

LUX

Precision Fire Grills



Damian and Sherry Lux



What began as an innovative idea for outdoor cooking has turned one Fayetteville man's design sketches into the ultimate open-fire grill.

Damian Lux, a humorously self-proclaimed "backyard hero," has long made a hobby of grilling outdoors. Whether it was charcoal, gas or open-flame, he loved the freedom of preparing food outside of the kitchen. But, about 15 years ago, he began shying away from using gas and ventured more toward charcoal and open-fire grilling.

Around that same time, he and his wife, Sherry, were having a landscaping project done in their backyard. One of the landscapers discovered an old, cast-iron stove original to the home and

offered to build it into one of the stone walls they were constructing.

"That sounded like the coolest idea I'd heard all day," Lux said. "So, they built it in, and I started cooking on it with just charcoal. There was just something about cooking over live fire, instead of a standard grill, that was fun."

Lux had also dug a fire pit in his backyard and designed it with rocks and chairs for gatherings. When COVID-19 hit in early 2020, the venue became a regular hangout where his family and friends could safely spend time together. "We started hanging out down there more frequently," he said. "We'd have some drinks, put on some music, and people would just enjoy being around the fire and have good conversation."

He then began envisioning a way to grill over the fire pit for extra convenience and fun. He began sketching out ideas and worked with a neighbor to construct the first fire grill.

The unique contraption was functional, but took too much effort to adjust the grill. "And it was not very precise," he said.

"I started drawing up different ideas — literally just drawings of what I thought would work better," Lux said. "I had a fire pit that looked really stylish, and I had a mechanism to provide necessary adjustability. I wanted it to be modern and aesthetically pleasing. I also knew that I wanted to make it out of stainless steel, because I didn't want it to rust."

He contacted a few manufacturers around the country, but no one had any interest. In a stroke of luck, he heard a radio ad for a local manufacturer looking to hire stainless steel welders and gave them a call. While the receptionist informed him that they don't typically do these types of products, she did offer to let him leave a voicemail.

The owner of ARMI Manufacturing returned his call the following day and a meeting was set. "So, I met with him, and he said, 'I love the concept, and I think you can make it work,'" Lux said.

At that point, he created LUX Grilling Company and began the process to commercialize the concept with ARMI Manufacturing's talented engineering team who shared his passion for quality and embraced the vision with incredible energy.

"My vision was to build a premium, highly durable product that would be an outstanding grill first and an exceptional fire pit," Lux said. "I wanted people to be able to gather around the fire, then pop the grill on and cook an incredible dinner. Then, when you are done, quickly remove the grill and continue the night around the fire pit. It's possible it wouldn't have happened at all without the ARMI Manufacturing team"

Six full prototypes and 18 months later, the LUX Precision Fire Grill was ready and started selling this past February, starting at \$3,000.

The signature element of the LUX Precision Fire Grill is the highly engineered Control Tower. This, in conjunction with the Versa Grate, allows the operator to efficiently manipulate the grilling surface to the perfect cooking zone. Temperature is adjusted by turning the crank to elevate or lower the Versa Grate. Then, use the LUX Grilling Tools to rotate the Versa Grate occasionally, to create an even cook. When the meal is ready, loosen a screw to swivel away from the heat to comfortably remove and serve. This level of adjustability is unique in open-fire cooking and the one-handed operation is patent pending.

The large fire pit — 37 ½ inches in diameter — and grilling elements are crafted from stainless steel and weigh just over 200 pounds. The weather-tight lid is made of high-grade aluminum. On cooler nights, the lid can also be used to reflect heat from the pit.

The initial assembly takes less than 15 minutes with the help of a friend, and disassembly just requires the removal

of one screw. Plus, everything is stored on the unit and protected from the elements when it is not in use. Just as easily, the LUX Precision Fire Grill can be disassembled and transported to another location.

"Whether you are a chef or a 'backyard hero', everybody is seeing the versatility," Lux said. "It's the right tool that allows anyone to master the art of open-fire cooking. And it provides an amazing experience for those who love to cook and entertain."

A number of local chefs, namely Matthew Cooper, of the soon-to-open restaurant Conifer in Bentonville, and Case Dighero, local chef and culinary writer, have already begun using the grill as an essential tool in their food preparation. "It's my favorite cooking tool this summer — not only a practical, technical grill for preparing everything from sides of salmon and vegetables to ribs, steaks and wild game, but also a showpiece that encourages everyone, cooking or just hanging out, to gather around the fire," Dighero said.

LUX Grilling Company is partnering with Walker Brothers men's clothing store to create "The Ultimate Father's Day Gift," offering a \$250 gift card to the store with every grill purchase. The grill is currently on display at Walker Brothers in Fayetteville.

"You really have to see it to believe it," Lux said. "It's designed to impress, it's built to last and it's engineered to perform." ■

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