

Premier Inn.

A hotel brand is setting standards.



The secret of our success: planning and trying things out.



Founded in 1987, the Premier Inn hotel brand, based in Dunstable, England, has roughly 750 hotels in the UK and Ireland, and two in Germany. At present it offers almost 80,000 rooms and has around 20,000 employees looking after the needs of its guests, making Premier Inn one of the UK's biggest hotel chains. What's more, it is still growing: at least 20 hotels should be up and running in Germany by the end of 2020. The Premier Inn in Frankfurt am Main/ Messe is the first of the chain's hotels in Germany and thus a good opportunity to test the market. Concepts will be tried out here and adapted as necessary. Ultimately, the hotels planned across Germany should benefit from the fact that the Frankfurt location has more or less consistently held the number 1 spot in the city's 277 hotels ranked on TripAdvisor since its opening in April 2016.

It's all down to the difference.

Premier Inn doesn't easily fit into the conventional hotel categories. Room rates are more in line with the lower segment, while the feel-good factor is much higher for guests, as part of the concept is providing travellers with maximum comfort over the course of a short stay. The rooms are tastefully yet functionally furnished. The breakfast and bar food is delicious, focusing on a few, specially selected products. Through its approach, the Premier Inn has created its own class and successfully positioned itself within the premium economy segment. This is also reflected in its food concept,



Key facts

- > Premier Inn is a subsidiary of Whitbread PLC
- > Over 800 hotels in the UK, Ireland, Germany and the United Arab Emirates
- > At least 20 hotels should be up and running in Germany by the end of 2020





which focuses on beautifully made modern dishes.



The F&B concepts for all of the German Premier Inn hotels are developed by the Support Centre, sometimes with the help of agencies. The aim is to offer modern food and good quality at a reasonable price, while also making everything as easy as possible. This is a challenge that Premier Inn Head of F&B Jens Hulek is tackling together with RATIONAL. As such, the Frankfurt kitchen is home to a SelfCookingCenter® 61 and a SelfCookingCenter® 101 as a Combi-Duo. As these two units are positioned one on top of the other, they save space and eliminate the need for long routes across the kitchen.

To make work easier, RATIONAL has set the cooking methods for the different dishes on each appliance. These can be found immediately with the help of MyDisplay: on the starting display, the user will see icons like a croissant or chicken wings, and simply needs to tap on them. The appliance starts automatically and only issues an alert if the user is needed. In addition to MyDisplay, the Frankfurt appliances also have the shopping cart function. The generic term of 'Pastries', for instance, includes cooking processes for cookies and chocolate twists. The user can immediately see which items can be made together, thus allowing working steps to be performed at the same time without any loss of quality.

“Today people define themselves by their food even more than by their car.”

Jens Hulek, Head of Food & Beverage,
Premier Inn Germany

“Thanks to RATIONAL, we no longer have any need for deep-fat fryers. This saves us the cost of expensive frying oil and CO₂ supply.”

Jens Hulek, Head of Food & Beverage,
Premier Inn Germany



Consistent quality at all times. That's a promise.

“In every redesign, we make sure that we have LAN connections in the kitchen.”

Jens Hulek, Head of Food & Beverage,
Premier Inn Germany

Three years after its opening, many regular guests have come to trust Premier Inn for the quality of its rooms and food. This makes it all the more important for Jens Hulek to be able to offer guests a reliable, consistent standard. Convenience products and the RATIONAL cooking system help him to achieve this aim, as the cooking processes are perfectly adjusted to the convenience products. If a product changes, so do the cooking processes. On all units. Hulek relies on ConnectedCooking, the networking solution from RATIONAL. He manages all of the units centrally from his computer and can allocate cooking programs to any appliance at the click of a button. This is easy and ensures that the same quality is served up at every Premier Inn.

Hulek is impressed not only by the opportunity for standardised production, but also by the savings afforded by RATIONAL. He is particularly enthusiastic about the CombiFry®, the appliance for all sorts of deep fried food. This eliminates the need for a deep-fat fryer, expensive frying oil and CO₂ supply, and is also a healthier way of cooking food.

The equipment

in Frankfurt am Main

1 x SelfCookingCenter® Com-
bi-Duo 61/101





Training. Getting everyone in the know.

“Before a new hotel opens, all of the kitchen staff are trained by RATIONAL.”

Jens Hulek, Head of Food & Beverage,
Premier Inn Germany

Before Premier Inn opens a new hotel, almost all of the staff also receive training in kitchen tasks. Experienced RATIONAL chefs provide them with training in cooking the different dishes and recipes on the units themselves. After all, the special thing about Premier Inn is that the employees are required to be highly flexible in their roles when required. The bartender also has to know his way around the SelfCookingCenter®!

Breakfast: a good start to the day.



The basic breakfast concept comes from the UK and has been adapted to the German market. In Frankfurt, for instance, there are far fewer hot dishes on the breakfast buffet, but more cold cuts and cheese. As in all other Premier Inn hotels, from 6.30 am guests can expect fresh rolls, croissants and pretzels – a hotel speciality – together with baked beans, Nuremberg sausages, bacon, scrambled eggs and boiled eggs, all made using the SelfCookingCenter®. Fresh fruit, raw vegetables and yoghurt round out the buffet selection. Hotel guests can help themselves to the buffet up until 10.30 am (Sundays and public holidays 7.00 – 11.00 am). The combi-steamer is on the go until then, too, assisted by the aforementioned shopping carts, which RATIONAL has also programmed for breakfast products. This ensures quality, minimises excess production and makes it possible to work with fewer staff.



It's off to the bar in the evening.

“As we see it, the traditional menu has had its day. Today, it's all about offering dishes that are large or small, sweet or savoury, and are easy to eat.”

Jens Hulek, Head of Food & Beverage,
Premier Inn Germany

The bar is open all day, but warm food is only served between 5 and 10 pm. Salad, burgers, fish & chips, sandwiches and even a small selection of desserts are on the menu. The food is in the spirit of 'eating, not dining', and that also sums up the atmosphere around the bar: club armchairs, little tables and comfortable sofas set the scene, along with bigger tables for larger groups of guests. The area is ideal for small evening meals and enjoying beer, wine or one of the 17 varieties of gin.

How about a break? Not a chance.

The two SelfCookingCenter® units are in constant use. When breakfast is over, baking gets underway for the treats for the adjacent coffee shop: croissants, cookies and chocolate twists are all on the list. What's more, this also helps Hulek keep guests on site, as who's going to set off for the nearest bakery when they can get their fix of baked treats right here?



What's on the menu for tomorrow: future concepts.

“We also want to introduce sharing platters as part of the new concept. They're a big hit in the UK, and they're perfect for groups.”

Jens Hulek, Head of Food & Beverage,
Premier Inn Germany

Just as Premier Inn hotels undergo regular upgrades to the decor, the Head of F&B also revises the menu on a regular basis. Jens Hulek already has a good idea of what he's going to add to the menu next: burgers and bowls. He's thinking of including beef roulade with mashed potato, as a nod to the hotel's hometown. There will be different bowls for Hamburg, Munich and Frankfurt. A delivery concept is also being planned for the city-based hotels, with homemade pizzas served after a long day of meetings or going round a trade fair. Guests will also have the option of ordering dishes from local takeaways and eating them in the hotel's bar area. The SelfCookingCenter® will also come in useful here, as Hulek explains: “Employees will be able to prepare the food with just a little training.”

Skills shortage, you say? It's not an issue for Premier Inn.

“We teach our staff absolutely everything they need to know.”

Jens Hulek, Head of Food & Beverage,
Premier Inn Germany

It goes without saying that with the array of new job openings over the coming months, a lot of new staff will be required. In order to get them on board, Premier Inn is happy to use some unconventional methods. For instance, many of the new employees will attend a 'recruiting event' as the first step. The hotel brand invites those interested to take part in 2-hour interactive workshops at stylish venues like the Hofspielhaus in Munich or the Schanzenkino in Hamburg. The personality of the candidates counts for more than their education, as they're looking for passion and commitment. Are you a good fit with the company? Can you fill people with enthusiasm? Do you have the right attitude for working in a hotel? Once Premier Inn selects its new employees, they will be given on-site training by experienced members of staff, including an introduction to the RATIONAL units. This means that Hulek is not necessarily reliant on trained chefs in the kitchen.





RATIONAL UK Limited
Unit 4 Titan Court, Laporte Way
Portenway Business Park
Luton, LU4 8EF
United Kingdom

Tel. +44 (0) 1582 480388
Fax +44 (0) 1582 485001

info@rational-online.co.uk
rational-online.com