

Texas barbecue draws a crowd in Italy

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The smell of Texas barbecue tickles noses, makes mouths water and attracts a crowd—even in Italy.

A mission team from Coastal Bend Fellowship, a church in Kingsville, discovered Texas barbecue offered an ideal way to bring Italians together. Partnering with Southern Baptist Convention [International Mission Board](#) missionaries Charlie and Shannon Worthy, the Texans held two barbecues during a recent mission trip to Italy.

A taste of Texas

The team held a barbecue for the missionaries in their neighborhood in Naples, where as many as 150 curious people—at least half of them non-Christians—arrived to experience a taste of Texas.



Noe Treviño, pastor of Coastal Bend Fellowship in Kingsville, prepares to barbecue a brisket in Italy. “The neighborhood party was a rocking neighborhood party,” said Steve Seaberry, director of Texas Baptists’ partnerships office, who made the connection between the church and the missionaries, who recently relocated to another site in northern Italy near Tuscany.

“People talking, visiting, saying goodbye—lots of friendship, lots of warmth. It showed how much people loved them.”

Delma Falcon, the church’s secretary as well as director of outreach and ministry, said the gathering was amazing.

“The people came, and they ate,” she said. “They loved the food. I felt like I was in an Italy movie. Everyone stood around and visited. At the end, they surprised us with a fireworks display.”

Another 130 people attended a barbecue at the missionaries’ church, giving

the congregation an opportunity to express their gratitude for the missionaries' service.

The barbecues had been dreams of the missionaries since they hit the field. The mission team had to improvise—including making their own barbecue sauce, finding necessary spices and even lowering the food down four stories on a makeshift rope and bucket system—but were thrilled to help.

“We had our challenges, but we made it work,” said Noe Trevino, pastor of Coastal Bend Fellowship. “We cooked briskets with charro beans and rice and made some quesadillas. They loved it.”

Positive image

The gatherings provided an opportunity to encourage the missionaries as well as presenting a positive image of Christians in a neighborhood where there are few Christ-followers.

God can use any ability for his purposes, Seaberry noted. He seeks people who are willing to follow his guidance, he insisted.

“There’s literally no skill, gift or talent that cannot be used in service for God,” he said. “If a person begins to have a desire in their heart to use their gifts, skills and talent for God, there is a place. Our challenge is to find it.”

For more information about mission opportunities around the globe through Texas Partnerships, visit www.texasbaptists.org/texaspartnerships.