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Press release

spoga+gafa 2023

Barbecue & BBQ as focus topic

Essen, March 8, 2023. spoga+gafa (June 18-20, 2023 in Cologne) will see even more exhibitors from the international barbecue and BBQ sector than in previous years. Thematically, BBQ and grilling pleasure will also move to the forefront at the world's largest garden lifestyle trade fair.

This year, the exhibitors will help shape the content of the multi-layered guiding theme of spoga+gafa 2023 "Social Gardens - Places of Encounter" in their areas. In the corresponding Halls 7 and 8, an increase in size due to new exhibitors from North America and the DACH region became apparent at an early stage. The reason for the positive booking behavior of the BBQ sector is on the one hand the challenges of the market, and on the other hand, the good experience that the exhibitors and their trade and large-area visitors had in Cologne last year.

The focus of this spoga+gafa is on the unifying power of gardens: gardening and designing together, celebrating and relaxing. "It is obvious that BBQ and grilling as a social event plays an important role in this," says Norbert L. Jedrau, Managing Director of the Barbecue Industry Association Grill e. V. (BIAG). BIAG is - as in previous years - present in Cologne with its own exhibition stand and welcomes trade visitors to exchange ideas. BIAG will also be available to the press and public as a contact for all questions relating to BBQ and grilling.

Barbecuing - a social experience

"Barbecuing together with family and friends has always been a special experience in Germany and continues to enjoy great popularity," emphasizes BIAG. The social component of barbecuing is also confirmed by market research. For example, in a survey conducted by the Gesellschaft für Konsumforschung (GfK) 93 percent of Germans who regularly barbecue said they enjoy doing so with friends because of the sociability. People have learned to value spending time together and, at the same time, exploring new culinary avenues together. This is evident in the growing business of barbecue accessories. Demand for new ways to prepare food on the grill is on the rise. Whether it's new methods of preparing meat or cooking vegetables and other side dishes, interest in variations on the grill is growing. As the latest barbecue study by mafowerk GmbH in Fürth shows, younger barbecuers up to 49 years of age in particular have intensified their barbecue behavior. One in three of them bought a new grill during the crisis - and intends to continue using it intensively. Nine out of ten of these "grill intensifiers" also want to grill more frequently after the crisis than before. For their part, manufacturers are stimulating the desire to try things out with numerous practical innovations. These will occupy a correspondingly large space at spoga+gafa.

Stable trends

This consumer behavior led to a strong boom in demand for barbecue appliances and accessories in the first pandemic years, but this then levelled off in 2022, as expected. For this reason, market observers do not speak of a slump in the market in view of the very high growth rates in previous years, but rather of a normalization at a high level. According to GfK, it is striking that average prices in many barbecue categories have risen sharply in 2022. The market researchers explain this by the fact that, following the pandemic, consumers have once again increasingly bought in DIY stores and consumer electronics centers, where higher-priced appliances in particular are on offer. The trend towards quality products and models with additional functions, as well as innovative accessories, is also being observed by the companies organized in the BIAG, which are aligning their product and brand strategies accordingly. According to BIAG, it remains to be seen to what extent the still tight supply situation for some raw materials and input materials will influence the availability and pricing of grills, accessories and fuels in the further course of this year.

April is the time to get going

By March at the latest, retail spaces should be ready for the big barbecue. This is because one in three Germans begins the barbecue season in April, according to the results of a survey conducted by POSpulse in 2021. Around 39 percent of consumers then reach for the barbecue every two weeks during the barbecue season. Almost 17 percent even grill throughout the entire year. In Germany, the most common grills are gas and charcoal grills.

BIAG promotes quality and sustainability

In principle, the issue of sustainability is becoming increasingly important, for example when purchasing high-quality charcoal and briquettes from sustainable, certified forestry. Consumers can recognize such

products at a glance when shopping. FSC or PEFC labels on the packaging identify wood from sustainably managed forests. The DIN EN 1860-2 test label ensures that the charcoal meets firmly defined requirements for premium quality: particularly high carbon content and thus excellent burning performance with low ash content. Under the leadership of BIAG, EN 1860-2, -3 and -4 for fuels, lighting aids, etc. have now been revised and optimized once again. With the support of the Spanish Standards Institute, the revised standard has been released for final approval and could then be applied in 2024.

High tech at the barbecue

In the case of the classics, charcoal grills, technical development also continues unabated. Models with special features, for example, are all the rage. In the American Smoker, for example, the food is not cooked directly over the fire, but in hot air or smoke. Japanese-style egg-shaped models are particularly suitable for indirect grilling and bread baking. And if you want to grill with charcoal today and gas tomorrow, you should take a look at one of the new combination grills. These so-called hybrid models allow either charcoal or gas to be used - or even at the same time. The latest innovations also include a wood pellet grill whose temperature can be precisely adjusted from 95 to 315 degrees Celsius. Unlike other pellet grills, this also allows for searing, according to the manufacturer. An integrated AI-based (AI: artificial intelligence) control unit monitors the core temperature and cooking level of the steaks at all times. Wood pellets made of maple, hickory and cherry, for example, specially developed for these grills are also available, and ensure particularly aromatic grilled dishes.

Numerous practical innovations

But it's also the little things that count: special smoking flavors or the right grilling tools for fish, pulled pork and poultry are just a few examples. The more unusual the barbecue ideas and the higher the demands, the greater the variety of barbecue accessories. Grill woks, pizza stones and pizza sets, grill plates, spare rib and chicken holders, hamburger presses and vegetable baskets are just a small excerpt from the accessory lists of the grill brands. Not missing is an extensive brand selection of barbecue charcoal and briquettes. Here, too, the selection of special products for special barbecue occasions and recipes is becoming ever larger. Barbecue fans who find a full range at their retailer have many shelf meters to choose from among hundreds of items. "For their part, manufacturers are spurring interest and the desire to try out new products with numerous practical innovations," emphasizes BIAG Managing Director Jedrau. "Innovations with high consumer benefits will take up a lot of space at spoga+gafa - and will once again increase people's shared experience at the barbecue."

norbert l. jedrau
- general manager -

Barbecue Industry Association Grill (BIAG) e.V. is a growing industry association representing the interests of European manufacturers and resellers of barbecue products (barbecue grills, barbecue fuels, barbecue lighters and barbecue accessories). BIAG brings together companies from 11 countries. With its activities, Barbecue Industry Association Grill (BIAG) e.V. mainly pursues the goals: **Innovation, comfort, quality and safety.**

For more information, please visit our homepage: www.biag.org