



This copy is for your personal, noncommercial use only. You can order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers [here](#) or use the "Reprints" tool that appears next to any article. Visit [www.nytreprints.com](http://www.nytreprints.com) for samples and additional information. [Order a reprint of this article now.](#)

November 15, 2009

NEW JERSEY DINING | INTERNATIONAL BARBECUE

## A World of Ways to Get That Grilled Taste

By KELLY FEENEY

WHEN Carlos Teixeira bought Burnet BBQ in Union about 15 years ago, most of the customers for his heaping platters of flame-grilled chicken and ribs were Portuguese.

That's not true anymore, Mr. Teixeira said. Portuguese barbecue, or churrasco, has become so popular that he now operates three additional restaurants: a second in Union, one in Newark and one in Clark.

Portuguese churrasco is just one of the many variations on the barbecue theme that can be found in New Jersey restaurants. Jamaican, Filipino and Korean are a few of the cuisines where the grill plays a part; each has its own marinades, seasonings and sauces.

These spots are typically casual and do a good bit of takeout business. None of those listed here serve liquor.

At Burnet BBQ, you place your order at an open counter and a waitress brings your food. There's seating for 15, at a handful of tables.

Mr. Teixeira, 40, said he learned how to make what he calls his "Old World" barbecue from his mother, Maria, who ran a barbecue restaurant in Portugal. He moved to New Jersey with his family when he was 4 years old.

Portuguese barbecue is straightforward, he said.

"We take the meat, dip it in the sauce and then put it on the grill," said Mr. Teixeira, who lives in Union. The key is good meat, he added, and saucing the meat while it cooks. Grilling over charcoal is also important.

At some of his restaurants he makes a white wine-based sauce from scratch; at the original Burnet BBQ he uses [Trappey's Red Devil Cayenne Pepper Sauce](#), a commercial condiment.

At the New Barbecue Pit in Bergenfield, Louie Cancio uses two kinds of sauces to prepare his Filipino-style barbecue chicken and spare ribs on the gas grill. One has an Asian influence, he said, and is primarily soy sauce and sugar. The other is tangy, a classic American tomato and vinegar-based sauce, to which he adds [Jufran Banana Sauce](#), a Filipino ketchup.

"We let the sauce caramelize on the meats while they grill," said Mr. Cancio, 34, who was born in the Philippines and came to the United States at age 11. For the past five years he has operated the restaurant with his father and mother; all of them live upstairs.

Mr. Cancio brushes the meats with both sauces while they sizzle on the grill and adds more just before serving. For another Filipino dish, pork on a stick, he lets the pork marinate in lots of garlic, Thai chili peppers, white wine, pineapple and Worcestershire sauce before grilling.

The sign outside might lead you to believe that the meat for another specialty here, the pulled pork sandwich, is cooked over an open fire. It's not; for safety reasons, Mr. Cancio's father, Carlos, roasts the 40-pound pigs in the oven.

At [Real Jamaican Jerk an' Ting in Somerset](#), the owner, Iva Thompson, 37, who grew up in St. Catherine, Jamaica, remembers roadside jerk stands there where the meat was slow-cooked over pimento wood in a pit dug in the ground.

Ms. Thompson now lives in New Brunswick and grills her jerk chicken, pork, shrimp and fish over charcoal briquettes in the kitchen at her yellow and green storefront restaurant, which opened in 2005 and seats 16 people. Sides include rice and beans, and festival, a type of Jamaican fried dumpling.

The jerk here owes much of its flavor to Ms. Thompson's dry rub, which includes peppers, thyme, scallions, onions and garlic. She likes to marinate the meat for several days.

But perhaps most critical is the sauce, which can be served on top of the jerk or on the side. Ms. Thompson is mum on the specifics. "There is a secret to making the sauce, which I really do not disclose," she said.

One of the more interesting takes on barbecue is at the [Krave, a food truck in Jersey City](#), which opened in August and has a following on [Twitter](#). Here the galbi (Korean-style short ribs), spicy pork and sesame chicken are served in tacos (\$2.50) or on a platter with rice and kimchi (\$6).

"The fusion aspect is definitely unique," said Nhon Ma, 27, one of the owners, who lives in Jersey City, where the truck operates, normally in front of the Grove Street PATH station.

"I grew up in L.A., where there are a lot of taco trucks and also good Korean food. That mix of cooking Mexican and Korean together was the next step," said Mr. Ma, the son of Chinese refugees from Vietnam who moved to the United States before he was born.

For authentic Korean barbecue, Mr. Nhon relies on the family recipes of his two partners, Taejin In and Charles Heo, both 24. The barbecue marinade includes a mix of soy sauce, garlic, fruit and spices.

"But Korean barbecue is all about the grilling," Mr. In said.

At the Krave, the marinated meat is cooked on a propane grill in the truck's tiny kitchen; some prep work is done off-site.

Customers say they can smell the barbecue aroma as soon as they walk up the stairs of the PATH station.

A sampling of different approaches to barbecue from around the state:

BERGENFIELD New Barbecue Pit, 100 North Washington Avenue; (201) 439-0522. Open Monday to Saturday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Barbecue chicken, \$9.25 whole, \$5.50 half; spare ribs,

\$10.55 for six.

JERSEY CITY The Krave. Check the Web site, [kravetruck.com](http://kravetruck.com), for the location, but normally at Marin Boulevard and Columbus Drive in front of the Grove Street PATH station. Open Monday to Friday, normally from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. Lunch, 11:30 to 2:30, usually in front of the Exchange Place PATH station. Tacos with galbi (short ribs), spicy pork or sesame chicken, \$2.50 each; platters, \$6.

SOMERSET Real Jamaican Jerk an' Ting, 500 Hamilton Street; (732) 745-7300. [realjamaicanjerk.com](http://realjamaicanjerk.com). Open Monday to Thursday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Jerk chicken entree, \$8.50 with rice and vegetable.

UNION Burnet BBQ, 1363 Burnet Avenue; (908) 687-0313. Open Sunday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Monday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Barbecue chicken, \$13 whole, \$7.50 half; ribs, \$13 whole, \$7.50 half. Includes two side dishes.

Copyright 2009 The New York Times Company

---

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Search](#) | [Corrections](#) | [RSS](#) | [First Look](#) | [Help](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Work for Us](#) | [Site Map](#)