

the THRILL of the GRILL!

tis the season to be grilling...full steam ahead!



by **Sam Jay Stoltzfus**
Owner
LanChester Grill & Hearth, LLC



As an outdoor kitchen designer for over 10 years now and a retailer of many fine-quality grill options and accessories, I get a lot of grill and grilling-related questions...especially this time of year. Why are outdoor kitchens becoming so popular in our area? How do I plan my grilling area

for ease of cooking? What type of grill would best suit my needs? Why would I do a built-in versus a portable grill?

There's just something about grilling and eating outdoors that has a comforting appeal and feel. Children love it, wives love it, especially when dad is KING of the grill. However it can be frustrating if everything has to be carried out from mom's kitchen—especially if dad forgets something and is in the heat of grilling and needs it NOW! Dad hollers at the children or wife to drop what they are doing and fetch it and soon the mood is broken and no one is enjoying themselves. Honestly, been there, done that!

Here is where an outdoor kitchen comes to the rescue.

1. You design it in a way that is convenient to use by having all your essen-

tials within easy reach and ready to go. Remember, you don't want to be hollering at your loved ones to fetch things—they're not dogs you know!

2. Consider what type of foods you normally cook and what you would like to expand to.

3. Do you prefer slow cooking, searing, smoking, or just normal grilling?

4. What type of grills should I be looking to invest in?

5. Will my kitchen be out in the open or will it be under a roof?

When choosing your grill it should always have at least a 15-year warranty on the burner and a minimum of 25-years on the stainless. You will want at least one set of drawers for convenient storage of utensils and other supplies you may need. And access doors for gas and water supplies if you have a sink. A cold water sink is a great feature that I really like for rinsing hands and dishes after handling fresh meats or rinsing veggies etc. I would also encourage having an infrared side burner installed. The



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beauty of a sear burner is that you can sear steaks, pork chops, burgers, etc. You can also use it as a burner for pots of water for steaming clams, corn, soups and many other uses. An infrared burner is a lot hotter and is not affected by breezes like a typical side burner is. An ice sink or a refrigerator is a nice option to keep foods and drinks cold. Plenty of storage drawers are always a plus when they are conveniently located. Plan now rather than wishing for them later. Trash cans built in sure are a pleasure to have—slide out to use, slide out of sight when not in use.

What type of grill should I be considering?

First you should consider the type of foods you normally cook, then also consider the type of foods you would like to cook if you had the correct grill to do it. Then choose the grill and accessories accordingly.

Gas grills are the most popular. Most of them have a rotisserie included, some you can add an infrared burner inside the grill, some you can add a charcoal tray if you like to cook with charcoal without the lighting hassle.

Simply install the tray, add charcoal, and light it with the gas burner.

Wood pellet grills are very popular for smoking. Use the flavor pellets you wish to smoke with, turn the dial to the desired temperature and you are set to go. The Memphis pellets grill is stainless steel with a lifetime warranty, it is extremely versatile, more

accurate than most kitchen ranges, and has a range from 180 degrees for low smoking to 650 degrees with a sear plate for smoke searing. A brisket that has been smoked at 180 degrees for 12 hours is hard to beat. Again, when building in a pellet grill I would strongly recommend it be 340 grade stainless steel. You don't want to be replacing it in 5 years.





The **Big Green Egg** is also a great smoker and cooker which uses lump charcoal—small chunks of charred wood which light easily, can be snuffed out, and relit the next time. The lump charcoal has no chemicals added nor do you need the smelly lighter fluid to start it and it burns to almost nothing—virtually no waste.

I personally use a gas infrared with a griddle for breakfast foods and stir fry mixtures. A Memphis Wood Pellet grill and a Big Green Egg for my smoking, searing, and other grilling. Certain grills for certain foods and moods!

Should you have a roof over your outdoor kitchen?

It is not necessary, however it is really nice if you are in direct sunlight or when it is raining or snowing. I have had an outdoor kitchen for 5 years without a roof but this year I'm redoing it so I have a roof over it. It will extend my grilling days plus I can grill when it's pouring rain and will not have a lot of snow to shovel in the winter time. Hey, I have done that and I'm not alone! I have also stood out in the rain with an umbrella! No fun there!

The bottom line—give it some serious thought as to how and how much or how long you will be using it. Will my guests be able to hang

out with me when I'm cooking or will I miss most of the conversations?

In your deliberations, don't be afraid to ask for suggestions or, better yet, have an expert help you design it. And try to avoid squeezing your budget too much. We have repeatedly heard the "I wish I had added this piece or



that piece but it's too late now. I just didn't realize I would need this."

We at LanChester Grill & Hearth would be delighted to

assist you through the whole process. See a 3D print of what it will look like and make the changes while you can.

R&A



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