

Chill on a BBQ Boat

By Genevieve Northup



Where I'm from in Texas, summers are spent floating the river with friends. Back in the day (my college days, that is), we slathered on sunscreen, packed coolers with snacks and drinks, and hopped onto rented inner tubes for hours on the Guadalupe or Comal. We always returned home in one piece, usually with awkward tan lines, a few bruises and some ridiculous stories that we won't be sharing with our kids.

Six summers into living in Germany, I was missing those good ole days when we took a trip to Saarbrücken. We saw several giant inner tubes with grills, and couldn't wait to take one out for a spin.

On a Sunday afternoon, my husband, mom (visiting from the States) and a few friends meandered down the Saar in a BBQ Donut while cooking brats, drinking and chatting. We even pulled off a few dizzying donuts, thanks to the outboard motor. The donut boat wasn't quite the same as floating the river Texas-style, but we will rent one again before too long.

What's a BBQ Donut?

It has nothing to do with grilling donuts. A BBQ Donut is an inner-tube-shaped boat with

a gas engine, seating for 10 people at a table, a giant umbrella and an optional grill. A boating license is not required to drive one of these bad boys, but it isn't easy navigating a round vessel — make sure someone is the DD.

How much is the rental?

Rentals are charged per person per hour, starting at 9.90 each for passengers over 6 years of age. A minimum of four paying customers is required, six on Saturday.

The preheated grill is optional, priced at 29 euros. Alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks must be purchased through BBQ Donuts Saarbrücken; preferences and quantities are arranged at booking. You are charged for what is opened, so it's better to be generous when ordering.

What should we bring?

Packages with meats, bread, cold salads and sauces can be ordered in advance, or you can pack your own. Either way, plates, cutlery, cups, napkins and a set of tongs are provided. Glasses are available if wine is pre-ordered.

Here are a few tips for your outing:

- Organize so no one gets stuck buying everything, and you don't end up with duplicates.

- Pack nonstick grilling spray, extra tongs, aluminum foil, serving spoons/forks, plastic wrap, hot pads, wet wipes, paper towels, sunscreen, sunglasses, a sharp knife, corkscrew and bottle opener.
- Consider adding skewers or a grill basket to your list, depending on what you have cooking. If you're grilling for vegetarians, you may need to separate non-meat items on the grill, also a reason to have a basket or foil on hand.
- Create a playlist on your smartphone and bring along the appropriate cable; the boats have speakers and a jack.
- Come hungry but not starving. The grill may not be ready right away. Also stop by a bathroom before boarding.

Want something special?

BBQ Donut packages can be purchased for children's birthdays, catered breakfasts, corporate events and bachelor(ette) parties. During the Christmas season, there's even a *Glühwein* offer.

To book your boat, visit www.saarspass.de or email info@saarspass.de. ■

Images courtesy of BBQ Donuts Saarbrücken

