

Fall Into South Carolina

Thanksgiving is a time for gathering around the table with family, counting all the many blessings of the year and gorging oneself on a bounty of turkey, stuffing, gravy, mashed potatoes and all the other traditional holiday fixings.

Here along South Carolina's Grand Strand, we like to do our Thanksgiving just a bit differently. And by that, we mean we like to get our smokers, grills and deep fryers going and add a little Southern barbecue flavor to our feast.

Alan McNeill operates Speedway BBQ in the Myrtle Beach area. He sticks to turkey for the sake of tradition, but it's a bird that's usually smoked as opposed to oven-baked.

Dickey's BBQ Pit recently opened a restaurant in the Myrtle Beach area. Managers say they'll be closed on Thanksgiving, but will be selling smoked turkeys and hams up until then to meet the demand.

Then there are others, like McNeill, who'd rather do the work themselves. It's not uncommon for those of us living here along the Grand Strand to see people hauling a cooker behind their car on the way to grandma's house for that Thanksgiving feast.

But a good, smoked turkey isn't all the rage here come Gobble Gobble Day. Employees at Sticky Fingers say deep frying a turkey is a very popular option in this neck of the Palmetto State.

Tammy Floyd, the owner of Simply Southern Smokehouse, agrees. She's been in Myrtle Beach since April, coming here from Lake City. For her, a turkey doesn't taste any better than after it's been deep fried.

As she said, in the country, that's just the way to do it.

But that doesn't mean barbecued pork is overlooked around the holiday. McNeill said turkey wears out its welcome by the next day. So, in his family, the Friday after Thanksgiving signals the start of a pig pickin.'

McNeill said it's a holiday tradition of his, and that delicious barbecued pork goes great with all the football there is to watch during the Thanksgiving holiday.