



Teamwork Makes the Dream Work, pg. 20

PHOTOS COURTESY OF (LEFT) CHARLOTTE CC, (BELOW) BELLE HAVEN CC

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JULY 2017

“
BBQ, DEPENDING ON HOW YOU PREPARE AND PRESENT IT, CAN TRANSLATE TO SO MANY DIFFERENT ATMOSPHERES. IT'S THE PERFECT FOOD FOR CLUBS.
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DUANE KELLER,
EXECUTIVE CHEF,
BELLE HAVEN COUNTRY CLUB,
ALEXANDRIA, VA.
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ON THE COVER:
JOHN CORNELI (LEFT), EXECUTIVE CHEF OF
CHARLOTTE COUNTRY CLUB (CHARLOTTE, N.C.)
WITH SOUS CHEF DAVID CHEEKS II



C&RB's
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(see "It's All in the Details," *C&RB's Chef to Chef*, April 2015). "We even cold-smoke the mayo that we use in our pimento cheese."

At JG&CC, smoked and global BBQ dishes tend to find their way into specials or as part of a bigger event, like a member-guest. No matter when or where it's served, though, members can't seem to get enough of Ramsey's creative BBQ style.

"We've done Korean BBQ, Mongolian BBQ, even Caribbean *barbacoa*," says Ramsey, who enjoys experimenting with new and different flavors, cuts and BBQ techniques. "But we generally do an Americanized version, so it's familiar for the members."

For example, he does a Korean BBQ beef short rib with *kimchi* collards that's more bitter than a traditional *kimchi*, but still goes over quite well. "It mixes Southern styles with global flavors," he says.

For unique cuts, Ramsey will try just about anything. For a recent college-rivalry football game between the Florida Gators and Georgia Bulldogs, JG&CC served alligator ribs (and *haute dawgs*, of course).

"The ribs [see photo, right] have a lot of connective tissue, so we brined them first, *confited* them in bacon fat, then smoked them," says Ramsey. "If you only smoked them, it would dry them out and make them very tough. To serve, we barely touched them to the grill, and then put them on the plate."

MAKING THE CUT

Good BBQ takes practice—especially when you're working with less-traditional cuts.

"One of our purveyors gave me lamb neck filets once that reminded me of beef brisket," says Ramsey. "So I treated them like brisket. The lamb neck is a small cut—it only weighs one or two pounds—and doesn't have bones in it. Treating it like brisket worked perfectly, and we ended up using it in a Southern *panzanella* with cornbread croutons. It was surprisingly light and flavorful, but the lamb was still assertive enough to stand up on its own."

Oxtail is another cut Ramsey likes to use in BBQ. "Like the alligator ribs, it's not going to break down well with just smoke," he says. "It needs liquid, so we brine, smoke and then braise it. But the beauty of oxtail is that the smoke flavor

carries throughout the cooking process, and there's a ton of flavor in the gelatin at the end."

Ramsey uses the gelatin to make an oxtail marmalade that he has served sided by smoked bone marrow and pumpernickel toast points (see photo, opposite page, center), as well as alongside oxtail sticky buns (made with the meat he pulls off the tail) stuffed inside either brioche dough or puff pastry.

Those sticky buns aren't the only breakfast pastry that's been turned into a savory BBQ dinner item on Ramsey's menu. He also does a pulled pork donut that has garnered quite a following.

"The donuts are topped with a maple bourbon glaze and bacon sprinkles that we dehydrate and chop super fine," says Ramsey. "It's a fun and different way to present smoked, pulled pork."

LICENSED TO GRILL

At Sedgefield Country Club (Greensboro, N.C.), Executive Chef James Patterson also likes to experiment with non-traditional cuts when it comes to BBQ.

"We did a dish for a wine dinner that we called 'Tongue and Cheek,' where we smoked and braised cow tongue and pork cheeks," he says. "The members loved it."

Currently on the menu at Sedgefield, Patterson is running a BBQ lamb rib smoked with a combination of mesquite and pecan wood. "We let the ribs go for two-and-a-half hours, then put them in a little apple cider vinegar and roast them for an hour or so, until they fall off the bone," he says. The ribs are then served with ponzu wedges and an apple coleslaw.

"The biggest challenge with smoking meats is time and temperature," says Patterson. "You have to be patient with BBQ. You can't rush it."

THE BEAUTY OF BBQ

Duane Keller, the newly appointed Executive Chef of Belle Haven Country Club (Alexandria, Va.), agrees with Patterson. Keller has BBQ'd nearly everything in every way over the course of his decades-long career. He even opened and ran one of the most successful BBQ restaurants in Washington, D.C. before coming to the club.

"BBQ has its own language," says Keller. "It requires a completely different skill set than most other cooking techniques. It takes time, practice and pa-



Because they have a great deal of connective tissue, Executive Chef Mike Ramsey first brines, then confits, then smokes alligator ribs (above) at Jacksonville G&CC.

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THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE WITH SMOKING MEATS IS TIME AND TEMPERATURE. YOU HAVE TO BE PATIENT WITH BBQ. YOU CAN'T RUSH IT.

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JAMES PATTERSON, EXECUTIVE CHEF, SEDGEFIELD CC

tiency. But the possibilities are endless. "At the club, I plan to bring a variety of BBQ cuts and styles to all corners of the property from the pool to fine dining," he adds, such as his BBQ Brisket Spring Roll (see photo, opposite page, right). "BBQ, depending on how you prepare and present it, can translate to so many different atmospheres. It's the perfect food for clubs."

After only a few days at Belle Haven, Keller had his first chance to "wow" members by smoking a whole salmon. "They had been purchasing whole-poached salmon from the club," he says. "So when they learned we could smoke it for them and give it a whole different flavor profile, their eyes lit up."

"Sometimes the simplest things can have the biggest impact" he adds. "As chefs, we're always hustling and moving at the speed of light. BBQ forces you to slow down and pay attention. The best BBQ is well-nurtured." 🍷