



## Where They Ate: Chefs' Favorite Eating Experiences Of 2012

by [David Farley \(RSS feed\)](#) on Dec 20th 2012 at 11:00AM

Two months ago I was at the New York Wine & Food festival. I happened to be walking by the main stage – where star chefs had been giving cooking demos all weekend – when the next chef was announced. When Guy Fieri hit the stage, the 200 or so people in the audience roared. They leapt to their feet. They fist pumped to the southern Rock that was blasting from the PA. And I stood there, my mouth agape, wondering when (if ever) will our veneration of chefs ever slow down.

Not that this reverence for food and the people who make it is necessarily a bad thing. But you have to admit, did anyone see this coming two decades ago? (You're lying if you say yes.) As someone who, um, eats food and also makes a living writing about it, I'm obviously elated with the phenomenon. And there's nothing more I like than hearing about where chefs eat when they're not in the kitchen. And so I recently got out my virtual Rolodex and asked some chefs where in the world they had their favorite eating experiences of 2012.

DANIEL HOLZMAN

Executive chef at [The Meatball Shop](#), New York City

- Masa, New York City: This sushi restaurant offers a one-of-a-kind special experience that can't be found anywhere else. Chef Masa Takayama is a master and it's a rare treat to have the master's hand preparing your food for you.
- State Bird Provisions, San Francisco: Such a cool place! State Bird has figured out how to integrate the kitchen and the dining room with their Western Dim Sum-style restaurant and every bite was inventive and delicious, without being intimidating.
- Alinea @ Eleven Madison Park, New York City - I never had so much fun spending \$1000... Part because I was there with my mother and she has wanted to eat at Alinea forever, and part because everything was just so interactive and fun plus tasty and perfectly prepared.