

## REVVING UP THE BARBECUE

New restaurant  
in KCK combines  
with motorcycles.

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# Business

STAR BUSINESS WEEKLY ★

# BARBECUE GOES HEAVY METAL

JOYCE SMITH



**T**o take on Kansas City barbecue — and succeed — you'd better be prepared.

Count the new Backfire BBQ Featuring Orange County Choppers — three years in development — as well-prepared. The new restaurant and retail shop kicked off with a grand opening Monday in the Legends at Village West in Kansas City, Kan.

So chow down and let the barbecue debate begin.

“Backfire BBQ is bikes, burgers and barbecue. And it is a phenomenal collection of antique cars, antique jukeboxes, phenomenal neon signs,” said Steve Schussler, creator of Backfire BBQ as well as T-Rex Cafe, also in the Legends, and Rainforest Cafe, among other concepts.



DAVID PULLIAM | THE KANSAS CITY STAR

**Backfire BBQ creator Steve Schussler said the new restaurant had “some of the most unusual decor that you will see in Kansas City.”**

“We have some of the most unusual decor that you will see in Kansas City, and what you don't see, which is behind the scenes, is one of the world's

largest smokers.”

Backfire BBQ has gone full throttle, developing a menu under the culinary direction of Chicago's Levy Restaurants,

which oversees such award-winning restaurants as Spiaggia and Bistro 110 in that city.

“We spent a whole year testing

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## CITYSCAPE: Backfire BBQ uses organic and local items

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food in their laboratories. So it is more about the food than the decor," Schussler said. "You can't think that your taste buds are going to be overwhelmed by the decor."

The 8,300 square-foot operation at 1855 Village West Parkway (just 20 yards from T-Rex) seats 300 people amid custom-built choppers by Orange County Choppers, an open flame "hog pit," 14 plasma televisions and artwork. It will have live music Thursday through Saturday nights.

Everything but the chocolate cake is made in-house, including the pickles, salad dressings, barbecue sauces, doughnuts (made to order and tossed tableside in cinnamon and sugar), apple cobbler and fried green tomatoes.

Backfire BBQ uses organic and local foods when possible.

Other menu items include chipotle deviled eggs, spiced barbecue shrimp, chili, a variety of burgers, meatloaf, salads, steak, catfish, and, of course, barbecue — ribs, brisket, pulled pork, and chicken — all cranked up on a smoker with a 1,400-pound capacity.

There's even a s'mores kit that allows customers to make the marshmallow and chocolate treat at the restaurant or at home. On Monday, Paul Teutul Sr., chief executive officer of Orange County Choppers, and his two sons were at the grand opening. The stars of the television series "American Chopper" plan to stop several times a year.

Schussler chose the barbecue and bikes combination because it reminds him of the freedom of the open road.

"We're in a barbecue town, and we said to ourselves, 'OK, dare we open up barbecue in a barbecue town?'" he said. "The only way that you can do barbecue in a barbecue town — and a town that's done barbecue well — is to be better. And we are so confident, not cocky confident, mind you, but we are so confident in our barbecue that I dare anybody to come in and not have our brisket melt in your mouth, our ribs fall off the bone."

### A Yarbrough farewell

After more than four decades in business, Leona Yarbrough's Family Restaurant will soon shut down in Shawnee.



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Go to [economy.kansascity.com](http://economy.kansascity.com) for a video report on Backfire BBQ Featuring Orange County Choppers.

The restaurant at 10310 Shawnee Mission Parkway plans to close at 8 p.m. Dec. 30. It has 28 employees.

"We've done everything we could. We tried opening on Monday, opening for breakfast, but the economy absolutely killed us," said Mike Yarbrough, president and grandson of the founder. "I've known my customers my whole life, and they are fit to be tied. But I wouldn't close unless I had to. It's been an emotional week."

Eating at Yarbrough's is akin to

sitting down for a meal with Grandma — chicken fried steak, pan-fried chicken, braised liver and onions, cucumbers in sour cream.

Leona Yarbrough learned to cook these hearty items for farmers and field workers when she was young.

In 1950, she went to work in a Fairway restaurant with the idea of owning it one day.

In the mid-1960s she did, renaming it and later passing it on to the second and now third

generation. It operated in the Fairway Shops for many years before relocating to Shawnee in the late 1990s. The family is looking for a buyer for the building.

Also on the menu before the closing: A Christmas Day buffet from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Hereford reopens

The new Prime Rib Grill by Hereford House, which temporarily closed last week, is back in business.

The operation at 100 E. 20th St. serves as a quasi-replacement for the original Hereford House across the street, with many of the same employees. It had opened in mid-November but was shut down by the Kansas City Health Department for operating with just a catering permit.

Although Prime Rib Grill by Hereford House specializes in prime rib, it also features appetizers, seafood, sandwiches, salads, burgers and lunch entrees such as beef Stroganoff and Kansas City strip steak.

Cityscape runs Tuesdays and Fridays. To reach Joyce Smith, call 816-234-4692 or send e-mail to [jsmith@kcstar.com](mailto:jsmith@kcstar.com).