

# Life in the Sauce Lane

Bill Pikus brings Grill Side Barbeque to tasty life.

words JASPER MIRABILE, JR.

On the Locavore trail this summer, I discovered some local barbecue sauces made by Bill Pikus right here in Kansas. You may remember him from KMBC Channel 9 where he was a sports anchor, but Pikus is also a barbecue enthusiast who has developed three sauces under the name Grill Side Barbeque.

After years of researching and testing several different flavors of Kansas City 'cue, Grill Side was born. Pikus says the recipe started as a home-made sauce for family gatherings and represents the best of Kansas City. When demand for the special sauce became overwhelming, Pikus decided it was time to go public. Grill Side offers three sauces: one that's sweet, a sauce with some sweet heat and a hot sauce—and none of them contain corn syrup.

I recently had lunch with Pikus—no barbecue this time, just a little pasta and cannoli as we discussed our Italian ancestry and how he became involved in barbecue. Pikus is proud of his recent winnings from The Great American Barbecue Contest, where he took second place in the sauce category.

*Jasper Mirabile: Your ancestry is Italian descent. Why barbecue?*

**Bill Pikus:** It's one of my favorite foods. My wife and I decided to bottle sauce about a year ago. I always wanted to do something food related, so we decided to give it a try. Although many people say it will be an uphill climb, I wanted to take a chance. Down the road, my other dream is an Italian deli.

“WE DON'T USE HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP. THIS SETS US APART FROM MANY SAUCES.”

**JM:** Any secret ingredient in your sauce or something that makes it unique?

**BP:** We have several secret ingredients, one of them being tamarind. I guess it's not a secret anymore! What we don't use is high fructose corn syrup. This sets us apart from many sauces. We also are gluten-free and all-natural.

**JM:** Are you a beginner, intermediate, expert or pro barbecuer?

**BP:** I consider myself an expert.

**JM:** What kind of grills and smokers do you use at home and in competitions?

**BP:** In competitions I've used everything from big smokers on trailers to little ones from the backyard. Many people might be surprised that you can smoke a great piece of meat on a small smoker. In my first competition I borrowed a Weber bullet. I was out-gunned by the other teams, but took second place in ribs.

**JM:** Pork or beef...that is the question?

**BP:** I prefer pork. Pulled pork or ribs are hard to beat.

**JM:** What is your favorite item to grill or smoke when relaxing with friends and family in the backyard?

**BP:** Lately I've been making sausage logs and smoking them. I season ground sausage and then form it into logs. There are no casings and it picks up a great flavor from the smoke. I use Grill Side as a glaze the last five minutes.

**JM:** Any particular beer you would like to suggest with the barbecue?

**BP:** I enjoy Boulevard Wheat. It's good beer and a local company.

**JM:** Do you have a secret rub you can share?

**BP:** Grill Side Rub is in the works. We just have not



packaged it yet, but hopefully by next year it will be on the market.

*JM: Low and slow or burn and turn?*

*BP:* Depends on the meat. For smoking, definitely low and slow. But when I grill, it's high heat all the way.

*JM: Do you cook with a competitive barbecue team?*

*BP:* I cook with the Grill Side Team. It's my wife, Amy, and my neighbors Brian and Nikki Wiedower. We only do several events a year, but we have fun and usually get a ribbon in some category.

*JM: Are you a member of any barbecue organization?*

*BP:* Kansas City Barbecue Society, of course!

*JM: This may be a tough question...What's your favorite Kansas City barbecue joint?*

*BP:* Hard to pick one. There are so many great places. I like to rotate around the city.

*JM: I'm being nosy here ... what's in your refrigerator right now?*

*BP:* Grill Side Barbeque Sauce, chicken breast, brats, wine, beer, fresh pasta, lettuce, lots of fruit, yogurt, bread, milk and all the basics. ❖

*For more information on Grill Side Barbeque Sauce, visit [www.grillsidebbq.com](http://www.grillsidebbq.com).*

## GRILL SIDE BARBEQUE DIP

*Here is an easy recipe from Grill Side Barbeque that I am sure you will enjoy!*

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup chopped and cooked bacon
- 2 (8 ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 3/4 cup Grill Side Barbeque Sauce
- 1 green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese

### DIRECTIONS:

Mix all the ingredients together and place in an ovenproof dish in a 400-degree oven for 20 minutes or until cheese is melted. Serve and enjoy with chips, crackers or pita bread.