



Mario Batali

Mario Batali believes that olive oil is as precious as gold, shorts are acceptable attire for every season, and food, like most things, is best when left to its own simple beauty. To that end, Mario, together with his business partner Joe Bastianich, creates magic night after night in his many New York City hotspots, the flagship of which is *Babbo Ristorante e Enoteca*, an award-winning Greenwich Village dining establishment where Mario has seamlessly combined traditional Italian principles with intelligent culinary adventure since June 1998.

A gastronomic superstar from its inception, Babbo was honored as “The Best New Restaurant of 1998” by The James Beard Foundation, and Ruth Reichl at the New York Times hailed it with three stars. Six years later, a re-review by Frank Bruni maintained Babbo’s three-star power and its excellence among New York City’s finest restaurants. Mario and Joe also own Lupa, a Roman-style trattoria, with Jason Denton and Mark Ladner, as well as a wine shop just off Union Square, Italian Wine Merchants. Esca, a southern Italian seafood trattoria, opened in the Theater District in April 2000. In January 2003, Mario and Joe opened another downtown eatery, Otto Enoteca Pizzeria, located around the corner from historic Washington Square Park. Otto serves pizza, pasta, house-cured salumi, vegetables, and 600 wines, Casa Mono and Bar Jamón, both opened in December 2003, are on Irving Place, a block away from Italian Wine Merchants. Casa Mono is a Spanish-style taverna featuring wines, sherries, tapas and traditional entrees. Bar Jamón, adjacent to Casa Mono, is a bustling tapas bar with wonderful Spanish cheeses, hams and small plate specialties. In December 2005, Mario opened Del Posto with Joe, Lidia Maticchio Bastianich and Mark Ladner. This spacious restaurant in New York City’s meatpacking district features modern Italian cooking in a luxurious and comfortable setting. The duo’s first west coast venture, in collaboration with Nancy Silverton is Osteria Mozza and Pizzeria Mozza in Los Angeles. Sharing the corner of Highland and Melrose Avenue, the former features a center island mozzarella bar, where fresh mozzarella is made all day, every day. For their most recent venture Mario and Joe journeyed to Las Vegas to open B&B Ristorante e Enoteca and Enoteca San Marco in the beautiful Venetian Resort Hotel and Casino. Their next project is Carnevino – a steak house opening in the Palazzo wing of the Venetian in Las Vegas in Spring 2008.

Raised in Seattle, Mario initially studied the golden age of Spanish theater at Rutgers University. Soon after graduating, he took his first bite of culinary training at Le Cordon Bleu in London, from which he withdrew almost immediately due to a "lack of interest."

An apprenticeship with London's legendary chef Marco Pierre White and three years of intense culinary training in the Northern Italian village of Borgo Capanne (population 200) gave him the essential skills and knowledge to return to his native U.S., eager to plant his orange-clogged foot firmly on the behinds of the checkered-tablecloth Italian restaurant establishment.

Among his many accolades, Mario was named "Man of the Year" in the chef category by GQ Magazine in 1999. In 2002 he won the James Beard Foundation's "Best Chef: New York City" award, and in 2005 the James Beard Foundation awarded Mario "Outstanding Chef of the Year". Mario is also one of the recipients of the 2001 D'Artagnan Cervena Who's Who of Food & Beverage in America, a prestigious lifetime achievement award.

Mario is the star of the Food Network series "Iron Chef America." Next Fall, his new PBS series with co-stars Mark Bittman and Gwyneth Paltrow will air. *Spain... On the Road Again* will follow the threesome's adventures as they travel and eat their way through Spain.

Mario has authored *Simple Italian Food* (Clarkson Potter, 1998), *Mario Batali Holiday Food* (Clarkson Potter, 2000); *The Babbo Cookbook* (Clarkson Potter, 2002); and *Molto Italiano: 327 Simple Italian Recipes* (Ecco, 2005). In 2006, Mario and NASCAR have joined forces to create the first ever cookbook for NASCAR fans. - *Mario Tailgates NASCAR Style* (The Sporting News 2006). Mario's upcoming cookbook and grilling handbook - *Mario Batali - Italian Grilling* (Ecco, 2008), takes the mystery out of making tasty, authentic, smoky Italian food.

Mario splits his time between New York City's Greenwich Village and Northern Michigan with his wife Susi Cahn of Coach Dairy Goat Farm, and their two sons.