



Kitchen Layouts, Trends, And More Discussed On “Food For Thought”

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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ST. LOUIS - A restaurant is only as fast and efficient as its kitchen layout allows it to be. Certified Food Safety Instructor Linda Petterson and Chef Michael Lepage discussed the importance of a well-designed kitchen layout on the latest [“Food For Thought” segment on Our Daily Show! on RiverBender.com](#)

Kitchen layout design is especially important in fast-paced commercial kitchen environments such as Chick-fil-A, which Petterson said is currently on its eighth version of their kitchen layout.

“I found that rather intriguing because they’re constantly trying to revamp that,” Petterson said. She added cross-contamination and ease of movement are the two highest priorities in kitchen layout design.

While national chains may have their kitchen layouts all figured out, the average restaurateur may not know which designs work best. Lepage recommends working with a company like Ford Hotel Supply’s Engineering Department, who can design and build the ideal layout.

“Most restaurateurs don’t know how to build a restaurant,” Lepage said. “They know good food, good beverage, management, maybe some money management skills, but building a design for a restaurant - whether front of house or back of house - is something that they might not be experts in, so let the experts be the experts at something you’re not a part of.”

Lepage and Petterson agreed that bad kitchen layouts can cause everything from inefficient kitchens to stressed out employees, so it’s important to give employees the tools they need to succeed, including an efficiently designed kitchen.

A popular modern kitchen trend is the “open kitchen,” which allows customers to see line cooks preparing the food as they’re eating, Lepage said. This allows for greater transparency and emphasizes the importance of keeping the kitchen clean, he added.

Other factors to consider include the size of the building and temperature of menu items. Bigger kitchens obviously mean more space to clean and manage, but also allow for more space for employees and customers. Lepage added it’s important to keep cold menu items together and somewhere separate from hot items - for example, it’s important not to store cold dessert items next to a hot grill to keep them from melting.

For even more kitchen design tips, trends, and more, check out the full “Food For Thought” segment with Petterson and Lepage at the top of this story or on [RiverBender.com/video](https://riverbender.com/video).

Petterson is also hosting some Food Safety Manager Certification courses coming up around the area, each from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.:

- Monday, Oct. 16, 2023 - DJ’s Pub & Grill, Jerseyville
- Tuesday, Oct. 24 - Turf Bar, Breese
- Sunday, Nov. 5 - Boogie’s, Maryville