



Marco's gadgets: HEAVEN OR HELL?

Chef Marco Pierre White has lent his name to Russell Hobbs appliances in the 'Heaven and Hell' range – sold at Argos. We've given his jug blender (£49) and hand blender (£39) a whirl.

Jug blender

This attractive device is compact and the cord can be tucked under the base. The unit is well weighted and steady.

There are two speeds, plus a blitz button for a burst of extra power and an ice-crush setting. We made crushed ice, with

mixed results – both slush and ice cubes staying quite chunky, and extra blitzing produced liquid results. When chopping for pastes and marinades, we had to add a lot of liquid. And trying to chop anything dry was a bit of a challenge. As such, this blender is suitable for smoothies, cocktails and soups.

The jug isn't recommended for dishwashers and the blade is stiff to dislodge for cleaning.

Hand blender

This blender is comfortable and weighty, with an

easy-to-use power button and blend and whisk attachments.

When making smoothies it coped well – even with whole bananas – and drinks were tasty and smooth. The whisk worked well on scrambled eggs.

No part is dishwasher safe, but parts are cleaned easily.

VERDICT The jug is useful only for liquids and isn't easy to clean. The hand blender works well but is heavy for prolonged use and pricey for its type. See www.which.co.uk/appliances for more.

Rooms alive with music

The Giga Juke system could be a one-stop solution for music needs throughout your home – boasting 160GB of internal memory (around 40,000 tracks) and the ability to wirelessly stream music to up to five other 'client players'.

Each player can play a different song at the same time or, with the 'party' button, they can play the same music. Setting up the system up will take a while, but it's straightforward to use.

Sound quality is impressive and it feels like a hi-fi that's built to last.

Features include a USB port, radio with FM, AM and DAB tuners, a CD drawer and an integrated dock for a Sony Walkman. It has an external dock for an iPod, but it would have been neater if it were integrated.

It sells for about £700 with a single client player. Additional players cost around £200 each.

VERDICT Offers potential for a huge music library and easy to use once set up. For full video review, visit www.which.co.uk/sonygigajuke.



PHILIPS KIDS' TOOTHBRUSH A LETDOWN

Considering that Philips' adult electric toothbrush is a Best Buy, we were hoping for great things from the kids' model and, at £70, you'd expect results that please your dentist.

The Sonicare for Kids (for ages four to 10) is funky, with coloured fascias, but the vibrating thick handle is tough to control for small hands.

A timer plays 15-30 second bursts of music to prompt children to move the brush around their mouths, but our four-year-old tester wasn't impressed and switched to manual brushing within a week.

While initially enthralled by the novelty, he found the bristles and buzzing 'ticklish and annoying', and brushing became messy.

The manual says adults should 'perform toothbrushing' for under eights, so how does it encourage 'healthy brushing on their own', as claimed on its website?

This model has two power modes – the higher one for aged seven and older. For older kids, the music may be a temporary distraction and, if its parent model is anything to go by, the brush works well – but, at £70, the extras such as music may be a waste on younger kids.

VERDICT Expensive fun for older kids, messy and a bit pointless for toddlers. Visit www.which.co.uk/electric-toothbrushes for Best Buys.



This phone is just for you

The HTC Hero is the third Android-powered mobile handset to be launched in the UK, following on the heels of the Google phone (also known as the T-Mobile G1) and the HTC Magic.

The Hero's jutting jaw design ensures it already stands out from the crowd, but the fact it can be customised is perhaps the most interesting feature.

There are seven virtual screens that can be personalised with widgets and shortcuts to the phone's many applications.

These pages can also vary between 'scenes' – for example, your seven work screens could differ from your seven holiday screens. The shortcuts are often more than just static widgets, allowing live updates of weather, for instance.

Our first impression is that this mobile is tricky to get used to because of the number of options provided but, with familiarity, it should become a great tool.



The Hero supports multi-touch use, so you can pinch the screen to shrink or enlarge text. And, unlike the iPhone, the HTC Hero supports Flash content, so you can view Flash-powered websites such as YouTube.

The 3.2-inch touchscreen has an oleophobic polymer coating, which is designed to repel greasy fingerprints.

The autofocus camera can take 5Mp still images and shoot video. There's a 3.5mm headphone jack for listening to music, audio and video files.

There are various tariff options available, including a £40-a-month contract, which includes the handset free of charge.

VERDICT This is great to personalise, and can take live feeds, but it can be tricky to get used to and has a small (but expandable) 512Mb memory. View our video review at www.which.co.uk/hatchero.



Canon can see clearly now

The Canon G11 is the latest in the Powershot G-series, which has been popular with consumers as well as professionals who need a smaller camera for their kit bag.

Looking at the differences between the G10 and G11, the appearance of a 2.8-inch adjustable LCD is hardly groundbreaking – but it is welcome.

The major difference is reduced resolution – the G10 has 14.7Mp, while the G11 offers only 10Mp. This is designed to remove graininess from photos taken in low light without the

flash, which would otherwise appear when increasing the sensor's light sensitivity through higher ISO settings.

We're waiting for test results to see how effective this was in the lab but, when we used the camera,

graininess certainly wasn't an issue.

As you'd expect from a G-series Powershot, the G11 has a raft of manual features: shutter speed and aperture priority modes as well as full manual control of exposure settings, including white balance, focus and flash.

VERDICT The G-series has a great pedigree so we expect excellent lab results – but it's expensive at around £570.



See www.which.co.uk/canonpowershotvideo for our expert view on the G11 and the Powershot S90



FUTURE TECH

Samsung on the double



Samsung has revealed what could be the new face of photography – a camera with two LCD screens – so it could be the solution for camera-shy adults or bored children.

With screens front and back on the Samsung ST550, adults can check their poses, including self-portraits, while children can watch a silent video clip of a clown to hold their concentration, and other video files will be available to download from Samsung.

We haven't tested it, but we did get to grips with one at September's IFA 2009 consumer electronics show (see www.which.co.uk/ifa2009 for video reviews of this and more).



When the front screen is off you wouldn't know that it was there, but it's clear and bright when this model is switched on. For self-portraits, you can get yourself and a friend in the frame with a full arm's stretch, but it also has a timer to allow time and space for composing a great shot. It also features smile detection so the shutter waits until you're beaming.

The main screen has touchscreen control. It is responsive and 'haptic' feedback confirms selections through vibrations. The camera has a 4.6x zoom and can capture HD video. Price is to be confirmed.

VERDICT Has novel twin-screen feature and can record HD video, but it might be gimmicky for serious camera users.