whether in a steamer or on the stovetop."

At the family-style Old Spaghetti Factory chain, Sonic Steamers have been in use for more than eight years. "We traditionally used combi ovens, which were very expensive and required constant repairs and maintenance," says Adolph Lehman, the chain's Vice President of Purchasing. "The Sonic Steamers produce great results with faster re-thermalization, creating very consistent products coming



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# SONIC STEAMERS



out of our kitchens. Panasonic has also been very instrumental in the support we have received, as well as with the research and development of new menu items."

## How It Works

With no internal water-management system, the Sonic Steamer is always ready to cook at the push of a button. Because of the microwave technology employed, high-heat plastic pans with solid covers replace metal pans, and the steaming process is completely self-contained within those pans.

"For example, when you rinse fresh broccoli before cooking, you'll have a little bit of water clinging to the broccoli after it's strained. That water is more than enough that's needed to steam the product in the Sonic," says Ken Megarr, MS, Panasonic Research & Development Director. "For prepared foods being re-thermalized, such as pans of lasagna, there's more than enough moisture in the product to

## "We love our Sonic Steamers."

—Stacy Lofton, Director of Child Nutrition, Knowledge Learning Corp., a national childcare and education chain

create a steaming environment within the pan. And for products where you don't want to use the inherent moisture, you can add wine, stock or any type of liquid to provide the steam to cook."

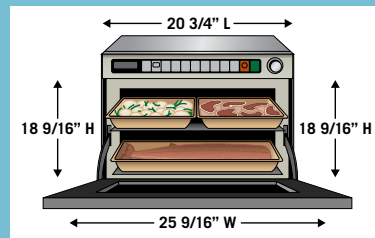
Steaming in a Sonic is different from microwaving, Megarr points out, in part because of the proprietary way in which microwaves are delivered into the cooking cavity and also in the greater amount of power delivered. "It takes a great deal more power to flash liquid into steam instantly," he says.

## Six Key Benefits

For providing foodservice solutions, the Panasonic Sonic Steamer delivers unique benefits in six important areas:

### 1 Large Capacity, Small Footprint

Small in footprint—just 26 inches wide—the Sonic is the only microwave-based steamer that can accommodate two full-size, 4-inch-deep covered steam table pans, up to four half-pans or four 12-inch plates.



### 2 Fast Cooking

More than four times faster than traditional steamers (not counting their lengthy warm-up time), the Sonic Steamer Model NE-3280 perfectly cooks and re-thermalizes menu items at an average rate of one minute per pound. Four two-pound lobsters for the four-top at table 19? Ready to serve in eight minutes. A full 12-pound pan of lasagna for the cafeteria line? Piping hot in 12 minutes. Three pounds of fresh broccoli blanched for tonight's special? Ready to plate in three minutes. A more economical Model NE-2180 Sonic Steamer is also available, offering the same production capacity with slightly longer cook times.

Sonic Steamers are huge time-savers at Knowledge Learning Corp., a nationwide chain of childcare and education centers, says Stacy Lofton, MS, RD, Director of Child Nutrition at the headquarters of the Portland, Ore.-based chain. "In our centers, it can take up to 50 minutes to boil water for pasta.

Then another 10 minutes after adding the pasta to the boiling water with constant stirring. Open flame, large pots, it's a chore!" she says. "With the Sonic Steamer, it takes 14 minutes from start to finish for evenly cooked pasta. We love our Sonic Steamers."

### 3 Food Quality and Nutrition

Steaming is one of the most healthful ways to prepare foods, and that's even truer with the Sonic Steamer. A study by Cornell University's Department of Nutritional Sciences found up to seven times the retention of ascorbic acid (Vitamin C) in fresh broccoli cooked in a Sonic Steamer compared to traditional steamers and stovetop boiling.

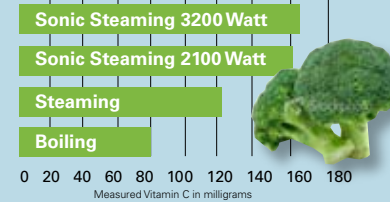
"Because the microwave energy is so powerful and the small amount of moisture used is contained within the pan, you're cooking for a shorter period of time, and nothing gets drained away. Hey, you can't argue with physics. Less water and shorter cook times—there's nowhere for the nutrients to go except to stay in the food. Plus, the products look better because there's less color degradation," Megarr says.

### Sample Sonic Steamer Cooking/Steaming Times

Food	Cooking/Steaming Time
1¼-lb. lobster	Under 2 minutes
#10 can of any food	5 minutes
Full pan of lasagna	12 minutes



### Enhanced Nutrition in Sonic Steamer (Broccoli Nutrition Levels)



\*This data extrapolated from the Cornell University, Department of Nutritional Sciences Study using Panasonic Microwave Ovens vs. traditional cooking methods.

A Cornell University study found that foods prepared in the Sonic Steamer retained up to 7 times more nutrients than foods prepared by boiling or traditional steaming.

### 4 Easy, Safe Operation

The Sonic Steamer's plug-and-play operation means exactly that: Simply plug the unit in, and it's ready to cook, with no water hook-up or drain. And it's "Instant On"—no warm-up time is required.

The steamer operates in both manual and pre-set modes. Pre-sets allow users to program cook times of up to 16 frequently prepared menu items, for fool-proof, consistent preparation.

The Sonic Steamer is also safe to operate. "When you open the door of a traditional steamer, you get a steam facial. That's nice in a spa, but not so nice in a kitchen," Megarr says. "With the Sonic Steamer, the only thing hot inside the cavity is the food, and that's inside a covered pan."

Its stainless-steel interior is easy to wipe clean with a damp cloth. The only other maintenance required is to remove and clean a set of filter screens at the front of the unit. This should be done monthly and is as simple as removing, rinsing and reinserting the filter screens.

### 5 Low Cost

A base price lower than that of most traditional steamers is just the start of the Sonic Steamer's cost-savings story. Because there are no water and drain lines required, no ventilation hood and

no water-filtration system, installation costs are eliminated. For traditional steamers, which have to be under a hood, these costs can easily run more than \$3,000 for a single unit, almost as much as the cost of a steamer itself.

Operating costs, too, are reduced, because no preheating is needed and no energy is wasted keeping the unit on standby periods between cooking. When the Sonic isn't cooking, it's not using energy.

On a longer-term basis, other costs incurred with traditional steamers are avoided as well. "With traditional steamers, door gaskets eventually fail, boilers and heating elements become crusted with lime scale buildup, and water-filtration systems need replacing," Megarr says. "None of these costs are factors with Sonic Steamers, because the only water is in or on the food inside the pan. It never hits the equipment."

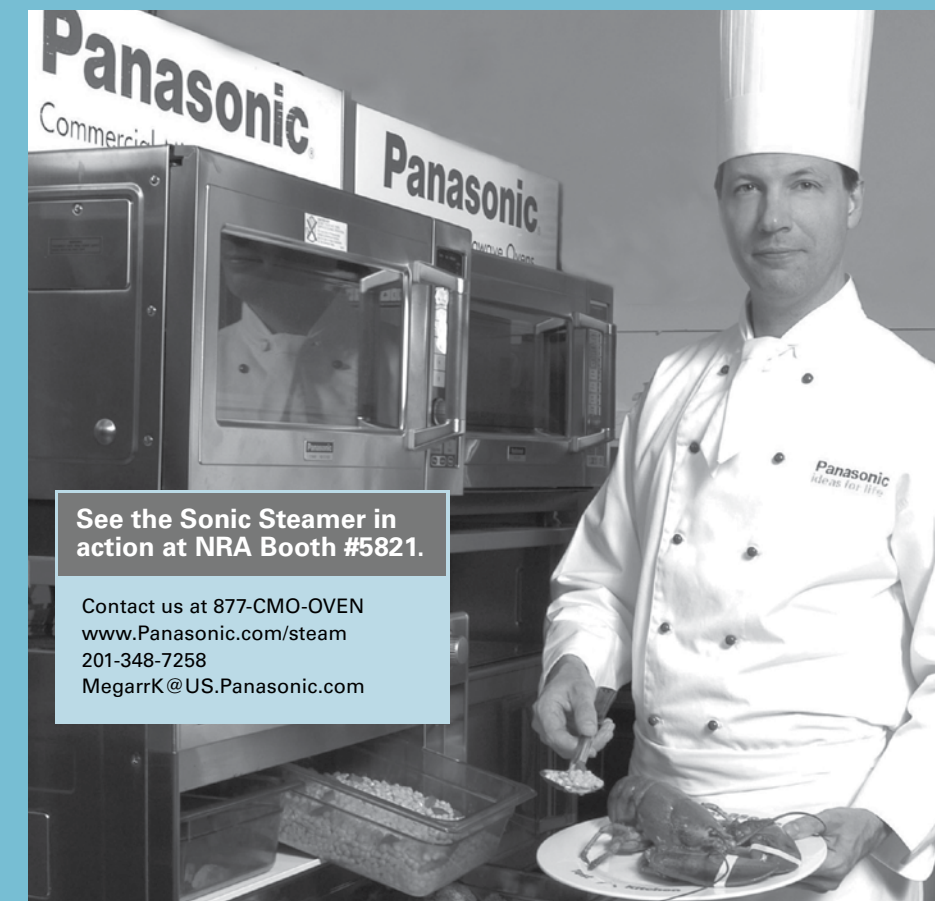


### 6 Three-Year Warranty

The Sonic Steamer model NE-3280 is backed by a full three-year parts and labor warranty. The model 2180, which costs roughly 25 percent less and has slightly longer cooking times, has a three-year warranty on the magnetron and one year on all other parts and labor.

For more information on the Panasonic Sonic Steamer plus appetizer, seafood, vegetable, pasta and dessert recipes, visit [www.panasonic.com/Steam](http://www.panasonic.com/Steam).

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See the Sonic Steamer in action at NRA Booth #5821.

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TRY THIS  
WITH YOUR  
STEAMER

The Sonic Steamer  
Heats foods like  
sandwiches, nachos,  
and cook-chill  
products

Save the nutrients in the foods you serve your customers while saving money, because unlike traditional steamers, **The Sonic Steamer** requires no water line, no gas line, no plumbing, filter or vent hood, no pre-heating—you'll get instant steam; no replacing gaskets, no de-liming, plus minimal maintenance.

Perfect for heavy volume steaming and re-therming in restaurants, supermarkets, delis, school food service, healthcare, correctional facilities and banquet halls.

- 3200 Watts of cooking power
- Holds two full-size 4" tall steam table pans with covers
- Top and bottom energy feed with 4 heating elements
- Convenient plug-in saves energy through on demand consumption
- A 3-year warranty

Visit us at [Panasonic.com/steamer](http://Panasonic.com/steamer) or call **1-877-CMO-OVEN** (1-877-266-6836) for more information.

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