



Q&A: CHEF BRIAN DUFFY
HIS FOOD, HIS RIDE, AND #DUFFIFIED

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Q&A

CHEF BRIAN DUFFY

Brian Duffy is the type of guy you want to hang with at a bar – just be aware that if you own the bar, he may want to implement some changes. In this exclusive interview, Philly's own *Bar Rescue* star opened up about family, favorite Philly food spots, and motorcycles. So heat up that skillet, people – you're about to get #duffified.

Being a Philly native, what do you love about the current Philly food scene?

It's awesome to watch the amazing place that Philly has become for food. To see such a meat-eating-town have Vedge become one of the top restaurants says volumes about our city. We appreciate flavor, not just volume. The cheesesteak is great, but check out this mushroom carpaccio! As a whole, the food scene is at its highest because the average person can have an amazing, creative burger, sit down to a fine dining experience, or have a great, casual meal. The whole country is on fire right now.

Anything you think this city is in need of, food-wise? I'd love to see more recognition for the more ethnic places. Michael Solomonov has done an amazing job with giving us access to a whole new world with his spots, and I'd love to see someone else tackle a new series of concepts.

We know you're on the road a large part of the year. When back on home soil, where are your go-to food spots? Breakfast is almost always some form of Sabrina's. For lunch, I try to hit South Philly. I visit George's for my favorite sandwich of roast pork, broccoli rabe, aged provolone, and sausage (with sweets). Or you can find me at Ba Le Bakery for a Vietnamese Hoagie. Dinner? Geez...that's a tough call. We cook a lot at my house, but I'd have to say one of my favorite things is to see my dear buddy Theo Atkinson at Eulogy. Or it's always great to head out with some friends to Alla Spina or Zahav.

Everyone is infatuated with how professional chefs cook for themselves.

When whipping up a meal for you and your family, what are your signature dishes? I cook very peasant: stews, soups, and braised, smoked, or roasted dishes. I love the preparation and the technique that become so important in the process of the dish. I love to cook at home!

We have this crazy idea that chefs like to eat everything. Any food that you just can't stand? I hate salmon and I HATE truffle oil! Truffle oil drives me insane!

You gave us a little taste of your love of motorcycles. On a beautiful day in Philly, where ya headed? I have a few great buddies that I travel with. I love a ride through Valley Forge Park, out to Spring City, then into Birdsboro and Reading! Or, I ride out through Lancaster County. The hills, the scenery, the smell – my kind of ride!



If you get a rare full week off (away from appearances), what's your dream week in Philly look like? Family time!!! Cooking with my girls, my girlfriend, and my family – I love it! Then I'd finish it off with a ride on Sunday. Heaven!

When you walk into a restaurant, what's the first thing your discriminating eye looks for? Employees doing their jobs well. Cleanliness. An attentive staff, and an odor of food that is not one that you question.

If we ever saw Chef Brian Duffy open a restaurant in Philly, what's the theme? Now that's a secret...

If we set up a cook-to-the-death culinary battle between you and another Philly chef, who would you want to go up against? I'd love to cook with my buddy, Theo Atkinson, from Eulogy. Theo and I have been friends for years, and oddly enough our friendship started as a very tumultuous chef-against-chef relationship. We have been friends for over 15 years now, and I'd love to spend some fun, quality time competing against him! Haha!

We love binge watching you transform restaurants on Spike TV's Bar Rescue. How's Mr. Jon Taffer in real life? Taffer...he's an intense dude.

Any charity involvements in Philly? I love doing stuff for Paws with my friend Dana Spain, and helping out Philly Gives with my friend Katie Everett. Katie also puts on an amazing event called Cooking Up Couture. I am a huge supporter of finding a cure for Cystic Fibrosis, as I have a friend who has been fighting that battle for 34 years!

Of all your years cooking, what would you say is your crowning achievement thus far? My children!!! I don't like to judge my career on events or accolades. However, I do judge my business on the successes of my clients and the restaurants that I have worked with. When I got involved with a local, Irish pub group, they were a train wreck – both financially and organizationally. We had a GREAT core team that was able to keep things working: Frank Kasper, Patrick McBride, and Frank Daly. These guys were a force to be reckoned with! Working with Dana Farrell and building a brand was an amazing experience. We were a powerhouse that was able to keep the momentum moving. I attribute the successes of that food program – both the ones achieved during my 3.5+ years there and the successes of the future – to my hard work and business sense. Trust me, there were some questionable times during my tenure there.



Currently, my clients are my achievements. I have an amazing group of people that I work with, who are ALL great operators. I love watching the businesses that I have helped become even more successful. Between the food programs, the trainings, and the ongoing involvement that I have with them, that is something that I cherish most!!!

Let us know where your popular hashtag, #duffified, originated. Simply going through a series of names for my spices and me.

Your thoughts on scrapple? LOVE it!!

OK, rapid fire: Wine or beer? Wine for dinner, beer with the boys, bourbon for fun!
Sweet or savory? Savory!!! **Paper or plastic?** Paper. **Neat or rocks?** Rocks. **Guilty pleasure food?** BBQ. **Favorite Philly watering hole?** Wow. I love Milkboy, and of course McCloskey's in Ardmore. **Favorite Philly diner?** Diners scare me! Haha. All those pre-processed and out-of-the-box foods piss me off. BUT, then there's Morning Glory Diner. Now they do an awesome job of not being one of those diners! **Most used kitchen gadgets?** Fish spatula and microplane.

For more, check out Chef Brian Duffy on Instagram and Twitter: @chefbriduff

