

WALTER JETTON



2025 HALL OF FAME LEGACY INDUCTEE

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Walter Jetton, known as the “King of Barbecue,” was a legendary Texas pitmaster whose influence helped bring Lone Star-style barbecue to national prominence.

Based in Fort Worth, Jetton ran one of the most prolific catering operations of his time—serving over 1.5 million people annually and cooking everything from brisket to whole steers over open pits. He gained widespread fame as President Lyndon B. Johnson’s personal pitmaster, catering high-profile events at the LBJ Ranch, including the first presidential barbecue in U.S. history in 1963.

Jetton’s distinctive chuckwagon-style presentations, cowboy charm, and rich, smoky flavors captured the imagination of the American public. In 1965, he co-authored Walter Jetton’s LBJ Barbecue Cook Book, preserving his techniques and Texas traditions for future generations. Through his pioneering methods, national media appearances, and dedication to authentic barbecue, Jetton helped shape the identity of Texas barbecue and left an indelible mark on American culinary history.