

3rd Party BBQ, Fireplace and Outdoor Heater Independent Review.

This is a collection of reviews done by a well established company in Southern California that sells and services many brands of BBQ and Fireplace Products. They have many years of hands on experience doing maintenance and warranty repairs on all of the brands that you will see being reviewed here covering almost every brand available today.

Here is the source: <http://allvalleybackyard.com/REVIEWS.php>

Here is what they have to say:

BBQ, Heater, Fireplace Reviews

When it comes to selling and distributing grill products, we've been around awhile - our corporation has four different operations that have a COMBINED operational history of OVER 95 years ... Yes, 95 years!! WE ARE NOT PAID FOR THESE REVIEWS AND OUR GOAL IS TO INFORM THE PUBLIC FROM A PERSPECTIVE OF SERVICE AND USE. WE SHIP ALL OVER THE USA, MEET OR BEAT ONLINE PRICING, and we palletize every grill purchase so that you, our client, get your product in one piece. For larger shipments, we crate your shipment, so unlike the other "guys", we go the extra mile!

So here are our opinions, Read: For Legality, of the various bbq's, fireplaces & heaters we have experience with. And remember: we are the service leader here in our area, and based on our service tickets and volume of repairs, we HAVE A GOOD IDEA WHICH BRANDS ARE WELL MADE AND TREAT THEIR CUSTOMERS WELL. And trust us: a Foreign-engineered and made product may SEEM like a good deal because it's less expensive, BUT PLEASE!!! STAY AWAY FROM JUNK!

ALFRESCO: We have a history with Alfresco, and it's not good. FIRST, we took them to court (twice) for hiring us to fix their grills and then they refused to pay! A 'class act' kind of company, let us assure you... (Oh, we won...) SECOND, we know that, in the past, they've re-boxed foreign items as "USA" made, so again, not the most ethical company in the world. Their 9v ignition systems constantly fail, and while they DO get hot, they also get so hot that they fry their electronics most every time. The ONLY reason they're still out here in the desert is because our competitor knows the owners and push this grill on their pool contractors... STAY AWAY FROM THIS BRAND. You can thank us later... :)

AMBIANCE: These portable gas heaters are the pyramid-type, which are really fire features and not 'heaters'. These are made by the same company that supplies "Lava Italia", so buy these and save massive dough! Trust us when we say, "Buy the Ambiance brand". And remember; if you're looking for a genuine heat source, then this type of product is NOT the way to go.

AMERICAN OUTDOOR GRILL (AOG): This is a low-cost, high-quality, American made product that works perfectly. It's made by R.H. Peterson (who makes FireMagic), and because their costs are fixed, they can make this grill for a very low price. This grill doesn't have a history of failure, it is used by all the Pool and Landscape contractors, and it's a great value for anyone who does little-to-medium amounts of grilling. It uses residential stainless-steel tube-type burners and has very little polishing... There are better grills out there that get hotter, but they're also more money. This is truly an excellent value for an American engineered and built product.

ASTRIA FIREPLACES: This line is basically your older FMI products... Superior, FMI, Lennox... repackaged for today's modern world. Note, this is NOT a bad thing! Basically, it's engineered product from a day gone by, but they have dressed it up and it does just fine. There are newer products, but this is still a nice line - but again, it's the older Superior, Lennox and FMI stuff re-badged. If that is not what you want, don't buy this product. We suggest looking at Empire, who since 1934 has written, and re-written, the book on traditional and linear fireplaces.

BIG GREEN EGG: This smoker has a MAJOR following of people who love it. There is also no dispute that it cooks well.... IF you learn how to use it and monitor the openings... It's extremely heavy, has a VERY poor hinge system and stand/rolling cart, and can crack easily with their hinge rings coming undone. Spending big bucks on a big piece of charcoal ceramic pottery is just foolish - we recommend a gas grill with a smoker insert - you'll be happier and it will be more versatile to use. With that said, if you wanted to have something 'different' than your neighbors, then this may be it... but we would FIRST have you go to www.blazegrills.com and check out their new aluminum bodied smoker. This is the cats meow!!!!

BLACK OLIVE: A pellet-fed Big Green Egg is essentially what this grill is. It's an excellent idea, but the product's representative companies keep changing. It can act as a pellet-fed smoker, or a high-temp grilling machine, and the hinge system is exceptional, as well as the build quality. What we like about it is that there are no cheap plastic parts. Everything is heavy, metal, and secure in it's place. They DID go out of business but parts are available and again, it does cook wonderfully!

BLAZE BBQ's: At last! A quality overseas product! Their standard line is made very well, and their Pro series is just exceptional. We have seen the junk from overseas (JennAir, Turbo, Nex-grill, Summerset, Coyote, Lion, Charmglo, Premier, etc.), but this is, by far, the better product. It was engineered here in the USA and the owner just wanted to produce a top-quality grill that was easy to get into (\$\$ - wise). A great value, and good performance, too! Also, the Professional 34" grill is simply a knock-out product. We highly recommend you see this grill line. We ship a lot of these grills all over the USA and they are 'in stock'.

BROIL KING: This is a Canadian-manufactured grill that is a very inexpensive way to enter the residential grill segment. It's sold at Home Depot and while nothing like what we sell, for those that need a fire source four or so times per month, you simply can't go wrong with this grill line.

BROMIC: A great heater line with a knock-out portable heater product. We installed just under 50 of these bad-boys at the La Quinta Resort and Spa in 2018 and they perform wonderfully. A great, modern-day heater with the credentials to go toe-to-toe with any of the competitors. We display the portable and mounted heaters and think you'll find that a Bromic may be in your future!

BULL BBQ's: Extremely low-quality manufacturing, stainless that is corrosive, no performance to speak of... just a very inexpensive grill product that caters to people that want something stainless, but that's it. We HIGHLY recommend saving your money and buying a better quality product. Bull is not a quality brand and they trick customers by always stating that their newest facilities are in the USA.. but really? These are just offices... their product is foreign junk. Stay away!! (Note: Bull was honest enough to give a US Veteran his money back after it was discovered that the sales people were led to believe that the grills were USA-made. After they discovered this was not the case, Bull did give the client his money back and took back the grill. Our hats off to Bull and/or the dealer.)

CAL FLAME: Look at our review of the Bull brand. Just another overseas junk model product line. If you cook one or two times per year, then you could use this grill without issue for many years.

CAPITAL: We don't have enough information on this grill manufacturer to give any opinion on it. We do know, however, that this company uses the residential-quality stainless steel burners in their grill, unlike Lynx, ZEUS or FireMagic, which use the real commercial-quality cast H- or U-shaped burners.

CHARBROIL: A Home Depot / Lowe's grill, made for the masses. If you cook one time per year, then this is your grill. Look at our review of the Bull brand.

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COYOTE.: Look at our review of the Bull brand. Just another overseas junk model product line. There are LOTS of Orange County, California shops that sell this brand because of how easy it is to get, and because of the profit they make on each grill sold. But it's not quality, and we're not going to sell it. Ever!

DYNAMIC COOKING SYSTEMS (DCS): This grill company, along with CharmGlo, were the first to introduce gas inside a bbq - the inventor of this 'idea' went on to start PGS (Phil Arnold). This was the very first outdoor grill company to offer a stainless steel exterior as an option. They created the outdoor kitchen market and rested heavily on their earlier design until early 2003, when they introduced a newer design that still used their dated internals. They were eventually purchased by Fisher-Paykel and are now made in Mexico. In 2016, it was evident that they needed a change, and BOY!! Did they do good!! Now, the new DCS is just awesome - genuine 304 stainless, excellent 'real world' pricing, quality internals, and a warranty to knock your socks off with!! And that Series 9 grill?!?! Wholly Batman!! This brand reinvented itself and it's back! DCS is back!!

DELTA HEAT: Twin Eagles, the parent company, built this line overseas, then brought it back recently. They put lights in it to induce people to buy it, and you know what? It's a decent grill, and although we do not carry it, we think it's okay. It's a better value than the Twin Eagles brand, which is just a cool look on a super-dated interior firebox. Delta Heat is not our first choice, but if you buy it, you will probably be happy with it if you cook no more than a few times per month. If you cook 2 and 3 times per week, do NOT buy this grill and get yourself into a better-built, hotter product.

EMPIRE HEAT: Okay, so here is a super old company (since 1934) that makes fireplaces. In fact, they come out with the fireplace, then after so many years, other companies copy what they do. It's a recipe that's been happening for almost 100 years. They make incredible traditional and linear fireplaces, in all the big sizes, AND they also have a great stainless steel line for outdoor - in fact, they have both LINEAR and TRADITIONAL for outdoors!! Oh, don't forget their SEE-THROUGH fireplaces!! A fantastic line very well priced.

FIREMAGIC: What can we say but this: Great bbq, bulletproof, a major following, and they have a stainless steel CAST commercial burner systems!! A truly wonderful grill line. We hate the computer on the front of the grill, but they now make it WITHOUT the computer if you want... Besides that, you won't be unhappy with this grill at all. The price, initially, is higher than most, but then again, it's a life-long unit, so over time, it will be rather inexpensive to own. This is one of the BEST grill brands currently on the market.

JENN-AIR: Look at our review for the Bull brand. Just another piece of junk. (Note: If you cook one time per month, and you like buying inexpensive products, then this grill will work for you... or your evil step-mother.... :)

KITCHEN AID: First, it was being built here, then by Lynx, then overseas, then out of business, then someone took them over (the name only)... we can't keep up. Don't buy this brand - you'll have a hard time getting parts, and the brand is in a state of constant flux.

LAVA HEAT ITALIA: If they're still in business in a year, that will be a miracle... they had the market LOCKED on the outdoor pyramid heater and then got greedy, trying to sell against their dealers online, making a deal with Costco (which Costco eventually got out of because of how this company is run), and by altering their products against the manufacturers recommendations. If you like the heaters, see the Ambiance line, which is made by the same manufacturer for less!!!

LYON: Look at our review of the Bull brand. Just another overseas junk brand. There are LOTS of Orange County, California shops that sell this brand because of how easy it is to get, and also because of the profit margin. But again, it's just a tremendously cheap product that looks the part. We recommend a Bic lighter and some aluminum foil... that would be a better 'bbq' than this brand.

LUXOR: Here is a company that made their grills in the USA for awhile, then went to China, and now builds them again in the USA. They use the simple recipe of a stainless box, stainless tube burner, and nice fit and finish. It's not a game-changing grill and they don't have anything life-altering, BUT... the metal is quality, they are simple to operate and use, and the bean-counters got something right for a change... We mostly ship the sub-\$2,499 version, which is a 30" built-in unit. A commercial-chassis size that you can put in a hole that once had an Alfresco, Lynx, Dynasty, etc... Again, a nice product at a reasonable price!

LYNX: We believe they are overpriced and have seen many with electrical and/or ignition/lighting problems. We have gotten to the point that we now write directly to Lynx with customers' information and have Lynx contact the customers directly. Why? Because we want Lynx to explain to the customer why their \$5,000 bbq is not igniting, or why the blue LED lights are not working. We're NOT an authorized Lynx dealer any longer (probably because we have voiced our opinion...do you think?), but we do service them and try to work with the customers to get Lynx to pay for the repairs when under warranty. The newest ripple in their business model is that they cheapened their grill and went to a brass burner (they used to make it out of red-brass, which was super strong). Also, Middleby bought them, so now, like their doors and drawers, they're probably going to be made in Mexico soon. Their parts are very costly and we just can't recommend their grills at this time. If you want constant repairs, buy this 'upscale' brand... but don't say we didn't warn you!

MAJESTIC: They make some really beautiful fireplaces, and the Echelon Linear Fireplace series is the one our best selling lines - our contractor friends love 'em! They have a great selection of different designs, etc., and again, their quality is awesome!!

NAPOLEON: They make bbq grills (which are okay - nothing to write home about) and fireplaces (beautiful linear fireplaces!). This is a great company that makes decent products, but

to get customer service for anything is like pulling teeth. They are about to launch a new electric linear fireplace line, so stay tuned - it's supposed to be beautiful (but not as nice as Dimplex). But if you can, choose another brand of BBQ, as the grills are very 'Home-Depot"-ish and don't really stand up well.

OUTDOOR COOKING SPECIALTIES (OCS): We don't know enough about these grills to formulate an opinion. We hear it's a nice grill and built decently. Parts are non-existent, however, so good luck getting things fixed...

OUTDOOR CHEF: Please see our review of the Bull brand. Just another overseas junk brand.

PACIFIC LIVING PIZZA OVEN: Okay, when we first got wind of this product, we were not impressed. It seemed cheap to us, and we didn't believe it could cook well. Then, we asked for a demonstration of the product, which they did for us, and after fiddling around with it, we are convinced that for very little money, you can have a wonderful pizza oven that will cook not only pizza's, but a lot of things, and this keeps the heat out of your home, as well! MUCH better value than the Lynx offering. If you can still find one, buy it.

PATIO COMFORT: Great residential quality space heaters, they come in Liquid Propane or Natural Gas, they perform well, and parts are readily available should the need arise. We suggest this heater brand if you're using it less than 90 days per year. If you only need a heater for a few times per year, then go get the junk at Home Depot... but if you want quality, then this is it. (Note: If you use it more than 90 days per year, look into Sunglo products, designed for more commercial or estate settings.) **BUY THIS HEATER BRAND.**

PERFORMANCE GRILLING SYSTEMS (PGS): Their A30 and A40 grills (replacements for their older K30 and K40 grills) are bullet-proof. Talk about a long-lasting grill line - these things just don't die!! Perfect patio bbq's for small patio's, and if you're replacing an older K30 or K40, do it with the new "A" series!! The new Legacy line is a complete departure from the older "K" series - new, beautiful stainless steel construction, they cook really well and their customer service is always there to help - super-friendly support. We get these grills right here in Southern California. (Note: One of our customers said that this grill sources a lot of parts from China - we believe that ALL USA-made grills source parts from China.) **BUY THIS GRILL LINE.**

RCS: Please see our review of the Bull brand. Just another overseas junk brand.

ROYAL: This is a good bbq grill line that has nothing special - tube-style burners, a nicely-welded stainless steel chassis... a good all-around product. But again, nothing superior and nothing different than most other grills. If you buy it, you'll most-likely be happy. We know the owner and we think they produce a nice product.

SEDONA: This grill line is made by the same people who bring you the Lynx brand, and they rolled out a cheap version so that they could capture some of those dollars that were going to other brands. Now, Middleby just bought Lynx, so nobody knows what's going to happen with it... DO NOT BUY THIS PRODUCT - they use 200-series stainless steel - not for outdoor use!

SOLAIRE: This grill line used to be made along side the original Alfresco line, before Alfresco went to China to produce some of it's grill parts/bodies. We have worked on a few of these grills and they are easy to fix. They are a very well made product and offer a lot of variations with infrared burners. Their quality is fine and we've heard nothing wrong with these grills. Rasmussen builds these grills here on US soil and we like the fact that it's a family-run business. BUY THIS BRAND.

SOLE': We like their Pizza Ovens, but their grills are just another re-badge of the Jenn-Air or Bull or Lion-type product. Please read our review on the Bull brand. But their pizza ovens? Great stuff - very reasonable pricing...

SUNGLO: These are the commercial heaters you see at restaurants and hotels/resorts. They are the best portable heaters in existence and are built super solid. We could write a book on how well they work for our clients, but here it is, short-form: If you have a need for a portable heater, and you always need heat in a certain area, then just buy these heaters. Preferably from us, but no matter; just buy them! They're a solid buy and you won't regret it!

SUNPAK: We absolutely love this brand of heater... they're made exceptionally well, the product an even heat, and they now have both a remote-controlled (wireless) version of their 2-stage valve system AND a non-remote version of it, too!!! They have faceplates that are either copper, black or stainless, and these mounted heaters are the best in the industry. The Twin Eagles brand had some issues, all the time, so we canned them and went with the best. You simply can't go wrong with a good, solid brand like SunPak.

SUNSTONE / SUMMERSET / SIZZLER / SUREFLAME: Please read our review on the Bull brand. Just another overseas junk brand.

THERMAL ENGINEERING CORPORATION (TEC): This is the grill manufacturer that started the Infrared push on all the grill manufacturers. TEC produced some really awesome units when they were just starting out, and all their grills used infrared main burners. Then, they made them a little more 'mainstream' by adding glass above the burners to make them more usable, but less hot. We have never worked on these grills, but we did tour their manufacturing plant, and we can say that they are built very well. Definitely a 'niche' product... NO RECOMMENDATION.

THERMADORE: This is another indoor company trying to go outdoor, and the grills are not the best. Very inexpensive stainless steel burners are used, the metal is rumored to be thin and not real 304 stainless, and we've tried to work on these units and had to give up - they are simply not well made and Thermadore should have stayed with what they know best, which is indoor appliances. We highly encourage you to do your homework on this grill... **DO NOT BUY.**

TRAEGER: When their product was made in the USA, it was made really well. Then, they went overseas and the quality has suffered. In fact, they lost dealers because of their quality and Costco picked them up because they were dying. Now, Costco is basically the place to get these machines, and for good reason; dealers are afraid of the returns and quality issues. Buyer beware...

TURBO: The quality was great when it was made in Australia, but now, it's just another junk brand from overseas, sold exclusively at BBQ's Galore (their remaining stores that are still in business). It's cheaply made and if you cook just a few times per year, it will serve you well. And whatever you do, don't purchase this grill if you live in Southern California - it will rust!

TWIN EAGLES: Too Expensive - just a stainless box and stainless tube-burners.. no different than AOG, Luxor, Sedona, etc.! This grill looks fantastic, and if it weren't for their stainless-steel tube-type burners (which are cheap and not as effective as cast-burners), this grill would probably be perfect. It's way too much money for a stainless-steel tube burner concept, but we don't have much problems with it. Remember; at this price, you're absolutely buying the LOOK of the grill. If that doesn't concern you, then the Twin Eagles product is a nice grill.. But cast-burners are always better, especially at this price point... Buy a Luxor or PGS BBQ - basically the same thing, for WAY less money...

VIKING: Here's a line that is marketed as an extension of their indoor appliances. They are very expensive as compared to other grills that use the same cooking system (stainless-steel tube-type burners and a flavor grid). Viking once did have a really great cooking system with cast burners, and at that time, you were paying for performance. But in the spirit of making things less expensive, they went the less-expensive route and installed stainless-steel tube-type burners... So now, there's nothing superior about a Viking grill to substantiate the high price they're asking for it. In fact, their grills aren't really any different than a PGS or AOG or Royal grill, but just wrapped in a more expensive and heavy 'box' with a logo on it. Personally, we don't recommend this brand because for less money, you can get something that still uses the cast-burner design like Viking once had, but now doesn't.

VINTAGE: Please see our review of the Bull brand. Just another overseas junk brand. Plus, getting parts is like pulling teeth! In 2019, this company is trying to do a new website and re-imagine themselves, but those of us in the industry know that this brand is poorly engineered (just like Alfresco), has ignition problems (just like Alfresco), and uses poor-quality stainless steel from China. Stay Away!

WEBER: What a waste... the once-famous USA-only grill brand has bit the dust... foreign-produced now (for the most part), it's neither a good or bad product... the quality is horrible unless you buy the most expensive Stainless product (which is partly made in the USA), and the ONLY good quality about Weber is that when you call them to tell them that your grill parts have broken, they send you out new ones right away. An insider we know says that Weber's costs to produce (production costs) are at about 30%, so they can afford to give free parts away when you call... makes sense!! It'll do the job, but there is better equipment out there...

WOLF (SUB ZERO): These grills feature red knobs and high-quality stainless steel hoods. We have worked on very few of these grills, but then again, there are only a handful out there... We have had some customers swap-out their Wolf for a Lynx or Dynasty product, but in reality, we don't know enough about these grills to rate them. Additionally, the service calls we do get are not for complete melt-downs, so again, it's just a stainless-steel tube grill made of stainless... nothing incredible about it to warrant the high price.

ZEUS: Their new Hercules line of grills is not out yet, but their old Emerald line was just awesome. Their doors and drawers and accessories are top-notch and of high-quality 304 stainless (the non-corrosive type). Just an overall great product line. The grill used to be the Delta, then Dynasty, then Jade grill.