





# THE RESTAURANT TAMALES BUILT

TOMMY TAMALE  
EXPANDED FROM A  
DOOR-TO-DOOR  
BUSINESS TO A  
POPULAR GRAPEVINE  
RESTAURANT

ARTICLE MADELYN KNECHT | PHOTOGRAPHY KALYN MASTIN

CONTINUED >

## HOT SPOT (CONTINUED)

**DELICIOUS FOOD AND MOUTH-BURNING HOT SAUCE PULL PEOPLE INTO TOMMY TAMALE IN GRAPEVINE, WHERE STEVE BARKER, AKA "TOMMY," WELCOMES HIS GUESTS WITH WARM, OPEN ARMS.**

The business started as a door-to-door tamale-selling business in Decatur in 2010 until it was given the opportunity by the farmers market to become a vendor in Grapevine. There, Tommy Tamale quickly grew a following, and after six years of vending, Steve opened their brick-and-mortar location in September 2015.

Tommy Tamale offers 16 different varieties of tamales and around 70 hot sauces. Since the business started because of its large following, the motto has still centered around customer service.

"We literally try to walk around and say hi to everyone who walks through the door," Steve says. "We think it's important to take care of you, whether it's the first time or the fifth time."

Tommy Tamale shops locally in Grapevine to support other vendors and businesses like them. The family-owned business gives back to the community through charitable events such as participating in feeding the elderly at the recreational center.

Work has begun on a second location in Coppel that Steve hopes will open in March. It is a large step from owning a tiny tamale shack.

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"We built our business on tamales, and from that, we've expanded to all the other Tex-Mex food," he says. "No one else I know has built their business off tamales."

Most popular of their foods is the Tommy Bowl (\$6), which includes a tamale, rice, beans and pico de gallo, the Tamale Pie (\$6), which adds a tamale to the beloved Frito Pie, and nachos (\$8) with either chicken, pork, steak or, of course, tamales.

Customers can also take their own tamales to go to heat up at home. Tommy Tamale sells them by the dozen. Chicken tamales, for example, can be bought \$13 for a dozen or \$7.50 for half a dozen.

Tommy Tamale is located in the Northwest Plaza Shopping Center in Grapevine and offers wide, open space and friendly smiles to all its guests.

*For more information on Tommy Tamale, 1689 W. Northwest Highway, Grapevine, TX 76051, call 817.360.6385 or visit [TommyTamale.com](http://TommyTamale.com).*



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