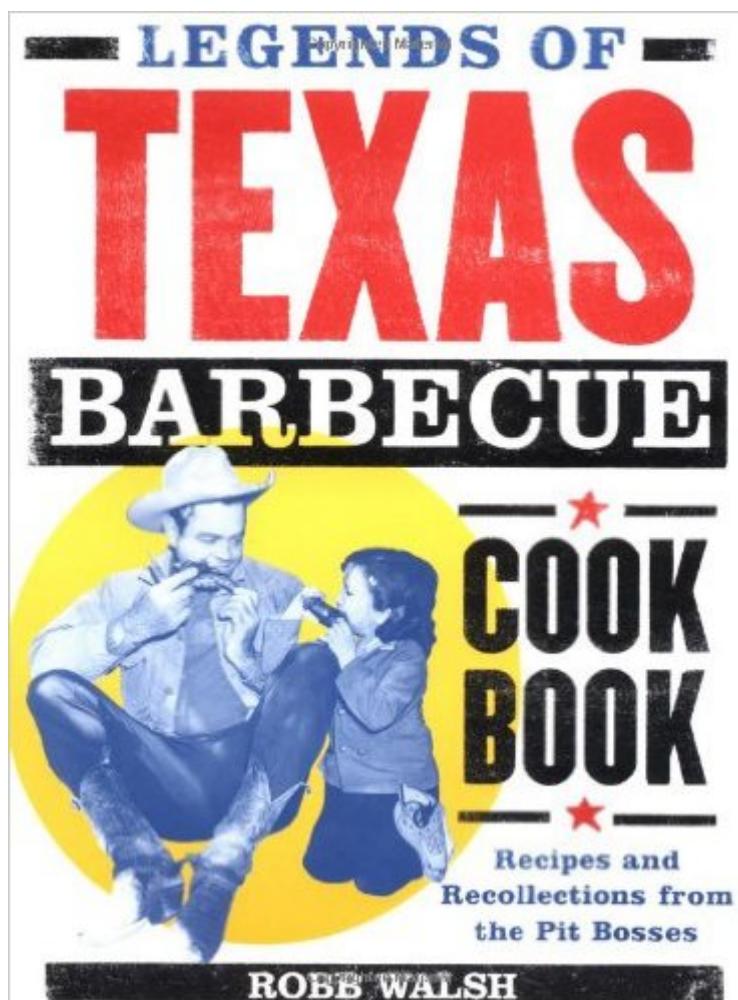


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Legends Of Texas Barbecue Cookbook: Recipes And Recollections From The Pit Bosses



Synopsis

Welcome to Texas barbecue. They love to make it. They love to eat it. And they love to argue about it—igniting as many feuds as fires from Houston to El Paso. *Legends of Texas Barbecue Cookbook* delivers both a practical cookbook and a guided tour of Texas barbecue lore, giving readers straightforward advice right from the pit masters themselves. Their time-honored tips, along with 85 closely guarded recipes, reveal a lip-smacking feast of smoked meats, savory side dishes, and an awesome array of mops, sauces, and rubs. Their opinions are outspoken, their stories outlandish and hilarious. Fascinating archival photography looks back over more than 100 years of barbecue history, from the first turn of the century squirrel roasts to candid shots of Lyndon Johnson chowing down on a plate of ribs. A list of the best barbecue joints and a month-by-month rundown of the most influential statewide cook-offs round out this glorious celebration of barbecue found deep in the heart of Texas.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The *Legends of Texas Barbecue* is not so much a cook book as it is a reverent tribute to Texas-style barbecue and the legends who made it famous. As author Robb Walsh notes in his introduction, "Southern barbecue is a proud thoroughbred whose bloodlines are easily traced while Texas barbecue is a feisty mutt with a whole lot of crazy relatives." There are few things that Texans argue over more often than barbecue. The book traces the diverse lineage of Texas barbecue and

introduces us to the pit bosses and restaurant owners who have grown to mythical status in Texas. Throughout, archival photographs highlight these men from as early as the start of the 1900's. Walter Jetton is perhaps the most influential pit boss in Texas barbecue history, once holding the record for feeding 12,000 people at a single event. He was also a favorite of President Lyndon Johnson. The early part of this book focuses on men such as Jetton and others, and gives a fascinating history of cooking methods and equipment these pioneering men used. The book then provides indispensable advice on achieving a Texas-style Barbecue at home including suggestions on the best equipment to use, fuels, and cook methods. Forget the gas grill, even the use of smoke boxes will never achieve that true, smoky taste. Utensils are also covered in detail including the one thing every good barbecuer needs...a basting mop. Moving to chapter two, the Legends of Texas Barbecue covers the "sport" of competitive cook-offs and masters such as Harley Goerlitz, holder of over 300 trophies including numerous championships. These men provide some of their award winning recipes and sure-fire tips to making the best barbecue. Even if you never plan to enter a cook-off, you'll find expert tips from these men that you can use at home. Rather than being sectioned like most cookbooks into type of foods, this book is sectioned off into regions. East Texas, West Texas, Southern Texas, as well as the very notable influence of German immigrants of the 1800's and the black urban influence that began when Harvey Miller opened his barbecue joint in 1941. Each section provides a sampling of recipes from these influences and it's interesting to note the differences in preparation, cooking, and spices in each. Among the most interesting chapters from a historical perspective is the one that deals with the strong German influence on Texas Barbecue. Texas became a hot spot for German Immigrants in the mid 1800's and continued for some fifty years. This influence is still seen today in the barbecued sausages from this region. The Recipes are unique and mostly simple, having only a handful of ingredients. Monte Barber's Country Style Ribs uses just orange juice, ribs, BBQ sauce and a basic rub. This is a recipe created by the legendary C.B. Stubblefield who lends his name to the famous Stubbs Barbecue sauces that are available throughout the country. Then there is Drexler's Ribs from Houston restaurant owner James Drexler, smoked to perfection using just ribs, paprika, salt, sugar, and garlic and onion powders. Simple and delectable. There's Potato and Black Bean Salsa Salad, BBQ Pork and Guacamole Sandwiches, Jalapeno Potato Salad, Barbecued Turkey, and more unique BBQ sauces than you've ever seen. Whether it's ribs, brisket, steaks, chicken, sausages, vegetables or salads, you'll be sure to find many recipes to enjoy. The final chapter takes readers on a guided tour of the most famous Barbecues in Texas complete with addresses and phone numbers and a capsule history of each. You're invited to make a pilgrimage to the Texas barbecue belt towns of Lockhart,

Elgin, and Taylor to visit some of the most famous barbecue joints not only in Texas, but the entire country! In addition there is also a section listing various online and mail order sources where many of the sauces, rubs, and cooking utensils can be purchased. This is just a magnificent book for any fan of barbecue! Highest recommendation.

I own and use a Weber charcoal grill, a high-end gas grill and an offset firebox, horizontal barrel smoker. I have a significant collection of books for each cooker. For authentic, slow-smoked BBQ, this is the best book out there. It is an excellent basic "how-to" book for the beginner and a great resource book for the experienced slow-smoker. It discusses types of wood, gives great recipes for various cuts of meat, has an excellent discussion on cooking times, gives recipes for rubs, sauces and side-dishes and is, simultaneously, a highly entertaining read. I am continually combing for additional BBQ cookbooks, however, to date, I have found none that are better than this one for slow-smoked BBQ.

There are not many books which I enjoyed reading as much as I did "Legends of Texas Barbecue." That may be a strong statement to make, but I can't think of any other book I've read on any subject that I read and then re-read and then re-re-read like I did this book. At times I could not put it down. I've had the great privilege of reviewing for you some fine books on barbecue. Two of the most recent reviews particularly stood out: "The Grand Barbecue" by Doug Worgul (reviewed last month) and "Celebrating Barbecue" by Dotty Griffith (reviewed two months ago). The former was a well-done history of barbecue that had a heavy Kansas City influence (Worgul writes for the "The Kansas City Star"). If ever there were to be a coffee table book on barbecue, this is it; the pictures and graphics within Worgul's book are wonderful and key to telling its story. The latter was a very well-written history of barbecue as a whole where Griffith's years of experience and research on the subject (she is the restaurant critic and former food editor of "The Dallas Morning News") are poured out on its pages. Bring the strong points of these two books together and you have "Legends of Texas Barbecue." Your first impression of this book will most likely be the pictures. It's evident that author Robb Walsh, restaurant critic for the "Houston Press" and former editor-in-chief of "Chile Pepper" magazine, wanted to use these to help convey the historical slant of his book and the pictures alone nearly tell the story of the Texas barbecue. You'll be amazed at the large number of pictures showing people cooking, eating and enjoying barbecue in various settings from long ago days, some dating back nearly 100 years. Walsh must have gone to great lengths to assemble this collection of historical photographs. The structure of the book is typical of many of this sort. It begins

with a very brief introduction and then a "warm up" chapter that sets up the stories to come and the obligatory explanation of cooking equipment, tools, fuels and methods. The book finds its pace in the second chapter - "The Sport of Barbecue" - where Walsh gives a look into competition barbecue. The chapter begins with Walsh explaining the subject and then finishing with several recipes from champion cookers. It's a solid format and one that he follows for most of the rest of the book, through chapters on sauce and smoked meats and his excellent coverage of the different influences of Texas barbecue - the German meat markets of the mid-state, cowboy style of the west, Tex-Mex from the south and black urban styles from the state's large cities. Walsh also dedicates a chapter to the barbecue of Juneteenth, the festive holiday marking emancipation in Texas. There are 95 recipes in all - a lot for a book that reads more like a history text than a cook book. Interspersed throughout the book are delightful sidebars entitled "Legends" and it is here that Walsh offers up interesting tidbits, bios on renowned Texas barbecuers and bits of other lore. He rounds out the book with brief sections of reference on Texas restaurants, barbecue cook-offs and associations, and a glossary. It's a great read, and if you have any interest in Texas barbecue at all, I know you will enjoy this one, too. I'd say it's a worthy addition to your bookcase, but it will probably spend less time there and more time next to your favorite reading chair.

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