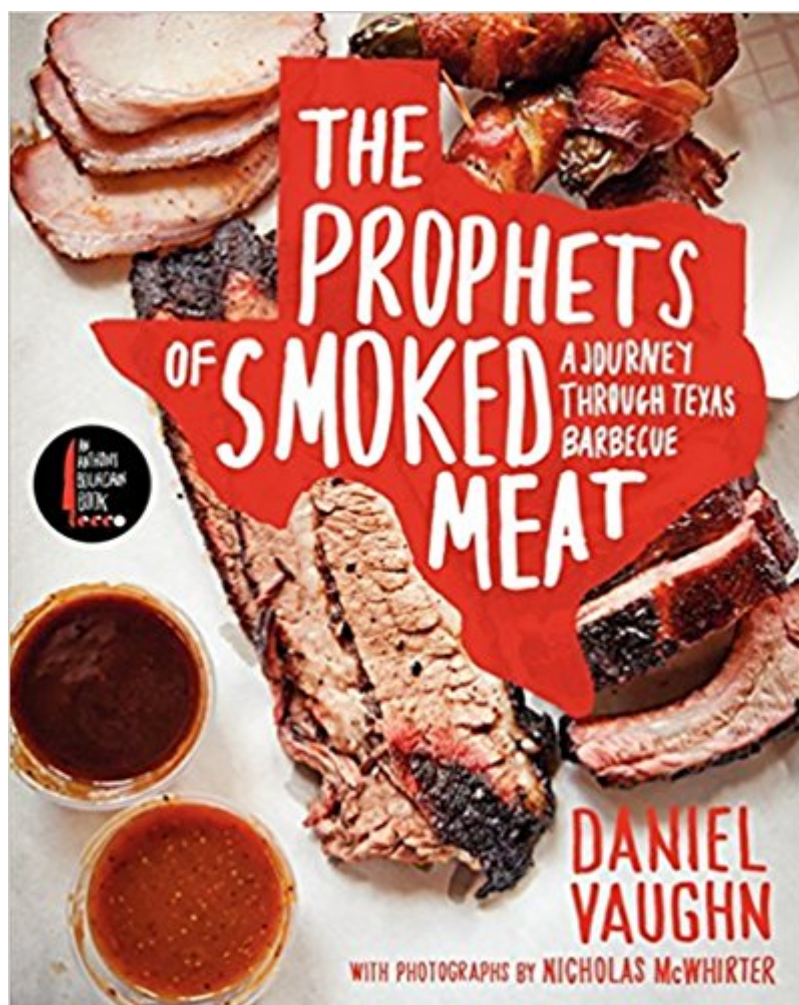


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The Prophets Of Smoked Meat: A Journey Through Texas Barbecue



Synopsis

The debut title in the Anthony Bourdain Books line, *The Prophets of Smoked Meat* by [Daniel Vaughn](#), author of the enormously popular blog *Full Custom Gospel BBQ*, is a rollicking journey through the heart of Texas Barbecue. From brisket to ribs, beef to pork, mesquite to oak, this fully illustrated, comprehensive guide to Texas barbecue includes pit masters' recipes, tales of the road—from country meat markets to roadside stands, sumptuous photography, and a panoramic look at the Lone Star State, where smoked meat is sacred.

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review Stomachs will ache at the thought of cabeza de vaca (cow's head), beef clod (beef shoulder), or barbecue brisket (among other delicacies). Undeterred, architect and barbecue fanatic Vaughn, along with photographer Nicholas McWhirter and occasional sidekicks, did a hunting, gathering, and tasting journey throughout Texas to find the best barbecue. Out of the 186 places sampled, only 5 made his best list; the journey to him, though, is worth it. Beginning with the universal definition of barbecue as simply seasoned meat cooked to tenderness over hardwood smoke, the author not only delivers a running commentary on the goodness (or lack thereof) of the proteins, sides, and desserts, he also gives an almost-native's perspective on the culture. Joints close when they run out of meat, often at 2 p.m., sometimes earlier. Fat counts: The value of well-smoked fat cannot be understated. So do desserts; there's nothing better, Vaughn states, to counteract protein overload than a bit of something sweet. At the end, 20-ish pit masters are singled

out for the specialties (mutton ribs, anyone?), providing quasi-recipes (details on meat, rub, wood, pit, fire, cooking time, it's done when . . . suggestions, resting, and other pro tips) with the assumption that you'll know how to interpret this shorthand. The first in a series of Anthony Bourdain's "branded books. --Barbara Jacobs

The comprehensive, must-have guide to Texas barbecue, including pitmasters' recipes, tales of the road "from country meat markets to roadside stands" and a panoramic look at the Lone Star State, where smoked meat is sacred. Brisket. Spareribs. Beef sausage. Pulled pork. From the science of heat to the alchemy of rubs, from the hill country to the badlands, *The Prophets of Smoked Meat* takes readers on a pilgrimage to discover the heart and soul of Texas barbecue. Join Daniel "BBQ Snob" Vaughn "host of the popular blog Full Custom Gospel BBQ and acknowledged barbecue expert" and photographer Nicholas McWhirter as they trek across more than 10,000 miles to sample the wood-smoking traditions of the Lone Star State's four distinct barbecue styles: East Texas style, essentially the hickory-smoked, sauce-coated barbecue with which most Americans are familiar. Central Texas "meat market" style, in which spice-rubbed meat is cooked over indirect heat from pecan or oak wood, a method that originated in the butcher shops of German and Czech immigrants. Hill Country "cowboy style," which involves direct heat cooking over mesquite coals and uses goat and mutton as well as beef and pork. South Texas barbacoa, in which whole beef heads are traditionally cooked in pits dug into the earth. Including recipes from longtime pitmasters and new barbecue stars, *The Prophets of Smoked Meat* encompasses the entire panorama of Texas barbecue. Illustrated throughout with lush, full-color photographs of the food, the people, and the stunning landscapes of the Lone Star State, *The Prophets of Smoked Meat* is the new gospel of Texas barbecue, essential for neophytes and seasoned experts alike.

This is an amazing book. I really couldn't put it down, sitting with a map on my computer screen so I could follow the details of Vaughn and photographer McWhirter's marathon road eating trip. Here is a book that gives details that others leave out; it goes to out-of-the-way joints as well as to the famous places in the state that have lines out the door. Assessments of the barbecue seem fair and there is a lot of good detail to back up the opinions; even when the conclusions aren't positive, the tone is not mean spirited. I really enjoyed Vaughn's personalized and congenial style. The photographs are done with a very practiced eye and contribute greatly to the book. Looking at other reviews of this book, it strikes me that many of those who didn't rate it well seemed to be expecting a different book -- some didn't like the fact that the journey was limited to Texas barbecue; others

were expecting a cookbook. For me, the book promised exactly what the last part of the title says: "A Journey Through Texas Barbecue." It may not in fact be for the casual reader -- but that's fine. By the way, the map "Texas BBQ by the Cord" showing what kinds of woods are being used in each place visited alone is worth the cost of the book. Thanks to Anthony Bourdain for making this part of his new food book series.

Born and raised in Texas...naturally I would become a BBQ man...I got hooked after reading Aaron Franklin's book...a meat-smoking manifesto....through his BBQ with Franklin show I knew who Daniel Vaughn was....and being that it was strictly about all of Texas BBQ...I had to read it...it's a great book...though I did get tired of Vaughn's constant negative criticisms on many of his stops...it only showed me of things to look out for when time to cook...great book thus far...still think Aaron Franklin's book set the bar pretty high for Texas BBQ today

I love Texas BBQ, and not only that but I love learning about the places and stops along the hundreds of miles of roads that I have never traveled. This book not only reviews many legs of a trip of a lifetime, but it also goes into good detail about the textures, sights, smells, and experiences of traveling just to eat BBQ. Not only does it entail all the locations and pit-stops on a very optimistic journey, but the author also includes bits and pieces of advice and reference as to the very definition of BBQ. Surprisingly there ends up being more mediocre places included in this book than I thought there would. A great read if you like BBQ and the quest for it.

As a lover of all things BBQ this has been a fantastic read. Living on the east coast I have been to Lockhart, Dallas, Houston and Austin. This has me wanting to return tomorrow. Very well done. A great picture of what Texas BBQ is. Well written, well done.

This book was a bit different from what I expected. Most of the books on BBQ have been dry and straight forward. This book truly chronicles an experience that I would love to have. The duo set there journey going all over the state and tasting the mediocre to the amazing. Texas is really an amazing place when it comes to the BBQ culture. Traveling just one-hundred miles can give you very different results. The photos help tell the story and this book is a very easy read. This is not necessarily a recipe book but the author gives a good idea what goes into most of the food. This book has helped inspire me even further to continue improving my meat smoking methods. I would recommend this book to anyone who is passionate about barbecue.

I learned some valuable lessons: stay away from east Texas hot links; understand the difference between direct heat cooking and indirect heat cooking; respect the elegance of a salt and cracked pepper dry rub; and keep that cooker closed! Texas barbecue is an art. This is a fine introduction to that art, and to the artists who create it. My favorite part of the book is the pit master profiles at the end: great portraits and wonderful insights on their process! The photographs are beautiful; with the exception of the chapter focusing on Houston and Dallas, there simply aren't enough of them. I would have enjoyed a little less "I'm from Ohio, but I love Texas Barbecue!" (Dude, you've just described eating at 30 BBQ joints in 36 hours - you don't need to tell us you like 'cue) and more of those lovely photos. I'm still trying to figure out how these guys don't weigh 450 pounds, have dodged diabetes, hypertension, and gout, and remain married. A very entertaining trip through the heart of Brisket, Rib, and Sausage Shangri-la.

Although I was disappointed that no real detailed explanations were included on how to smoke meat based on the different styles that are shown, the book achieved what it set out to do. The Prophets of Smoked Meat takes the reader through the different regions of Texas and the different styles, techniques, history, and modern day hot spots of BBQ. I really wish I would have owned this book while living in TX because the book identifies specific BBQ joints in the region and makes the reader/eater appreciate them even more. Not only is it a good read, but the photos are amazing and it looks great on the shelves!

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