

Authentic Urban Chicago Style Barbecue

Sweet Baby Ray's thoughts on Chicago Barbecue Culture

Authentic hickory smoked meats. Meats have been smoked in Chicago since the days of the stockyards when Chicago was known as the hog butcher to the world. Chicago's rib joints on the south and west sides are guys who worked their way up from the south and expanded on what they learned back home.

Pulled pork with sauce on it. Chicagoans love sauce and love to slather it on their pork sandwich. We have bottles of Sweet Baby Ray's on the tables at both restaurants and warm sauce is also always available in both Wood Dale and Elk Grove.

Sweet Baby Ray's BBQ Sauce. We only use Sweet Baby Ray's Barbecue Sauce. Created in Chicago where the sauce enjoys a 42% share of the retail market is used by over 2000 food service customers. We built the company, why would we use anything else?

We feature baby back ribs (loin back ribs). Chicago is a baby back town. Our spec is 11-13 bones per slab, 1 ¾ lbs. and down, no more than 2 ½" on the short end, no more than 1 ½" larger than the small end, skinned, no shiners.

St. Louis Style Spareribs. While not nearly as popular as baby back ribs, Chicagoans prefer the St. Louis cut of spare ribs to full spare ribs common in most other southern markets.

Rib Tips. Chicagoans love rib tips, uncommon in many other markets. Our Wood Dale location alone smokes and sells over 700 lbs. a week. Rib Tips, French fries and white bread – that's barbecue to lots of folks.

Unique menu offerings. Chicagoland supports a diverse multicultural population base making it one of the most exciting food cities in the nation. Chicagoans require choice; folks around here do not want to eat the same food every day.

Passion and commitment. Passion is an important ingredient for great BBQ. Sweet Baby Ray's has the passion and continues to make the commitment through developing a staff with professional chefs setting high standards and expectations for our food items and service.

Sincere effort to produce the best products. I do not know of any other BBQ place that has a team of 6 professionally trained chefs.

Using the best products available to us. Being in a major urban city, a more diverse array of products are available, fresher food stuffs, access to better personnel, and in some instances better companies to work with.

When you put it all together, Chicago is not on the top tier of barbecue but I believe we are at the top of the second tier and, as such, Chicago is deserving of our own style and standards and Sweet Baby Ray's is enthusiastic about further defining what Chicago barbecue is all about.