

Super Bowl Sunday: most popular winter day to barbecue

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Super Bowl Sunday is more than just a big game; it's the most popular grilling day of the winter. According to the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association's (HPBA) State of the Barbecue Industry Report, Super Bowl Sunday is one of the Top 10 most popular grilling days of the year with 62 percent of grill owners looking to fire up their grills to feed family and friends for the Big Game. "With millions of Americans cooking on the grill, this popular Sunday is the perfect occasion to cook up delicious grilled food," says Leslie Wheeler, communications director for HPBA. "We are seeing year-round grilling as a major trend among Americans. In 2006 alone, grill shipments reached an industry record high, supporting the fact that more than 60 percent of grillers are grilling year-round." In 2006, the barbecue industry experienced the fastest year-to-year growth rate since HPBA began measuring grill shipments in 1985, shipping a record 17 million grills and marking a 15 percent increase from the previous year. Convenient, fast and known for heart-healthy cooking, grilling is one of Americans most preferred ways to prepare a meal. "When you factor in the 70 percent of Americans who cite easy clean-up as a huge perk, grilling for the big game at home is a convenient, no-mess way to pull together a feast big enough for a football team or a pack of die-hard fans," says Wheeler. If experiencing the pre-game in person at Dolphin Stadium is not an option, fans can still enjoy tasty tailgate grill recipes from the comfort of their couch. This Super Bowl, grill outdoors and create your own indoor tailgating party with family and friends using these tips from the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association:

- Pre-game Prep - Plan ahead to ensure that you'll be watching the game instead of still preparing the food. Prep food ahead of time by marinating meats the day before. On game day simply remove from the refrigerator and throw on the grill.
- Equipment Check - Eliminate a last minute run to the local store for charcoal or propane by checking levels the day before.
- For the Feast - Burgers, steaks, and chicken are the most popular foods for the grill, but try some other appetizing ideas to feed your friends like grilled pizza, grilled veggies and even grilled fruit.

All tailgate and grilling recipes can be found at <http://www.hpba.org/>. -- Reci-tips: -- Using skewers? Soak bamboo skewers in water for at least 30 minutes to prevent veggies from sticking. -- Before grilling, trim the excess fat from meat to avoid flare-ups. -- Place vegetables and fruits at the outer edge of the grill to prevent burning. -- When grilling, use tongs or spatulas to move or turn meats instead of a fork to minimize the loss of juices. -- Light the fire - Before lighting the grill, apply non-stick spray on the grates. The protective spray cuts down the clean-up time afterwards. -- Quick Clean-Up - For charcoal grills, line the bowl with aluminum foil. After grilling, and once the grill and coals are cool (as a rule of thumb, always allow coals to burn out completely and let ashes cool* at least 48 hours before disposing), simply discard the foil with the coals and ash, then wash and reline with foil for next time.

*If you must dispose of coals and ashes before completely cooled, place them in heavy duty foil and soak with water completely before disposing in a non-combustible container. About Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association (HPBA) The Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association based in Arlington, VA, is the North American industry association for manufacturers, retailers, distributors, representatives, service firms and allied associates for all types of hearth, barbecue and patio appliances, fuels and accessories. The association provides professional member services and industry support in education, statistics, government relations, marketing, advertising and consumer education. There are more than 2,700 members in the HPBA.

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