

BACKYARD BBQ STORE

Where Cooking Out is Always In | By Dan Muller | Images provided by Backyard

BBQ Store & Christina Lundin



Since opening in 2003, Backyard BBQ Store in Wilmette has grown well beyond a typical grilling supply shop. Founded by Dan Marguerite and his nephew Brian Farrell, the business has become a Midwest hub for grilling enthusiasts—offering expert advice, premium products and an inviting social space complete with a full kitchen and bar.

For the past nine years, the store has operated out of a remodeled former carwash just across the street from its original Green Bay Road location. This thoughtfully redesigned space has helped Backyard BBQ Store become more than a retail destination—it's a community gathering place where locals come to learn, savor and celebrate the art of outdoor cooking.

The Evolution of Backyard BBQ Store

What began as a straightforward grilling supply shop has grown into something much larger. While their roots remain firmly planted in quality grilling equipment, spices, rubs and sauces, the store now serves a broad base of fans beyond Chicago's north shore.

Today, Backyard BBQ Store draws customers from across the Midwest and is known not only for its curated product selection, but also for its deep knowledge of all things grilling. Whether recommending the right smoker or walking a customer through their extensive spice collection, the team's expertise sets them apart. Marguerite is still directly involved, now with help from his son-in-law, Josh Davenport, who brings fresh energy and support to the store.

The business has also expanded into outdoor living design, working alongside landscapers to create custom outdoor kitchens that bring backyard cooking dreams to life. This evolution has helped Backyard BBQ Store meet rising demand for elevated outdoor experiences—without sacrificing their core values of quality and service.



“As the business has grown over 22 years, the community has supported us greatly. Without our customers, I wouldn't be here. When they see our name associated with the Better Business Bureau, they know we're committed to doing right by them too.”

— Dan Marguerite, Owner



FUN FACT: George A. Stephen, founder of Weber Grill and a family friend of the Marguerites, helped inspire the store's design and product mix. Visitors can explore Weber grills from different eras on display throughout the shop.

Classes, Events, and The Backyard BBQ Experience

Backyard BBQ Store isn't just a place to buy gear—it's a hub for learning, connecting and celebrating everything BBQ. A standout feature is its robust lineup of classes and private events, drawing grilling fans from across the region.

The store regularly hosts guest instructors including Babs Boards, with her “Girls Who Grill” classes; Eudell Watts IV of Old Arthur's Barbecue in Evanston; Charlie McKenna of Lillie's Q; and pitmasters from Kansas City's legendary BBQ scene. Marguerite himself leads popular classes on the Big Green Egg, helping attendees master one of the most beloved smokers on the market.

Since moving to its current location, Backyard BBQ Store has opened a full kitchen and created a welcoming dining space with seating for 48 guests. Chef Emily serves BBQ specialties on Friday evenings, Saturday afternoons and Sunday game days during football season.

Fridays in particular are lively, as the shop transforms into a neighborhood hangout, complete with a full bar offering cocktails and local craft beers. Weekly specials and customer favorites—like pulled pork, chopped brisket and blackened chicken salad—help make the store a go-to destination not just for gear, but for great food and community.

Community Commitment and Trusted Service

At the heart of Backyard BBQ Store's success is a deep commitment to community, service and education. From hands-



on classes and engaging events to daily customer interactions, the team focuses on building long-term relationships rooted in trust and shared passion. That philosophy is reinforced by their BBB Accreditation, which affirms their integrity and customer-first approach.

The team backs up that promise with action—offering free local delivery and standing behind their products with a “service what we sell” policy. These customer-first practices align with the BBB's mission and have helped cement the store's reputation as a trusted partner for grill lovers across the region.

How to Connect with Backyard BBQ Store

You may have heard Marguerite's signature ad on WXRT-FM, featuring the tagline, “Where cooking out is always in.” Backyard BBQ Store has also been featured on Chip and Joanna Gaines's show Fixer Upper, bringing national attention to their unique blend of expertise and charm. Additionally, fans can also explore grilling tips and behind-the-scenes content on the store's YouTube channel.

More than just a shop, Backyard BBQ Store has become a trusted expert and community hub for grilling lovers across the Midwest. With a commitment to quality, hospitality and connection, they continue to ignite a passion for outdoor cooking—one backyard at a time.

To stay updated on classes, events, specials and new arrivals, follow @backyardbbqstore on Instagram and Facebook, or visit www.backyardbbqstore.com.