

# Mesquite Trees and Texas Barbeque

In many a Texas field, forty feet below the ground, dwells a taproot that anchors mesquite trees and provides the essentials needed for this shrubby tree to survive in Texas. Just as these trees are scattered in fields throughout the state, you will find in almost every town that you visit a locally-owned barbeque restaurant that still uses the same rub and sauce recipes that their grandparents used when they first opened the store many years ago...and a big woodpile of mesquite logs out back to give the meat a distinctive flavor. Texas mesquite trees represent the heart and soul of Texas barbeque and provide a warm sense of culture, tradition and community.

Mesquite trees are a best friend to most pit masters at barbeque restaurants throughout Texas, but ask cattle and livestock ranchers about mesquite and you might be greeted with scowl or a growl. Ranchers try to keep healthy grasses in their cattle fields, but they fight an on-going battle with the fast-growing mesquite. Cattle eat the mesquite pods and help to spread the seeds throughout their pasture. The sharp mesquite thorns make the process of removing these hardy shrubs quite painful for ranchers and their horses.

While being a nuisance to most ranchers, the trees do have a beautiful side. When the mesquites are in bloom, they produce a stunning flower which emits such a sweet smelling aroma that you cannot help but enjoy it. In Texas however, the best part of these trees, is the sweet smoke that fills the air and the smell of the meat when that Texas barbeque is cooking on the pit.

When making this delicacy, many different styles and practices are used. Often barbeque chefs use indirect heat in a brick or metal fire pit, burning mesquite or other carefully selected woods. Mesquite is favored for its sweet, smoky flavor, and the meat of choice across Texas is

beef brisket. Throughout the state, you will find many different types of trees and foods, but mesquite and barbeque will always hold a special place in the hearts and stomachs of Texans.

## Source(s):

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