



# Green Dream Cooking Machine

By Rosie Inge

We agreed to do a house swap with a 6-bedroom family house, 45 minutes from Nice, which is set in six acres with a swimming pool. So we had a look around ours, and woke up to the fact that my 23 year old friend, the halogen cooker had to be replaced. The door springs went some time ago, and a handy little hand-shaped chair proved very useful in propping the oven door firmly closed. I felt I might have problems explaining this Heath Robinson contraption!

I first met an induction hob at a cookery demo by Adam Fellows in Wells Town Hall. He was singing the praises of this demonically fast method of cooking, so after some research, I discovered Amica, a Polish company with an excellent reputation for reliability, which had just starting exporting their induction cookers to the UK.

The 6011E3Ta, a 60cm oven which combines the versatility of freestanding with the efficiency of induction was the model I needed (at £599.00). Phil Higginson from RDS fitted it neatly into the gap left by the Tricity, and I was thrilled: it stood there, gleaming invitingly. He told me that Amica is the most modern factory in Europe.

**Disadvantages first:** it only has one oven, so I have to heat the plates elsewhere.

**Pots & Pans:** most of my old pans are not compatible with induction cookers (heavy duty cast iron is ok).

**Advantages:** But, hey, let's look at the bright side and who wouldn't say no to a collection of pans that are shiny and co-ordinated. So, shiny and co-ordinated my shelves now are, with beautiful Circulon Infinite by Meyer which, as well as a lifetime guarantee (how do they know how long I'll live!), can be used in the oven as well as on the hob. They are also very goodlooking and I saw Raymond Blanc flash one in his recent cookery series. Three saucepans (16cm, 18cm and 20cm), a 24cm stockpot, a 26cm chef's pan and a 20cm frying pan will cost around £400.00 and are available from ([www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)) and on ([www.kitchenwarexpress.co.uk](http://www.kitchenwarexpress.co.uk)).

**Speed:** put some water in a pan, turn it to high, and literally feel the water heating instantly. Speed is the main advantage and a very fast pace at that. Not only do the pan's contents come to the boil quicker, but the dish actually takes less time to cook (warning: don't leave your pan on high and go out into the garden!).

**Controllability:** excellent, although it took a few days to get used to the timing. One clever aspect is that you first turn the hob knob to Automatic, then straight away to the heat selection you want it to continue on: it will pulse at 9 (the highest) until it boils and then return to the number to finish, so you don't need to watch it til it bubbles and then turn it down.

**Cleanliness:** this is very exciting. Because the heat is generated by magnets in the induction hob reacting with the metal of the pans, neither the ceramic surface of the hob nor the bottom of the pans heat up to the extent that they do with gas or plain electric elements. So, spillages don't burn on the hob, or stick to the bottom of the pans. My bottle of Hobrite will last much longer, as will the grease in my elbow. There is a very natty setting where you half fill a bowl with water, turn the oven control to Steam and it will clean the inside.

The oven makes the most delicious scrumpy roast potatoes and every dish I've cooked so far has been well received by its recipients. There's also a useful storage drawer at the bottom of the oven which I vaguely hoped might heat the plates but it doesn't.

I'm trying to live as sustainably as possible, so I'm thrilled with the news that I will use far less electricity. Instead of heating the area under a pan like a traditional gas or electric burner, induction cooktops heat the pan directly. Oscillating induction coils are set underneath the black cooktop so no energy is wasted at all. You loose 55% of the energy when cooking on gas because the heat spreads up the outside of the pan and 35% on ceramic.

So, I have a very good looking, extra economical, decidedly green new friend in my kitchen, and I'm looking forward to a satisfying and exciting culinary partnership for the next 25 years.

*All Amica products have a comprehensive two year guarantee and are only available from independent specialist retailers.*

*Stockists: Refrigeration Discount Co, 5 Highweek Road, Newton Abbot; tel 01626 363038; Chard Domestic Appliances Limited, Chard, Dorec House, Old Town; tel 01460 63698; Domestic Electrical Appliances, Yeovil, 17 Wyndham Street; tel: 01935 474284. [www.amica-international.co.uk](http://www.amica-international.co.uk).*

