

PORTSMOUTH

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Local wild mushrooms are a rich flavor addition to any fall meal. Meet the creative mushroom expert, William Dunkley, and his booming Brentwood-based Dunk's Mushrooms in the Homegrown and Harvested on the Seacoast story.

Photography:
Portsmouth City
Lifestyle.

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TASTE THE DIFFERENCE



Elevate Your Grill Game with Lakes Region Luxury Outdoor

ARTICLE BY ANN KATHRYN KELLY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATT MIKULA

Flickering flames, the sizzle of something good, a smoky aroma, a cold drink in your grip, the reward of biting into the perfect balance of char and juicy. Gathering with family and friends for outdoor grilling engages all five senses in a way few other experiences can.



“This is the last grill you’ll buy. They’re built like tanks and you’ll be using it 20 years from now.”

Long a summer activity, grilling has graduated to become a year-round passion for many. With advancements that keep raising the bar on better control and bigger flavor, today’s grill game is not your father’s hobby. And with state-of-the-art outdoor kitchen solutions that can withstand all weather and 365-day use, it’s not surprising that luxury grilling is enjoying its well-deserved heyday.

Lakes Region Luxury Outdoor in Tilton specializes in premium outdoor cooking appliances and accessories, featuring top-end grills from Alfresco and Artisan, outdoor pizza ovens from Alfa, charcoal smokers from Primo, and refrigeration solutions from Perlick. With the largest live demonstration showroom in the state, Lakes Region Luxury Outdoor owner Brian Neil is happy to fire up one of his grills or pizza ovens to show visitors the difference between his appliances and those from big box stores.

“It’s like learning to drive stick in a Honda Civic and then stepping up into a Porsche,” Neil says. “Technically,

you’re driving stick with both, but the experience with a premium grill—the way it handles, the end result, the joy along the way—it’s night and day.”

Neil says the turbo charge in heat output on luxury grills means learning to cook differently. “A typical grill might max out at 24,000 BTUs,” he continues. “The Alfresco? That’s the output from just one burner. Now, factor in that you’ve got three burners and a 42-inch footprint.”

Those accustomed to grilling on lower-end models will find that meat burns more quickly on the models he carries. Neil explains it comes down to timing. Ceramic sear burners, for example, utilize a forced air system that reaches 1,800 degrees in under 60 seconds. “You’ve got maybe 30 seconds to flip your meat before it turns into shoe leather,” he points out. Luxury grills also offer precise control for low and slow cooking, like rotisserie or preparing fish on cedar planks.

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Top: Grill Master Brian Neil

And while many of us cook with lids closed because we're using our grills like an indoor oven, it's better to leave lids open on top brands to take advantage of higher temperatures that cook food in half the time.

Neil and his team seek to understand how a customer plans to use a grill before selling someone more than is needed. Grilling hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken breast? One doesn't necessarily need a luxury model. Wild game, on the other hand, or premium dry-aged steaks? That's where advanced features like the sear burner that provides restaurant-quality crust while locking in juices and flavor or the independent smoker that precisely controls smoke and heat is going to be a game changer and a deciding factor.

Neil loves grilling bear tenderloin, venison, pheasant, turkey, fish—catching all of it himself. An avid outdoorsman, he moved his family to New Hampshire from New Jersey in 2015. "I love camping, hiking, fishing, hunting," he says, "and New Hampshire has it all." He demonstrates wild game preparation in his outdoor showroom, in online videos, and at the Northern New England Outfitters hunting camp in Errol, New Hampshire, where he equipped them with a custom outdoor kitchen.

Lakes Region Luxury Outdoor offers design, sales, and custom installation, working with contractors or directly with homeowners from New England to Florida. Each sale comes with complimentary hands-on training. "We tell customers, this is the last grill you'll buy. They're built like tanks; with simple maintenance, you'll be using it 20 years from now."

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