

There is only one way to review a Thai charcoal stove...

... so I called in the Thai community!!!

Around 20 people showed up, with their families – and nobody, NOBODY, has more fun cooking outdoors than the Thais!



Within the community, the Queen of the Cooking, the lady everyone accepts as the best cook, was deferentially allowed unfettered access to the object of everyone's attention: the clay-pot stove.

Khun Khek, beautiful in red in the photos, is well-known in Al Ain for her delightful Thai dishes, so much in fact that she regularly is called upon to cater to dinner parties and friends who want to add something special to their table. Just ask any most expat about "Khek's Thai Kitchen" and they'll have tried her dishes!





The cooking implement in question has been used, and still is used, throughout Thailand – from street vendors to rural households – because the design and materials used in its construction make for a fantastic stove that uses very little fuel yet cooks with great focused heat over many hours, if needed.







It is imported into the UAE by Rahal Outdoors, an outfitter of camping adventures and expeditions - [website here](#).

The Thai stove is basically a metal bucket, into which a thick layer of clay is baked.







There are two compartments, divided by a clay partition with plenty of holes for the ash to drop through.



The coals are lit in the upper compartment, under the grill. The lower compartment has a clay door with which the heat can be regulated by adjusting the air flow.

It is portable, though quite heavy, and it comes with a sturdy no-heat handle. It is also available in numerous sizes. An interesting feature is the way the clay is angled allowing for placing pots of various sizes directly onto the stove without using a grill, in order to slowly cook rice or curries or soups.





The Thai stove will radiate heat for hours and hours - and for us it would have easily lasted 'till morning.





Khun Khek prepared luscious lamb chops, dipped in a spicy Thai sauce,





followed by mystery skewers, which were crunchy and slathered in a tangy sauce.











We were finished eating and the Thai stove was just getting started - a fabulous radiator of heat!

We could have used just a tenth of the charcoal we did, and occasionally deep into the night we checked the stove, and the reports would come back: "Still going strong!"

An excellent authentic Thai outdoor-cooked dinner followed by a wonderful campfire, and the expat lifestyle sings out to all residents in the UAE, none as lovely as the Thai community.





The Thai stove proved to be an absolute winner, and several courses of grilled meats for over a dozen hungry people didn't even scratch the surface of what this little powerhouse of stove is capable of.

