



Increasing Your Profits with Creature Comforts

"natural gas ambiance for your customer enjoyment"

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Although maximizing your dining area has always been an important issue, today's economic challenges have given operators even more reason to increase seating capacity and revenues with new outdoor and indoor dining environments. Best of all, this can often be accomplished with minimal investment. So, it has often been said that "necessity is the mother of invention" and in thinking of additional ways to improve that bottom line, many of yesterday's common "appliances" are becoming today's marketing edges! As the "nostalgia craze" continues to grow, we find many once popular products are rapidly gaining popularity again.



Yes, things do have a way of coming around full-circle, and that certainly holds true for **gas lights, gas tiki torches, firewalls and fire pits** for today's foodservice operations. Operators today are employing these basic but improved technologies as a means to generate more revenues by increasing their seating capacities for minimal costs and creating comfortable outdoor dining environments for customers. Adding these simple yet attractive "creature

comforts" can create "glowing" profits by creating new and attractive outdoor dining spaces and cozy improvements indoors that features gas lights, tiki torches, fire walls and fire pits.

Today's Drivers for Comforts...

According to the Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association (HPBA), one of today's new luxuries is that of a "casual lifestyle". And what consumers experience at home they also like enjoy when they are dining out in regards to comfort and ambiance. Relaxation, spending time outdoors and outdoor entertainment are the primary drivers for moving these trends into today's restaurant environment. And a growing list of restaurateurs recognize that added ambiance with additional natural gas amenities can help entertain and comfort customers to foster more socializing by extending their stay and increasing the average check.

So let's look at some simple low-cost options that you can employ to increase your bottom line by adding a new and attractive outdoor dining space that

features gas lights and fire pits and creating a more cozy and social indoor space with gas firewalls and fireplaces.

The Romance of Gas Lights & Torches...

The addition of gas lights and torches to your outdoor dining area has long been an added ambiance and romantic appeal for your outdoor dining customers. The charm of that 19th-century Gas Light Era can be yours today from a variety of different manufacturers.



Gas lights for restaurants come in many different shapes and sizes and have popularized an open flame burner technology. Units that incorporate the open “flickering” flame technology, require less maintenance than those equipped with fragile silk mantles and are often designed to be turned on and off with the flip of a switch, which I will expand on in more detail.

With a typical gas input of 3,000 Btu's per hour (open flame), these ambiance enhancing lamps will cost less than three cents per hour to operate at current industry gas prices!

And thanks to technological breakthroughs, today's modern gas lights can incorporate an electronic ignition system which allows open-flame lanterns to be turned on with a typical light switch. With low-voltage electronic ignition, should the flame blow out, the lantern will automatically re-ignite. Customers now have the convenience of turning the gas lantern on and off with the flip of a switch rather than with lighters and ladders. The electronic ignition system can be used for situations where gas lanterns are installed over doors, or where ladders are needed to turn lights on and off. It can also be useful in conservation of energy, to turn them off when the dining room is not in use. And to keep things simple, more than one lamp can be operated from a single wall switch; however each lamp does require its own electronic ignition component.

While outdoor garden torches have dotted summer landscapes for decades, many operators who are looking to create a more “tropical themed” outdoor dining environment have started to install high grade copper-constructed models as permanent fixtures. Torches can be classified as either kerosene or gas fueled, but there are definite advantages to using the gas-fired units; better performance and less maintenance. A gas-fired tiki torch head is fired at a more constant pressure, which allows the flame to be higher and more brilliant than that of a traditional kerosene model. In addition, a kerosene model's flame height is dictated by how much fuel is physically present and consumed by the exposed wick above the uppermost fitting. While fiberglass wicks have a longer life, they cannot match the absorption of a cotton wick. Yet, cotton wicks will actually burn down with the consumption of the fuel. This then affects how much kerosene is above the wick-holding fitting, therefore requiring a cotton wick to be advanced upward after so many hours. In contrast, natural gas tiki torches do not need this same type of attention. The torch's flame is a consistent height for the entire evening and a group of torches can be turned on or off with the use of a master valve. And long term maintenance is simply limited to keeping the torch's orifice and burner free from debris.

Gas Fire Pits, Bowls and Walls...

It takes more than a few tables and chairs scattered on an empty terrace to make a popular patio. The best examples possess character enhanced by decorative



features. And the addition of “visual warmth” has become a huge attractor on patios and indoor conversational areas because customers like to congregate around their warm and inviting ambiance. The increasing popularity of gas-fired fire pits and fire bowls have afforded many savvy operators with more revenue as a result of providing customers with intimate outdoor spaces for after dinner relaxation and added

conversational beverage sales. They come in a variety of styles and designs and are also economical to operate when compared to the added revenue they can generate by enticing customers to stay longer and spend more. The increasing popularity of the expansive “fire wall” both indoors and out is an ever popular gathering place for customers to spend just a little more time and money before they leave your establishment for the night. And given the challenges of today’s economy, employing these features to your restaurant or bar can add big dividends to your bottom line!