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## **Bobby Flay Biography**

**Bobby Flay's** versatility is evident in the multiple talents he brings to the field as a chef, restaurateur, cookbook author, and media personality.

Bobby discovered his culinary identity at the age of 17, working as a cook at the famed theatre district haunt, Joe Allen's. The job had been arranged by his father, who was a partner in the restaurant. After a short time, Joe Allen himself became so impressed by Bobby's talents that he paid the young cook's tuition to The French Culinary Institute.

Following his graduation in 1984, Bobby worked with restaurateur/owner Jonathan Waxman at Buds and Jams, where he first discovered the sweet-heat of Southwestern ingredients. It was at these burgeoning restaurants that Bobby met other icons of the era – Wolfgang Puck, Jeremiah Tower – who he credits with spawning an entire generation of chefs. After Jams, Bobby debuted as Executive Chef at the East Village's Miracle Grill where he caught the attention of restaurateur Jerome Kretchmer. Kretchmer offered the 25-year old the opportunity to create his own sensation at Mesa Grill, which opened in 1991.

Soon after, Bobby teamed with businessman Laurence Kretchmer to open Bolo in November 1993 in the Flatiron district. During Bolo's reign, Bobby drew inspiration from the bravado and complexities of Spanish food, deftly blending the unique flavors of Spain with more familiar American ingredients. A decade later, its menu reenergized by the introduction of tapas, Bolo was awarded a rare three stars by *The New York Times*.

Bobby brought his unique amalgam of innovative food and inviting hospitality to Las Vegas with the 2004 opening of Mesa Grill at the legendary Caesars Palace. The city's upbeat urban energy provides an ideal backdrop for Mesa Grill's lively cuisine.

At New York's Bar Americain, which opened in March 2005, Bobby takes the intimacy of a midtown brasserie and injects it with authentic American flavors and style. Drawing exclusively from regional American ingredients, his dishes rejuvenate old classics and celebrate the abundance of America's diverse and delicious heritage. Bar Americain has received rave reviews from the press, including two stars from *The New York Times*.

Bobby Flay Steak, which opened in July 2006 in Atlantic City, is Bobby's first-ever steakhouse. Here, he presents classic steakhouse fare that he remembers enjoying as a child in New York City and on the Jersey Shore as well as new dishes that incorporate his famous grilling techniques and signature Southwestern fare.

In March 2007, Bobby brought Mesa Grill to The Cove, Atlantis in Paradise Island, Bahamas and in July 2008, Bobby opened his first Bobby's Burger Palace (BBP) in Long Island. At BBP, Bobby presents an array of burgers inspired by his extensive travels throughout America and love of the grill in a convenient casual setting. To date, there are 14 BBP outposts.

Bobby also shares his knowledge and enthusiasm for food through his cookbooks and cooking programs. Bobby's ninth cookbook, *Bobby Flay's Burgers, Fries and Shakes* (Clarkson Potter) hit bookstores in April 2009 and *Bobby Flay's Throwdown!*, (Clarkson Potter) the companion to the popular primetime series, was released in October 2010 featuring recipes from both Bobby and his challengers. *Bobby Flay's Bar Americain Cookbook* (Crown Publishing) was released in September 2011. His latest cookbook *Bobby Flay's Barbecue Addition* (Clarkson Potter) will be available in April 2013.

Since debuting on Food Network in 1994, Bobby has continuously hosted programs that bring cooking tips and information on American regional fare to a national audience. His first show, *Grillin' & Chillin'*, premiered in 1996, followed by *Hot Off the Grill* in 1998 and *Boy Meets Grill* in 2003. Along with participating in many holiday and seasonal Food Network specials over the years, Bobby currently stars on *Iron Chef America* (premiered 2005), *Throwdown with Bobby Flay* (premiered in 2006), *Grill It! With Bobby Flay* and *Food Network Star* (both premiered in 2008). In Fall 2010, Bobby expanded his television presence to Food Network's sister network Cooking Channel, with the debut of *Brunch @ Bobby's*. His other series include *Bobby Flay's Barbecue Addiction*, *3 Days to Open with Bobby Flay* and *Bobby's Dinner Battle*. He also recently competed a second time against Chef Anne Burrell in the fourth season of competition series *Worst Cooks in America*, where he led his team to victory.

Bobby works tirelessly to challenge the way Americans view and taste food – making it bold, zesty and always fun.

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