

GOURMET *insider*

Connecting the business of gourmet housewares®

Home Grown

**Dominic's Kitchen Store embraces
the local community with a creative
blend of merchandising and events**

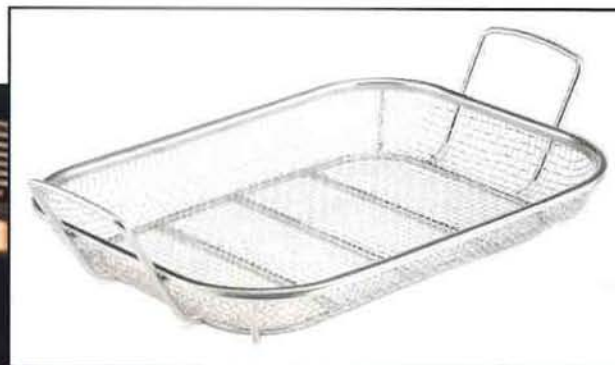
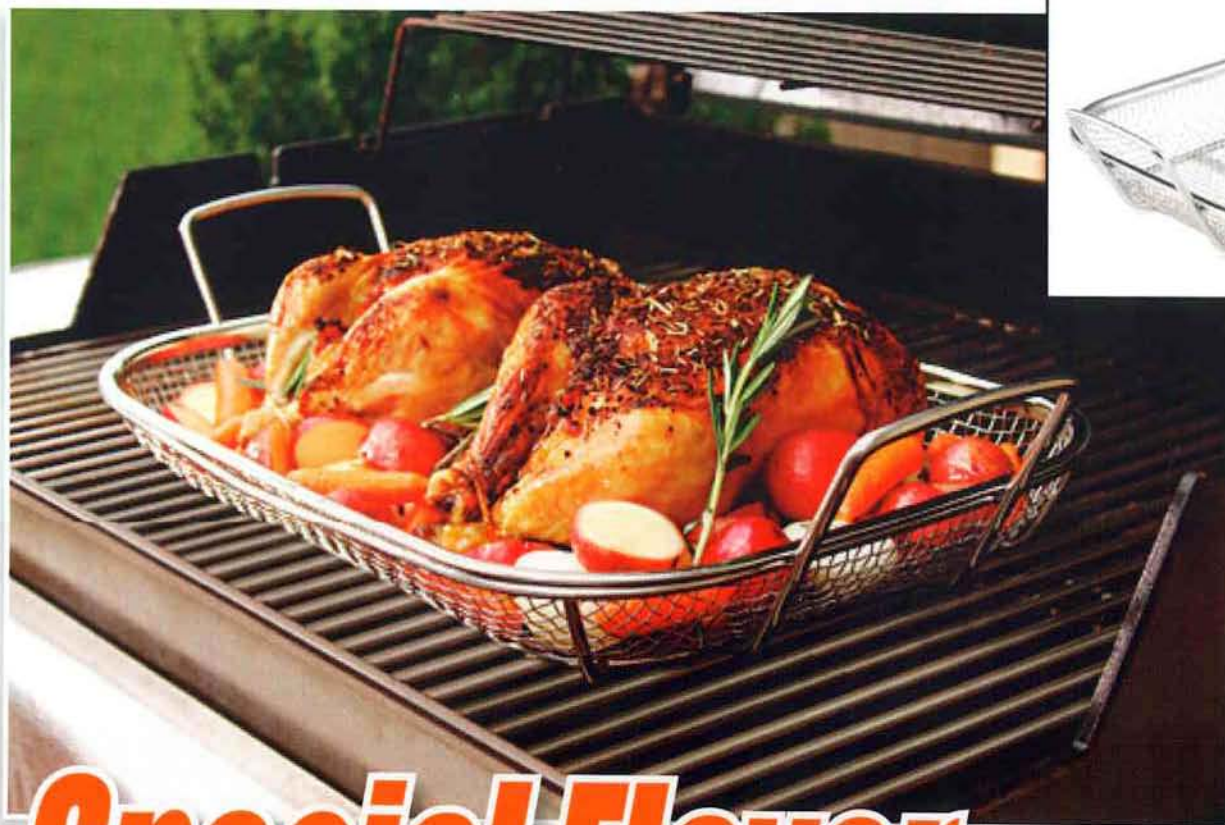
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*Dominic Cimilluca,
owner of Park Ridge,
IL-based Dominic's Kitchen Store*

ALSO INSIDE

Gourmet Insiders
prepare for summer's
outdoor entertaining season

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Left and above: Roaster and grill pan in mesh stainless steel from Maverick. Below: Barbecue tools from Outset.



Special Flavor

fire up the outdoor selling season with barbecue accessories

When talking barbecue with gourmet insiders, sales of grillware and accessories seem to come down to just one thing: flavor.

Planks, rubs, smokers and barbecue sauces stoked the category in 2010, according to store owners, along with the accessories and grillware needed to impart those flavors.

In addition, consumers were cooking healthier fare on the barbecue this year, increasing demand for grill products that made adding veggies, fish and leaner meats to the fire tastier and easier.

Gourmet store owners in 2010 saw barbecue accessory sales increase slightly over 2009, and 2011 shows even more promise.

According to Linda Wyner, owner

of Pans on Fire, in Pleasanton, CA, barbecue fared better this year than it did last year. That sentiment was echoed by Michael Fear, of

Now You're Cooking, in Bath, ME. "Barbecue was up a little bit this year over last year. It was in line with everything else," he said.



Barbecue has a definite selling season, gourmet insiders have said, regardless of the region of the country, with spring and early summer through Father's Day the best time for moving grilling products. Wyner, whose northern California location has consumers barbecuing pretty much year round, still feels the spring is the best time to promote the category. "If you don't have your stuff out by April," Wyner noted, "you miss the boat."

However, Lorraine Hitchcock, owner of Beyond Pots and Pans, in Stockton, CA, has also found that the winter holiday season can be profitable for moving barbecue accessories. "December is a great month for us because the big boxes

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outdoor entertaining

GOURMET
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Gourmet insiders have noted that barbecue and grill gift baskets have been popular, as well as products that emphasize lighter fare and healthier eating. Shown here, Fire Wire's flexible stainless steel grilling skewers.

gift baskets, store displays key for bbq gourmet channel

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put their barbecue away and we sell a lot as gifts," she said.

Both Hitchcock and Wyner commented that setting up barbecue gift baskets during the holidays is a great way to sell barbecue products.

While gift baskets, complete with tools, sauces and grilling cookware may have been a hit this holiday season, according to gourmet insiders, grilling tool sets are a tough sell.

"I have a hard time selling sets," said Pans on Fire's Wyner. "If I have the pieces separate though, they sell."

"A lot of people pick pieces instead of a set," added Now You're Cooking's Fear.

Pieces that the gourmet store channel is successful with, according to store owners, range from cedar planks from companies such as Camerons to grilling tools— spatulas, mops and tongs, for example— from companies such as Companion Group and Outset.

Wyner has found that indoor smokers and slider presses, from companies such as Nordic Ware and Camerons, are also popular in

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