

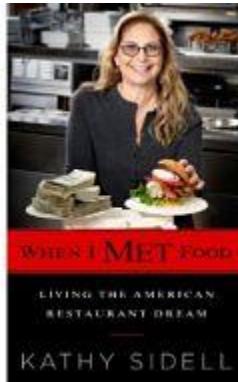
« Grub Street Boston home



DAILY FOOD NEWS FROM [nymag.com](#) & [MENUPAGES](#)

November 14, 2012

## The Met's Kathy Sidell on Burger Bread, Great Locations, and Guy Fieri



Published author.

Kathy Sidell: career launcher (Todd English, Jeff Fournier); restaurateur (the MET empire); sister of Stephanie (Newbury Street's Stephanie, that is); and now author. She's throwing a lavish soiree for her behind-the-scenes look at the biz, *When I Met Food*, tonight. Lucky for us, she took a break to offer a crash course in restaurant management ... and to defend [Guy Fieri](#).

**Location Is Key:** "It's critical," she says. On that note, look for her to open two new branches sometime in the not-so-distant future. She won't reveal where, though she notes that Boston's northern suburbs are a bit culinarily deprived. And there's always the South End...

**It Is Not Glamorous:** If you're going into the restaurant biz to wine and dine with tables of models while Tweeting photos of your sweat-soaked self elbow-deep in a champagne bucket, you might want to reconsider your career choices. "People think it's very glamorous, see and be seen, especially if you have a successful place. It's an adrenaline high. But the reality is, it's a business. You have to make the tough decisions: What you can afford, what the public is willing to pay for, and people misjudge that equation."

**Good Food Just Isn't Enough:** "From the concept to the graphics to the business plan to the menu to the service, what you deliver has to have a very common theme and often times, restaurateurs or chefs don't understand that it's not enough to have *one* element drive the business. It's not enough to have a great name, or great food; it takes a confluence to make any magic happen in any artistic endeavor."

**Keep Your Brand Consistent:** "You need to have a clear identity and you need to have a clear idea of what you are conveying. People can get confused; they think of food

in very specific genres ,not unlike movies. 'I am going to a steakhouse. I'm going to an Italian restaurant.' People eat out in genres."

**Nobody Likes Hamburger Bread:** "We thought this was a brilliant idea. It was the *best thing you ever had*. Melt in your mouth, and nobody ordered it at our burger bar in Natick. It was kind of like a Philly steak roll. We all gained five pounds. But, I guess, if you're ordered a hamburger, you don't want hamburger bread, too."

**Give Guy A Break:** "Way too much credence is given to restaurant reviewers. I truly believe Yelp! is fantastic because people are honest, and that's more valuable than someone who has been wined and dined by a lot of people and has a particular point of view ... He is a big success, and people love to throw arrows at people who do well."

Her book, [When I Met Food: Living the American Restaurant Dream](#), is out now.

**Earlier:** [The MET's Kathy Sidell Lives the "American Restaurant Dream," Pens a Memoir](#)