



Gunter Backhaus

April 5, 2024

Gunter Backhaus, 82, died peacefully on Friday, April 5, 2024. Born in Hamburg, Germany, he was the son of the late Edgar and Martha Marquardt Backhaus.

A chef and restaurateur, Gunter's culinary career spanned decades and countries all over the world. After his dreams of becoming a ship's captain couldn't be attained, due to colorblindness, he embraced cooking as a career. Starting at a hotel in the Central German District, he did his apprenticeship in a place called Bad Salzuflen. He stayed a year in Germany, then moved to Paris, Madrid, Amsterdam, London, Bermuda, the Bahamas and Mexico. America was his next and final destination, as he took jobs at the Brunswick Hotel, Lancaster, Amelia Island Plantation, Florida, The Chase Park Plaza, St. Louis, The Host Farm, Lancaster, and The Grove Park Inn, Asheville, North Carolina.

After having two children, Kirsten and Stefan, he decided that it was time to put down roots in Lancaster and open his own restaurant. He purchased The Loft Restaurant and The Tally Ho Tavern in 1987.

During his free time, Gunter, along with his children, enjoyed his love of food, traveling and all things culinary. Scuba diving, bicycling and photography were some of his favorite pastimes. He was, also, a skilled handyman and

woodworker.

Gunter is survived by his daughter, Kirsten Backhaus-Smith (Brandon) and his son, Stefan Backhaus. Residing in Munich, Germany, a brother, Gerd (Gunhild), and a sister, Gudrun. He is also survived by his companion/spouse of 30 years, Denise S. Campbell.

Services will be private, at the convenience of the family.

In memory of Gunter, please consider a donation to the Parkinson's Foundation or the Michael J. Fox Foundation.

Tribute Wall

CD

“ I was very sad to hear of Gunter's passing. The Loft was my favorite restaurant especially for special occasions. No one could make oysters like him. We always said we never got anything there that wasn't perfect! My condolences to the family, especially Kirsten who exemplified great customer service as our server.

*With sympathy to all the family,
Cheryl Deaven*

Cheryl Deaven - April 12, 2024 at 05:15 PM

PH

“ Met Gunter as employees at the Host Farm in the 1980's and then happily frequented The Loft to celebrate family special occasions and holidays. For over 30 years Gunter would always take a moment from the kitchen to come out to say hello to our growing family which was a Special Treat to see him. Gunter and The Loft "The Best".

Paul & Kathy Harclerode Family

Paul Harclerode - April 12, 2024 at 08:31 AM

ES

So many wonderful memories of happy times and birthday celebrations at The Loft. Liz Smedley

Elizabeth Smedley - April 12, 2024 at 10:46 AM

MA

*Dear Denise, Kirsten, and Family,
We were so sorry to see that Gunter passed. He was a wonderful man and Master Chef.
We enjoyed many meals at the Loft, which was one of the best restaurants in the USA.
He will be remembered and missed by many.
Love,
Michelle and Rick Atwater*

Michelle & Richard Atwater - April 12, 2024 at 03:12 PM

PL

*Denise, Kirsten , and Family,
We are so sorry to hear of Gunter's passing. We miss the delicious meals he prepared over many years for us and our friends when we dined at The Loft. Many a day we wish Gunter and the rest of you were still there running The Loft. Please accept our deepest sympathy at your loss.
Fondly,
Paul Lajkowicz and Albert Hamm.*

Paul Lajkowicz - April 12, 2024 at 03:45 PM

BC

the greatest compliment is for someone whom does something that impact's another's life ,Gunter was that someone whom impacted my late brother Steve Caldwell. Gunter always was a call away .Steve would make German dishes(he learned from Gunter) for NY Yankees owner Geo. Steinbrenner ,who would say Steve this is the best (my brother said; because i learned from the best) . We wanted to share and recognize how it became Steve's passion and how much Gunter met to us as well as Steve. Billy & Ted Caldwell

bill caldwell - April 12, 2024 at 09:34 PM

CA

*Fond memories of wonderful dinners with friends at The Loft over the years! Gunter was one of the best - still miss The Loft!
Carole Ashby*

Carole Ashby - April 13, 2024 at 09:00 AM

FB

I'm so sorry to hear of Günter's passing. He was a wonderful cook and a friendly person.

He always made an effort coming out of the kitchen and we spoke in German.

He made the best Schnitzel in town, one of my favorites from good old Germany.

My deepest condolences to the family.

Fritz Bossert

Fritz Bossert - April 13, 2024 at 09:36 AM

JW

My Mentor & Friend, The world lost it's Best Chef

I am Chef due to you . Gunter taught me things they don't Teach in school or life.

Dam tour missed. Rest in Peace Chef

Joseph Marlin Weems - April 14, 2024 at 07:23 AM

LK

Michael and I send our deepest sympathies. Gunter was a master of his craft and we sorely miss the wonderful food and hospitality he provided for so many years!! Know that we have your family in our thoughts and prayers.

Lizz Keppel - April 14, 2024 at 09:32 AM

RK

So sorry to hear this. Many fond memories working with Chef at the Loft.

Ronda May Kuhn - April 14, 2024 at 03:03 PM

BS

We always enjoyed going to the Loft for special occasions and Gunter always took time to come out and say hello as we would remember the good old days at the Host Farm. Bonnie & Fred Skagen

Bonnie Skagen - April 15, 2024 at 11:39 AM

GS

Denise , Kirsten and Stefan , I was so , so sorry to see the passing of Gunter . I missed the food , the great service and the many conversations I had with him ...and you also Kirsten , ever since The Loft closed . Your Dad was so interesting to talk to , and funny. Especially those we had regarding politics and world / local events. I loved those lunch days , his scallops was my favorite. , and I haven't had scallops since. The Loft , with Gunter as chef was the best restaurant ever in Lancaster. Even after it closed , I kept hoping he'd reopen somewhere. He was the best , and will be missed forever. MY deepest sympathy . RIP Gunter

Gail Smith - April 17, 2024 at 03:10 AM

FT

Dear Denise, Kirsten, and Stefan, For many years The Loft was my favorite place to dine. Every time oysters are served, I am always bragging about Gunter's! My deepest sympathy for your loss. The old days are sorely missed. Fred Teschner

Fred Teschner - April 19, 2024 at 06:48 AM