

Big Delicious Brand 2024: Big & Delicious Dips & Spreads

[DeliveryRank](#) had the pleasure of chatting with **Jim Millican** of **Big Delicious Brand**. Jim is a passionate cook whose culinary journey began chopping ingredients for his father. Inspired by his father's lessons to use the best ingredients, take his time, and keep it simple yet flavorful, Jim now creates hearty, small-batch Southern inspired dips and spreads.

“
Today I make hearty good food in small batches -- so you don't have to. Look for the Big Delicious gold star and grab some today for your next party, or tailgate, or... whatever strikes your fancy!
”

JIM MILLICAN



Jim, what inspired you to create your award-winning gourmet dips and spreads with a Southern flair, and how do they reflect your culinary heritage?

Such a loaded question – thanks! It’s really a couple of different things. At the time I started there was truly an unmet need for high-quality dips and spreads that packed a flavorful punch. The goal was to meet that need by bringing a line of delicious gourmet dips to market. That was the opportunity. Having an entrepreneurial spirit was an added benefit, obviously, and I really do love good food. That love was something my father passed along to me as a youngster. I would sit with my dad and watch how he loved to create in the kitchen. It gave us time to spend together, shoot the breeze, and sometimes literally chew the fat. He was the inspiration. I’ve always tried to follow his simple mantra: take your time, keep it simple, and always use the best ingredients.

Can you walk us through the process of crafting your signature dips, from selecting ingredients to achieving the perfect flavor balance?

Simply put, it started with some ideas and a lot of trial and error. I knew we needed to create something unique – not a “me, too” dip that consumers could get just anywhere, and definitely not a spice or soup mix stirred into sour cream. Taste is always the most important attribute for any food item, and that would be our foundation.

Carolina Sausage Dip was our first creation and remains our signature item. It is our version of a traditional Southern favorite that folks have loved for decades. We live in a top pork producing state so it was logical to source our sausage locally, but it was equally important to use a fresh sausage that met our high quality and flavor standards. After trying several, we found a producer that could create a sausage for us with just the right proportions and spices. We also had to zero in on the cream cheese. Some take cream cheese for granted, but there are different variations and flavor profiles. We tried many and ultimately chose what we consider to be the highest quality cream cheese available as it provides the best taste, mouth feel and consistency.

Once I figured out these 2 core ingredients it became a matter of procuring the other ingredients and experimenting. Countless hours in my home kitchen were spent experimenting with different proportions before finally arriving at what we serve today. Thank goodness for, and kudos to, the multiple friends, family and neighbors who kindly served as taste-testers (guinea pigs?). With their help and some good fortune, we have been able to produce a delicious dip that is loved.

Your Carolina Sausage Dip and Pineapple & Country Ham Spread offer unique twists on classic Southern flavors. What inspired these innovative combinations, and how do you ensure they resonate with customers?

Carolina Sausage Dip is our version of an old Southern favorite – we call it our savory Southern staple and folks genuinely do love it. We take freshly ground, mildly seasoned pork sausage and combine it with deluxe cream cheese, ripe red tomatoes, green chilies, and caramelized onion. It’s a robust combination of flavor and texture that excels at most any social occasion, and more. It has a great, mildly spicy profile.

It didn’t take long before people began asking if we could create a “hotter” version, and after some thought we realized that making something hotter is easy enough to do by simply adding your favorite hot sauce. Instead, we viewed this as an inspiration for creating something totally unique, and new. Since most everyone has a penchant for pork barbecue (especially when it has been smoked over hardwood coals), and since nobody had a barbecued pork dip, we saw an opportunity. We began tinkering with flavors in the kitchen, sourced a truly pit-cooked pork barbecue, and were off to the races with our Original Hot ‘Cue Dip. It’s tender smoked pulled pork crafted with a touch of cream cheese, tangy diced tomatoes, and slightly sweet shoepg corn. It is topped off with zesty vinegar-based barbecue sauce for a mouth-watering kick. We call it our Trifecta of Taste because you get smoky from the pork, spicy from the sauce, and a little sweet from the corn.

Southerners have also long been known to serve a light, chilled salad creation of cream cheese, pineapple and either pecans or walnuts. Long a popular palate-pleasing combination, we decided to put a unique spin on the familiar. Our spread version of this classic favorite skips the nuts and enhances the flavor by adding another beloved treat, country ham. Big Delicious Pineapple & Country Ham Spread is delightful – not too savory and not too sweet – and pairs perfectly with crackers, biscuits, bagels, and especially, ginger snaps. It has become quite popular on charcuterie and grazing boards.

Customer testimonials rave about the addictive flavors and versatility of your dips. How do you recommend customers incorporate your products into their culinary experiences beyond traditional dipping?

To your point, traditional dipping remains awesome! But along the way we've also discovered our dips are quite versatile and open to interpretation. And we live in an era where the more you can do with things, the better. According to market research firm, Mintel: *"Consumers primarily use dips and savory spreads for their principal purpose – as a dip. Market analysis further indicates consumers will turn to dips and spreads for their versatility and ability to add to different occasions and meals."* We absolutely intend to showcase our versatility.

We've recently added a Recipe page to our website (www.BigDelish.com) specifically for the purpose of highlighting easy to fix ideas for delicious meals made with minimal effort. Consider a version of pasta Bolognese incorporating warmed Carolina Sausage Dip over freshly made pasta. How about stuffing baked potatoes (white, or sweet) with either Carolina Sausage Dip or Original Hot 'Cue Dip? Something as simple as Hot 'Cue Dip over rice is a perfect, quick and easy meal solution. Not to mention delicious. And my favorite is quesadillas made with Hot 'Cue Dip. Also, let's not forget stuffed grilled peppers and mushrooms, or toppings for hot dogs and burgers, or deviled eggs. The delicious decadence of Southern Poutine – French fries smothered in warm Carolina Sausage Dip – is unsurpassed. All it takes is a little creativity and imagination to easily create with Big Delicious.

Your commitment to using high-quality ingredients and small-batch production reflects your father's culinary values. How do these principles shape the taste and experience of your gourmet dips, and what sets them apart in the market?

It's straightforward, really. These 3 features set Big Delicious apart in the market:

1. **High Quality Ingredients = Superior Taste** - Big Delicious dips and spreads use very high-quality ingredients which provides maximum flavor and superior taste. It's also important to note that all of our products contain protein, and lots of it. I developed these products as something that I, personally, would want to eat – and I'm a very tough critic. Big Delicious = premium products.
2. **Convenience** – All of our dips are fully-cooked so that all you need do is thaw (if frozen), warm, and enjoy. (And with the Pineapple & Country Ham Spread all you need do is thaw and stir.) There is no preparation, mixing, or cooking. And there is absolutely no need to add protein. With Big Delicious you're good to go.
3. **Versatility** – Fantastic for dipping; perhaps even better as an appetizer or main menu item. With Big Delicious there are options aplenty. #MuchMoreThanDip

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