



SHIMA

Redesigning the kitchen for "sustainable food and workstyle" and installing a temperature control system

First-floor retail space. Rice-flour bread is displayed on the left shelf, and lamb in the refrigerated showcase (photo taken before opening).

SHIMA opened in Machida City, Tokyo, with the aim of offering a no-worries menu from a worker-friendly kitchen. SHIMA is a combined retail and dining restaurant in Tokyo's Machida City that sells primarily rice flour and lamb and represents the owner's vision to create such a space. According to President Akemi Akiho, they decided to install Kitchen Link Cloud, a cloud-based temperature control system, and the latest equipment, such as a combi oven and Vario Series Dual Pan, to reduce the physical and psychological strain on staff while providing a safe, high-quality menu.

— A combined retail and dining restaurant specializing in rice flour bakery and lamb

SHIMA opened on September 10, 2022, on Tsurukawa Kaido Road in the Tama Hills area of Machida City (Tokyo). It consists of a rice-flour bakery, a sales area selling mainly lamb products, and a dining area with approximately 30 seats.

Fukuya Co., Ltd., the operating company, operates five stores along the Keio Line in Tokyo: a fish shop, a combined fish shop and deli, an izakaya (Japanese pub), an Akita restaurant, and a Genghis Khan* restaurant (* "Genghis Khan" is a Japanese mutton and vegetable dish). Two things that happened prior to the opening of SHIMA had a significant impact.

First was the COVID-19 pandemic. President Akemi Akiho recalls, "I think many people were concerned about the future of the food and beverage industry. We and our employees were also quite concerned about the future of the restaurant industry. The COVID-19 pandemic was a setback, but it gave us time to think about the future. One conclusion we came to was to create a new place where everyone could work with peace of mind. --

Another was the illness of President Akiho's younger brother, former President Masakatsu Yoshioka. "We've helped out in the family restaurant business since we were young," said President Akiho, who took over the president role. She expressed regret, saying, "When Yoshioka, who had long led the company, fell ill, we realized that we, the ones who were closest to food, had neglected our own meals because we were too focused on our work. That's when I decided to reconsider the whole concept of food."

Faced with these two major challenges one after another, they decided to close the businesses they had built up to that point (management rights were negotiated for one restaurant) and launch a new business model, SHIMA, to change business formats.



Akemi Akiho, President of Fukuya

— Rice-flour bread was chosen as a less burdensome option for workers

President Akiho coined the phrase "place where everyone could work with peace of mind," and it has two meanings. First, it means that the restaurant will continue to operate and that Fukuya employees will have long-term work. Second, we want to create an environment where employees can continue to work even if they are elderly or ill and want to return to work.

President Akiho explains, "As we continue running the restaurant, for example, more people will become too old to work as hard as they once did. We wanted to focus on a menu that would make work less burdensome for such people." One of the ideas was to make bread and tacos with rice flour. "With wheat-flour bread, it takes a lot of effort to knead the dough to produce the gluten. Rice flour bread, on the other hand, requires less effort and less time for fermentation, so relatively, it requires less labor. Also, because it is gluten-free due to the absence of flour, it is less stressful on the digestive system of the person eating it. Rice-flour bread is a gentle food for both employees who cannot do strenuous work and for those who eat it," President Akiho says.

For Fukuya, however, it was the first time for the company to handle rice flour, and baking bread with it was a first-time challenge. They had to start from scratch. The chefs and staff not only attended Fujimak's "Cooking Live" cooking demonstration but also visited Fujimak's test kitchen, where they repeated multiple simulations covering various cases, including frozen dough and scratch dough, using the kitchen equipment planned for the restaurant.

"The corporate chefs at Fujimak were there to give us personalized help, including for other menu items," says President Akiho. "They kept checking in with us after we returned from the test kitchen, especially for the rice-flour bread. When we received the 12-page report, it was more detailed and attentive than we had anticipated, and I remember saying to our chefs, 'I can't thank the corporate chefs enough.'"

In addition to gluten-free bread rolls "Maru pan" made with domestic rice flour, SHIMA also sells "Mackerel Bread," "Akita Sausage Bread," "Brown Rice Bread," tacos, and other items. Since there is no flour whatsoever in the shop, even people with gluten allergies can visit.



Bread-making area In addition to a combi oven and a table-type refrigerator/freezer, they also installed a dough conditioner that controls fermentation at every stage, from frozen dough to scratch dough.



Rice-flour bread is baked in the combi oven.

— We serve lamb that we find delicious and whose production history can be traced

Lamb is another mainstay of the menu. In addition to Welsh lamb, for which Akiho was appointed as a promotional chef by the British Embassy, the product lineup also includes Icelandic lamb, French mutton, and Taiheizan pork. Lamb was the main ingredient at the Genghis Khan restaurant they used to run and an item that they also handled for direct online sales. They also sell shabu-shabu, Genghis Khan, and barbecue meal sets that come with vegetables.



Dining space on the second floor of the restaurant has smokeless roasters installed.

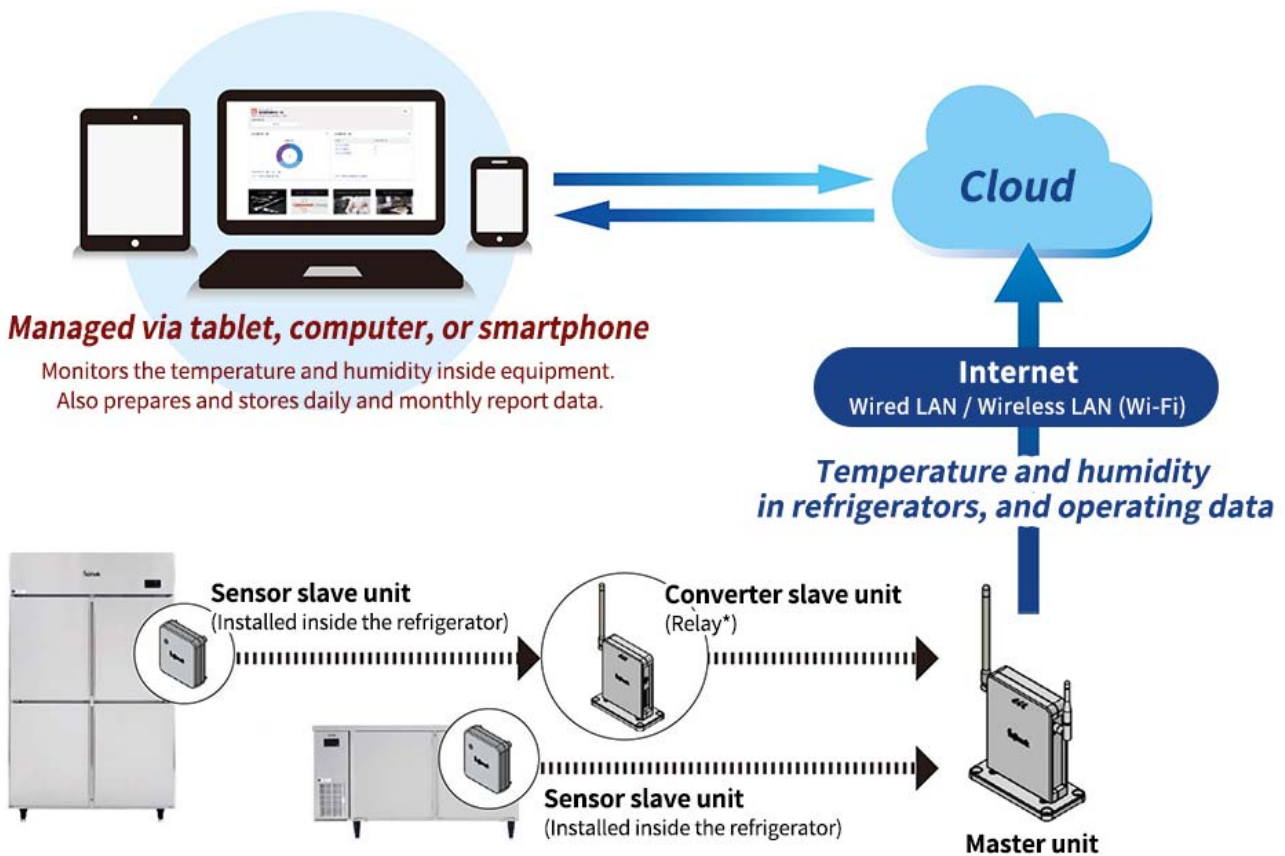
President Akiho says, "We wanted to serve food that we find delicious and would feel comfortable even feeding to a sick relative. As for the lamb, we offer lamb that people like us, who couldn't eat it before, find delicious. Whether it is lamb or pork, they all have one thing in common: they are all traceable. We want the people who eat the meat to know who raised the livestock and how it was raised."

In addition to selling meal sets on the first floor, the restaurant offers a lamb menu in the second-floor dining room, which has six tables and can seat around 30 people. The menu focuses on lamb meat and rice-flour tacos. "To avoid wasting ingredients, the dishes served on the second floor use the same meal sets that we sell. The restaurant can also be used to enjoy alcohol and such, but we basically operate on the premise that visitors can eat the meal sets sold on the first floor at home, enjoy them as taste test on the second floor." President Akiho says.

— Adopting Kitchen Link Cloud for temperature control that is also worker-friendly

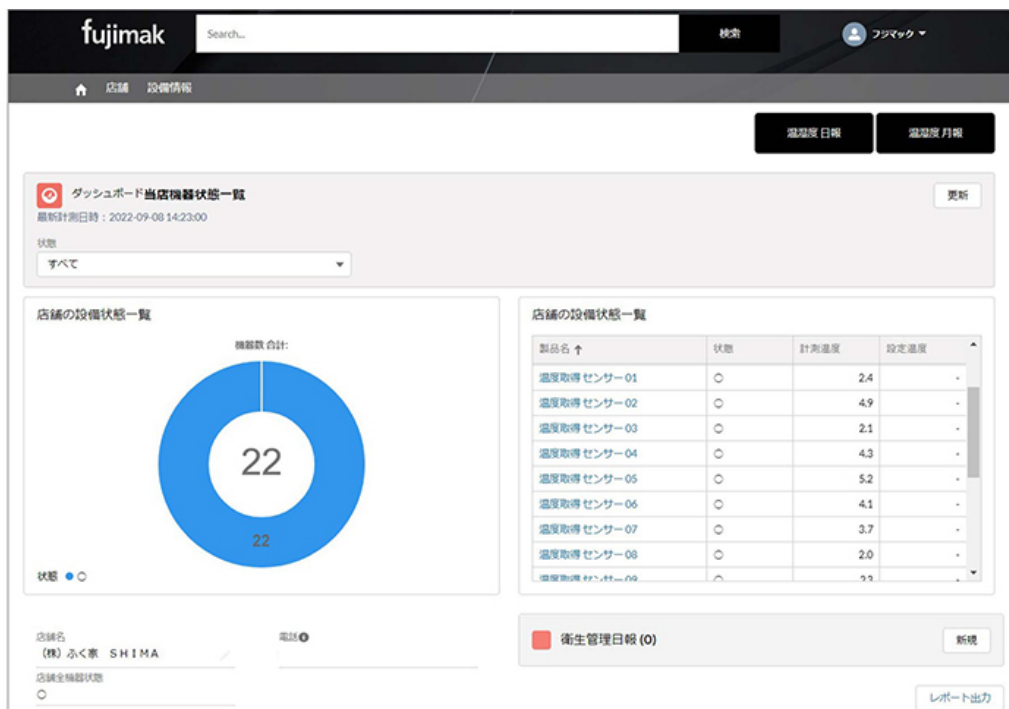
SHIMA has installed the "Kitchen Link Cloud," a temperature control system that uses sensors to read the internal temperature of refrigerators and other appliances and stores the data in the cloud via wireless communication. President Akiho says, "This is to implement HACCP-compliant hygiene management in a gentle way that does not burden the workers."

Even if we make a checklist and check the temperature of the refrigerator, we can sometimes forget because we're only human. Because we are a small shop, having a full-time HACCP-compliant employee is not an option. Furthermore, in the unlikely event that an item has an abnormal temperature, because kitchen staff is not constantly checking refrigerator temperatures, they will feel blamed and stressed, even if it is not their fault. With Kitchen Link Cloud, internal temperature data is automatically collected and sent to the cloud, eliminating the need to worry about forgetting to record it. Cloud storage also provides a means for us to externally store data. In other words, the fact that the data cannot be tampered with by the restaurant provides proof that it has been recorded honestly."



* Uses the converter slave unit as a relay if the sensor slave and master units are far apart.

Example configuration of the Kitchen Link Cloud system Sensors collect data from the refrigerators/freezers and store it in the cloud. The data can be transferred to a remote computer at any time.



The Kitchen Link Cloud management interface at SHIMA. Using the cloud eliminates the need to update software or hardware capacity, and the system can be installed at a low cost.



Kitchen Link Cloud sensor installed in SHIMA's refrigerator-freezer (zoomed-in photo) and the parent unit for communication (top of the refrigerator)



In-kitchen relay unit (left) and a temperature/humidity sensor (right).

The user-friendliness of Fujimak's latest equipment

Fujimak helped with the design of SHIMA's kitchen, which included several other Fujimak products, in addition to Kitchen Link Cloud. President Akiho is particularly fond of the combi oven and Vario Series Dual Pan. She shares, "Both of these products enable the elderly or those returning to work from illness with diminished physical strength to cook with less strain on their bodies while still enjoying the pleasure of cooking and the satisfaction of doing their jobs."



First-floor main kitchen. Equipped with a Vario Series Dual Pan, combi oven, gas range, etc.

Apparently, Fukuya has numerous recipes that were handed down from artisans before they retired from the field. SHIMA has saved and uses some of these recipes via the combi oven's program feature. President Akiho says, "Even with the same ingredients, each person has a different idea of when to add which ingredients. That makes it difficult to maintain a consistent flavor. The combi oven's program function remembers what to put in the oven and when, and the alarm tells you when to put it in, eliminating the need to memorize recipes and maintain a consistent flavor no matter who makes it."

She also noted that the Vario Series Dual Pan was appealing because it can perform multiple functions, including pressure cooking, simmering, baking, roasting, and deep frying, freeing workers from heavy labor and achieving high productivity. President Akiho points out, "Unlike cooking at home, restaurants use large pots and pans, so everything workers handle is quite heavy. Some workers leave the restaurant when their strength diminishes because they can no longer carry heavy pots. In this regard, the Vario Series Dual Pan, with its large capacity, relieves them of heavy labor and eliminates the need to repeatedly transfer ingredients from one pot to another. It also heats up quickly due to its powerful heating capacity. As a result, cooking that used to take eight hours can now be completed in only around one hour. Another feature worth noting is the convenience of the automatic water supply. Measuring water and pouring it into pots takes significant effort. The prep staff was very excited about this feature."

President Akiho also points out that the equipment is easy for older employees to use due to its easy-to-understand control panels and other interfaces. She says, "When people first try out new machines, they are hesitant because they are concerned that they will make a mistake and break something. The combi oven and Vario Series Dual Pan are very intuitive, similar to a smartphone screen, which lowers the psychological barriers to using them. I feel that Fujimak machines are very worker-friendly." The development of SHIMA has taught us that people-friendly cuisine is born from a people-friendly kitchen.



SHIMA

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