

SMOKIN' SUCCESS

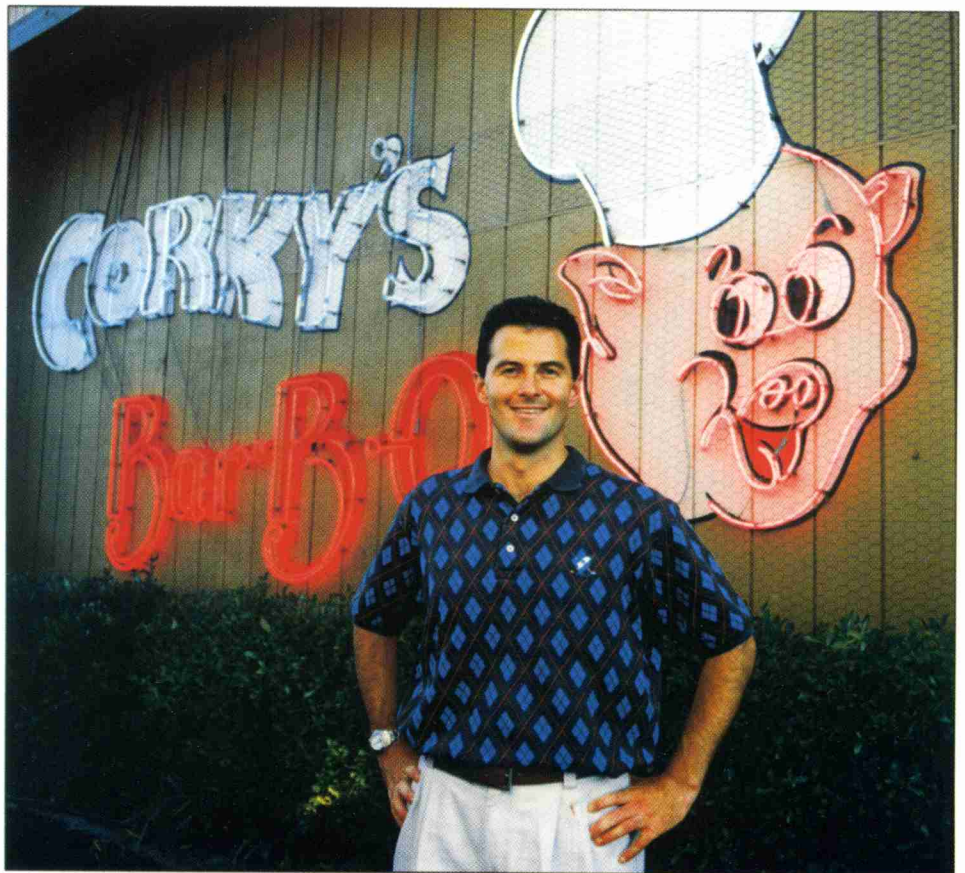


Featuring: "Corky's Bar-B-Q"

The BBQ U faculty is pleased to report that its quest to learn the secrets of America's most successful barbecue operations is truly starting to get to the meat of the matter. We can now say, with firsthand experience, the business of barbecue is conducted largely behind smoke screens. It is a mysterious world of low voices and whispered information about secret recipes and special seasonings. Private reserves of rare hardwoods burned for unique aromas and flavors may not be the only fuel behind the success of a place. Case in point: we heard a rumor about Burt Reynolds and Farrah Fawcett. It was all we needed to hear. We were headed for *Corky's Bar-B-Q* in Memphis, Tennessee.

Thirteen consecutive years the readers of *Memphis Magazine* have voted *Corky's* the Number One barbecue restaurant in the city. That's saying something: there are more than 250 restaurants in Memphis serving barbecue; 115 of which serve *only* barbecue. But *Corky's* is more than a restaurant: it's a major enterprise consisting of 12 franchise operations, grocery distribution, institutional sales, a catering operation and a mail order business.

Mail order? Yes. To all 50 states. They flash-freeze mouthwatering slabs of ribs and pork shoulders and ship them FedEx in insulated containers. Customers include Reggie White, The Grateful Dead, Scotty Pippen, Jay Leno, Eddie DeBartolo, Jr. ... and Farrah Fawcett and Burt Reynolds.



Barry Pelts, President of Corky's Bar-B-Q, uses Southern Pride smokers to help build his reputation as the #1 barbecue restaurant in Memphis.

During the last presidential campaign, candidates Clinton, Dole and Perot had *Corky's* flown in.

Barry Pelts is President of *Corky's*. We asked what he attributes the company's incredible success to.

"We have never lost our focus. We started out as a barbecue 'joint' and today we're still a barbecue joint. Barbecue is our business. Everything we do supports our commitment to this business.

"But we're not just in the restau-

rant business. We're in the *idea* business too. We're constantly creating new ways to deliver our product under different circumstances. We look at our total market as being limitless. Anywhere someone is eating anything, there is an opportunity for *Corky's*. You can get *Corky's* at 20,000 feet on a Northwest Airlines jet. You can get *Corky's* at Marriot Hotels, Kroger supermarkets, Sam's Town Casino in Tunica, Mississippi. If you're having a party — no matter where,

no matter how many guests — you can have *Corky's*."

Our astute faculty noticed some familiar equipment in Mr. Pelts' kitchen. "Isn't that a Southern Pride smoker?" we asked.

"Yes, it is. *Corky's* was started in 1984 by my father. Before that he had a restaurant and used a Southern Pride smoker. He said it was the best, and that it helped him build his reputation. When I got involved in the family business, we looked at many other smokers, but to be honest, I wouldn't consider anything else.

"I could give you a couple dozen reasons why Southern Pride smokers are so great, but the most important one is that they make absolutely fantastic barbecue. In addition, they are dependable, easy to operate and require little maintenance.

"When you get right down to it, I suppose the most important thing is the relationship we have with Southern Pride and their rep. We get *incredible* support from them. An example?

"Consider that we have a huge, fast-paced operation with six smokers. We keep them going 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If one goes down, we have a problem. Southern Pride understands this. So when we had a unit go down one night, they had somebody here working at two o'clock in the morning to fix it and have it cranking again by five a.m.

"That kind of service gives us confidence. Confidence that our units are going to handle the load. We know we can deliver, without interruption, a superior product."

But it isn't just equipment and service that Southern Pride provides.

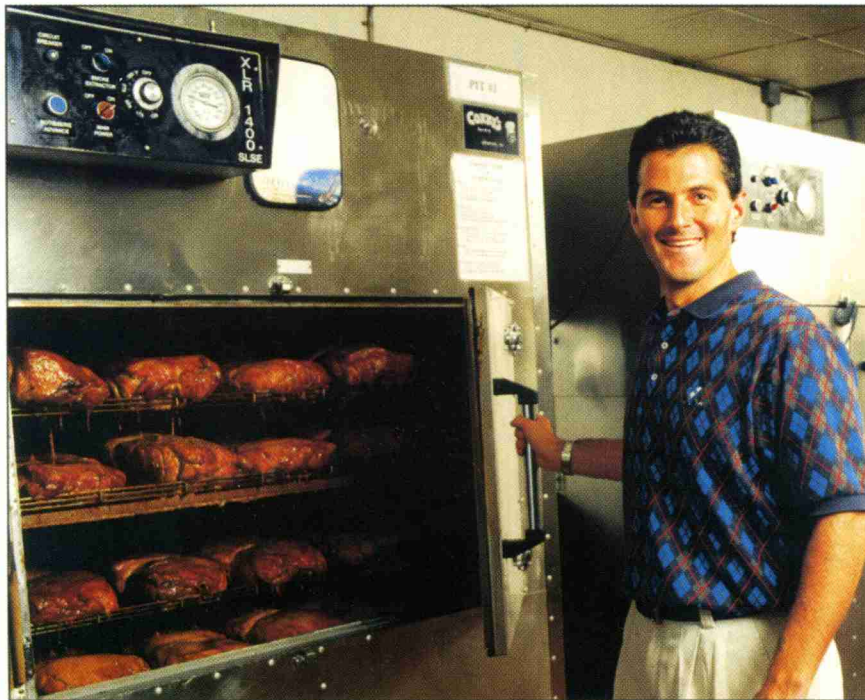
"They provide knowledge, too. One of their great strengths is the quality of their field organization. Charlie Christian is our rep. Has been from the start. When we were

You don't get that kind of support from other companies. We've come to expect it with Southern Pride."

We asked Mr. Pelts whether he had any advice for others who might be planning to open a barbecue restaurant.

"I do. Go with Southern Pride. They've helped us build our reputation. Our ads say 'cooked the old-fashioned way.' That means slow, slow, slow, and even — to seal in a true 'taste of the South.' We cook our pork shoulders 22 hours and our ribs eight. That's where dependability and ease of operation are so important. There's no guesswork with Southern Pride, either. Set it and forget it.

"One other piece of advice I'd give is, stay out of Memphis. Because when barbecue lovers make it to Memphis, they make it to *Corky's*."



*Barry shows off one of his six Southern Pride smokers during the slow cooking cycle that gives *Corky's* that unique "taste of the South".*

a young and growing company, he gave us a lot of very valuable and valid advice on how to build our operation. In essence he was a free consultant who brought us expert advice on equipment, handling, technical support and so forth.

"Charlie understands our business because he owned a barbecue business of his own prior to going with Southern Pride. He knows the problems that are unique to the barbecue business. An example of *this* too? Okay.

"When we were bringing on-line our new state-of-the-art USDA inspected meat processing facility for our grocery distribution, Charlie was there whenever we needed him. Sometimes he worked eight straight hours with carpenters and plumbers, contributing his knowledge in order to get us set up right — and as rapidly as possible.

For additional information about Southern Pride, please call Steve Walker at 800-851-8180.

**Southern
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