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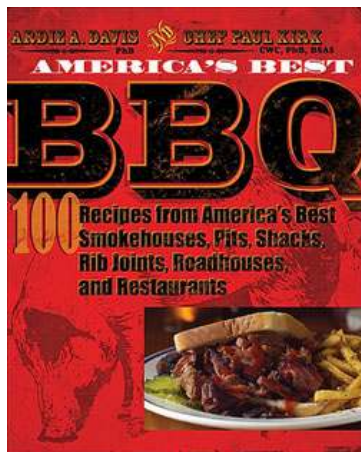
COOKBOOKS



America's Best BBQ - Cookbook Review

100 Recipes from America's Best Smokehouses, Pits, Shacks, Rib Joints, Roadhouses, and Restaurants

By Ardie A. Davis and Paul Kirk
(Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2009)



Browsing through barbecue historian Ardie A. Davis and pitmaster Paul Kirk's glossy book resembles taking a roadtrip through America and making pit stops to enjoy the finest barbecue dishes in the country. Although *America's Best Barbecue* does list recipes, the primary focus is on barbecue restaurants and their lore throughout the United States. The excursion to 'cue spots does not dwell on grilling ribs, but rather it's a celebration of barbecue culture.

Flip through the pages, and you'll see 1930s-style billboards that resemble advertisements that were found in *Look* or *Life* magazine, like the parody of the pig in a ballroom dress dancing. Barbecue hangouts in small towns like Lockhart, TX; Reidsville, NC; and Paul's Valley, OK nostalgically portray Middle America. Many of the barbecue restaurants have unique characteristics like the paper maché pink pig at Hickory Creek Bar-B-Que, dubbed the "ugliest pig in Kansas."

Each stop that the authors visited focuses on a [specialty dish](#) cooked by the chef and includes a recipe. While the majority of these are for barbecued meats, there are sections on appetizers, side dishes and desserts. For the aficionado who wants to relish our great barbecue nation and learn about the top places to eat in the country, this is a great book. However, for the aspiring chef, it lacks detailed instructions and contains few photos showing how to prepare dishes such as rib tips, Jamaican Jerk Hot Wings, Spatchcock Chicken and smoked barbecue beef ribs. ❖



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Reviewed by Sam Heller

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