



Dining by
Design

Flames, Family AND Flavor

A Life Built Around the Grill



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Most of us have at least one cherished memory of a summer campfire or a backyard barbecue that defined our childhood. For me, those memories are soaked in mesquite smoke, laughter, and the kind of heat that only comes from a Texas summer—and a roaring fire.

I was lucky enough to be the adopted granddaughter of Flip Breedlove, known far and wide as the Barbecue King of Clarendon, Texas. If there was a gathering—whether for family or 500 spectators of the Fourth of July parade—Flip was at the helm, a white apron cinched around his belly, a broad grin across his face, and a wicked chuckle in the air as he slung 200 chickens onto his legendary pit.

His style was old-school and unapologetically bold. He dug out a trench nearly 15 feet long and 6 feet wide, a foot and a half deep. His coals would be burning before sunrise. Our job as kids? Keep him supplied with cold beer.

And we did it with joy.

It was magical. The air thick with the scent of hickory and mesquite, sunburnt kids chasing the mosquito fog machine down the street like it was the ice cream truck. It was the kind of memory that lives in your bones.

By the time Flip's birds were ready for their debut at the Clarendon Fourth of July celebration, the whole town lined up. We were sticky with sweat and still giddy from the turtle races—which I never won, but everyone knew the main event was the barbecue.

Watching Flip all those years lit a fire in me, too.

My first attempt at grilling came in high school, out at Greenbelt Lake. Back then, it was just a newly dammed-off part of the Red River, but to us, it was an adventure playground. We'd pitch tents, build fires, and experiment with cooking.

One of our favorite tricks? Wrapping canned biscuit dough around a stick and holding it over the flame.

Later, I discovered the magic of flipping a gallon can upside down and building a fire inside. Suddenly we had a flat top griddle—perfect for pancakes and bacon. These were the moments that shaped my cooking career.

By college, I was grilling burgers on a tiny tabletop grill outside my apartment—four patties at a time. But those humble beginnings led to something more: community, connection, and a love for feeding others that has never left me.

My father used to say, "If you feed them, they will come." He wasn't wrong. Today, my kids call me an "over-feeder," and I wear the title with pride.

Now, I have an arsenal of grills I adore. My Tiernan smoker is my pride and joy. I'll take a wood or charcoal smoker over an electric one any day—just like learning to drive a stick shift, once you know the real way, you can do anything.

I also love my TEC infrared grill and my Big Green Egg, each with its own personality. But if I had to choose just one? That Tiernan smoker wins every time.

There's something deeply satisfying about coaxing flavor from fire and smoke. And while it's not as common to see women behind the grill, I guess it's in my blood. I had the best teacher in Texas.

Grilling has always meant more to me than just food. It's tradition. It's family. It's freedom. It's the sacred space between laughter and fire where stories are told and memories are sealed in smoke. Here are a few of my go-to recipes—perfect for backyard parties or just a day that deserves a little smoke and sizzle.

Tools I Love



Tiernan Smoker – Traditional, reliable, and full of soul

TEC Infrared Grill – Sleek, hot, and fast

Big Green Egg – Versatile and built to impress

Custom Spice Blend – Equal parts salt, black pepper, garlic, and a whisper of brown sugar

RECIPES FROM MY CAMPING DAYS

FLAT-TOP CAN PANCAKES

CAMP-STYLE Serves 4

1 C. *pancake mix*

3/4 C. *water*

1 T. *oil*

1 *metal coffee can or large tin can, turned upside down*

Fire-safe skillet or griddle

Light a small fire inside the can, place a skillet or griddle on top, and wait until hot. Pour batter and cook like you would over a stove. Serve with syrup or fresh berries if you're feeling fancy—or just plain, if you're lakeside.

CAMPFIRE BISCUIT STICKS

Serves 4–6

1 *can refrigerated biscuit dough*

Sturdy roasting sticks

Butter and jelly for serving

Roll each biscuit into a rope and twist it around a roasting stick. Hold over a fire until golden brown and cooked through. Slide it off and fill the hollow center with butter and jelly. Heaven in your hand.

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SMOKED QUESO

8 oz cheddar cheese, shredded
 8 oz pepper jack cheese, shredded
 8 oz Velveeta
 8 oz cream cheese, cubed
 ¼ C. heavy cream
 4 oz can green chiles, drained
 10 oz can Rotel, drained
 2 jalapeños, seeded and diced
 12 oz cooked hot breakfast sausage,
 finely chopped
 1 T. chili powder
 1-½ tsp ground cumin
 2 T. fresh cilantro, chopped

Preheat your smoker to 225°F. In a cast iron skillet or disposable foil pan, add the cheddar cheese, pepper jack cheese, Velveeta cheese and cream cheese. Pour the heavy cream over the cheeses and sprinkle over the green chiles, Rotel, diced jalapeños, breakfast sausage, chili powder, and cumin.

Smoke for 30 minutes (the time may vary depending on your smoker) or until the cheeses melted and bubbling slightly. Mix together using a wooden spoon and let smoke for another 10 minutes.

Remove from the smoker and stir in the chopped cilantro, serve with tortilla chips and enjoy!

► I got this idea from my favorite dish at the Amarillo Club. Chef Lauren designed this dish 4 years ago and it has been a top seller. Lauren's dish is called the Power Bowl and is served with salmon and quinoa.

If you have lunch at the Amarillo Club the Salmon Bowl is a must order.

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CHIPOTLE CHICKEN SALAD

Serves 4–6

4 chicken breasts
 4 T. chipotle vinaigrette the rest is reserved for the salad dressing.

Chipotle Dressing for marinade and salad dressing.

1 C. avocado oil
 ½ C. frozen corn

½ C. honey
 4 T. Red wine vinegar
 4 T. Fresh lime juice
 1 T. Dijon mustard
 2 T. chipotle pepper in adobo sauce and one of the peppers
 1 tsp. Cumin
 Salt and pepper

Combine all ingredients in a blender and process until smooth. Adjust seasoning to your liking.

Place chicken in a glass bowl or ziplock bag. Marinate chicken for at least two hours. Remove chicken from marinade and grill on a prepared gas or charcoal grill. Cool and cut into bite size pieces.

To make the salad, add the following ingredients in a large bowl. Toss with the chipotle vinaigrette and first 6 ingredients plus the chicken. Drizzle with balsamic reduction.

10 C. arugula
 4 C. mixed greens of choice
 12 dates cut into small pieces about the size of a dime
 2 C. frozen corn, thawed
 1 can rinsed and drained black beans
 2 C. frozen edamame, shelled and thawed

Toppings:
 Crumbled feta cheese
 Honey pistachios
 Tortilla strips

A guide to dining out in Amarillo and the area, Chomp is a result of opinions and experiences of the Accent West staff. Publication of a listing cannot be purchased or influenced by advertising. Reviews of restaurants are by anonymous critics to ensure no special treatment. Accent West is always interested in hearing about new restaurants and/or entertainment enterprises. Ideas and comments should be sent to Chomp Editor, Accent West Magazine, Box 1504, Amarillo, TX 79105. Deadline is six weeks prior to date of publication. Price scales are for a typical meal for one person, excluding drinks, tax or tip as follows:

Inexpensive – under \$7.00

Moderate – \$7.00 to \$20.00

Expensive – over \$20.00

Café Moonwater, 3316 SW 6th Ave., 806-670-6116. Cozy tables, each styled distinctly in a delightful, eclectic atmosphere – invite diners to relax and refresh in a world away from the everyday. Superb, satisfying lunches include such amazing homemade delights as avocado toast, irresistible caprese salad, chicken salad (several tempting ways!), sandwiches, soups... and the oh-my-goodness desserts. Dine in or take it to go. After lunch, the enticing Moonwater home decorations and designs throughout the store must not be missed! 11:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Tues-Sat. Moderate.

Chicken Salad Chick, 2620 Wolflin Ave., 806-808-0709. Comfortable, clean, efficient restaurant. Fresh chicken salad – made so many ways – yummy with pecans, apples and

grapes, but then try the zesty with ranch, bacon & shredded cheddar cheese, or with just the right diced jalapenos! The Lemon Basil is hard to resist too! Sandwiches, soup, salad – then there's pimento cheese and the signature sandwiches including the Turkey Club. Little Chick offerings and, for dessert – how about a Buttercream Frosted Flower Cookie, or a slice of pie, such as Pina Colada Pie?! Open for lunch, and on 'til 8 p.m. Dine-in, take-out, delivery. Moderate.

Sa-vor Tapas Bar, 7679 Hillside Rd., Ste 600, 806-310-2600. Definitely an upscale, social dining experience! Urban, chic, small bites, big flavor. So many delicious options to choose but do start with the charcuterie board – bold, fresh and delicious, especially with an imaginative cocktail. Select cold or hot tapas to your liking – such as the Mejillones (mussels), Albondigas (pork meatballs with manchego), roasted artichoke flatbread... the list goes on and on! Of course, there're are salads, and entrees –including prime beef, seared snapper, Rainbow trout. Wines are extraordinary. Don't miss the crème brulee for dessert! Open daily 11 a.m. – Midnight; Brunch (Sat & Sun) 10 a.m. -3 p.m. Moderate to expensive.

Sad Monkey Mercantile, 9800 TX-217, Canyon, TX 79015, 806-488-2658. Just 15 minutes from Canyon and 25 from Amarillo, Sad Monkey Mercantile is the perfect stop for a relaxing break on your way to or from Palo Duro Canyon. This unique spot offers everything from hot sandwiches and fresh local coffee to craft beer from

area breweries like Pondaseta Brewing Co., plus wine flights and mimosas at the Monkey Bar. The food trailer, open on weekends, serves delicious meals, while the pet-friendly patio with cornhole and occasional live music sets a laid-back vibe for all ages. Check out their Instagram for the latest on live music events. You'll also find camping gear, homewares, and "Panhandle Proud" merchandise to take home as souvenirs. With scenic views, a small dog park, and Texas longhorns nearby, Sad Monkey Mercantile offers a peaceful, family-friendly space to relax, grab a drink, and explore the best of the Texas Panhandle. Whether you're hiking, biking, or just looking to unwind, it's the perfect place to recharge. Open Sun – Thurs, 9 AM – 8 PM and Fri/ Sat, 9 AM – 9 PM. Moderate.

Six Car Pub & Brewery, 625 S. Polk Amarillo, Texas, 79101, 806-576-3396. Located in the heart of Amarillo, Six Car Pub & Brewery offers a vibrant atmosphere and a diverse menu that's perfect for any occasion. Whether you're craving a juicy burger, fresh salad, or delicious pizza, this local favorite has something to satisfy every palate. Their brunch menu is especially popular, making it a go-to spot for weekend relaxation. Family-friendly and welcoming, Six Car offers a kids' menu and provides high chairs for the little ones. The downstairs space is ideal for families, while the Rooftop Bar provides a more relaxed cocktail lounge vibe, best suited for adults seeking a quieter, more mature setting.

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