The Westinghouse How Australia Cooks Report surveyed over 1,000 Australians about their cooking behaviour and habits, revealing that Australian households are traditional at heart when it comes to home cooked meals for the family and sharing quality time around the dinner table.

There’s something special about a home cooked meal – a family setting, fresh foods, warmth, healthy eating and comfort. The newly announced research from Westinghouse supports this familiar scenario, revealing that more than nine out of ten Australian households are cooking at home on any given day, in contrast to the common perception that Australians are dining out and regularly ordering takeaway meals.

Healthy, balanced and nutritious meals are important to Australians, especially when it comes to choosing the evening meal. The simple yet endured dish of meat and vegetables and the traditional roast are the two meals appearing most frequently on kitchen tables across the country. Although in today’s society many people live busy lifestyles and are time poor, the report suggests Australians recognise the importance of preparing wholesome and home cooked meals for their families and sharing this quality time together.

Key findings
- More than nine out of ten Australian households are cooking at home on any given day.
- More than seven in ten of the main household cooks are female although cooking at home is proving to be a family affair with one in two households having two or more people who cook regularly.
- The roast lives on! One in two cooks will use their oven on any given day. On average, Australian households will use their oven three or more times every week.
- Our number one evening meal is steak or chops with vegetables or salad. One in five families cooking at home tonight will serve this meal.

Australia’s top six home cooked evening meals
1. Steak or chops & veg/salad/chips
2. Roast/baked dinner (chicken, lamb, beef, pork)
3. Spaghetti Bolognese or other pasta dish (not lasagne)
4. Stir fry (meat and/or veg)
5. Fish or seafood & veg/salad/chips
6. Chicken breast/pieces pan fried with sauce

Popular television personality and mother of three, Alyssa Jane-Cook, agrees that preparing and enjoying meals is the ideal opportunity for the family to spend quality time together.

“Meal time is a special occasion in our household as we get to step away from all the other things happening in the world for a moment and enjoy time spent together over great food. Traditional cooking will always have a strong influence on the menu in our home because it’s nutritious and nostalgic. I still use recipes that my mother passed down to me, but I like to make my own special touches – whether it’s a few extra ingredients or different flavours to keep my meals fresh and modern,” said Alyssa.
Alyssa and her family still enjoy a traditional roast at least once a week. Below are some of her favourite recipes.

**Lamb mint sauce**
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup honey
- 1/4 cup firmly packed spearmint leaves, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Handful of freshly picked rosemary leaves

“This is my grandma’s special recipe for lamb mint sauce – simple but very tasty. My kids love it! All you do is combine the ingredients in saucepan and cook slowly for five minutes. Drizzle over lamb roast after carving.”

**Mashed potatoes with sage and rosemary oil**
- 8 kipfler potatoes
- 2 cloves of garlic
- Small pinch of sage leaves
- Handful of freshly picked rosemary leaves
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 cup pouring cream

“This side dish has really just evolved through experimentation in the kitchen! While you are boiling the peeled potatoes in salted water, heat the oil in a small frypan over medium heat, throwing in the rosemary leaves and freshly crushed garlic. Stir the oil for a few minutes until you can smell the garlic taking care not to burn it. Drain, mash the potatoes til smooth then stir in the cream and sage & rosemary oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper.”

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**Microwave ovens at a glance**

According to the *Westinghouse How Australia Cooks Report*, the microwave oven is Australia’s most popular cooking appliance, found in 95% of kitchens. Of those households, 83% of cooks use their microwave on any given day.

Surprisingly, one in four people are not satisfied with their microwave and one of the main reasons is because it doesn’t complement other kitchen appliances as well as the overall kitchen decor.

Recognising this frustration and making a distinct move away from the ‘white box on the benchtop’, Westinghouse has launched a new range of freestanding and built-in microwaves designed to complement modern kitchens. With a mark resistant stainless steel finish and electronic touch controls, the stylish appliances integrate easily into the kitchen, creating a visually harmonised space.

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**About the Westinghouse How Australia Cooks Report**

This report has been produced by Westinghouse, a leading kitchen appliance manufacturer. The research was conducted nationally by Bread & Butter Research, among 1,000 Australians aged 25-64 years in October 2008.