

UNION SQUARE HOSPITALITY GROUP

DANNY MEYER CEO

Danny Meyer is the CEO of Union Square Hospitality Group, which includes Union Square Cafe, Gramercy Tavern, Eleven Madison Park, Tabla, Blue Smoke, Jazz Standard, Shake Shack, and The Modern, Cafe 2 and Terrace 5 at the Museum of Modern Art, as well as Hudson Yards. Each USHG restaurant is lovingly hand crafted and distinctive, and each strives to distinguish itself with warm hospitality and consistent excellence.

Born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, Danny Meyer grew up in a family that relished great food, cooking, get-togethers, travel and hospitality. Thanks to his father's travel business, he spent much of his childhood eating, traveling to near and far-off places, and sowing the seeds for his future passion for food, wine, and a successful career in the restaurant and hospitality industry.

Danny worked for his father as a tour guide in Rome during college, and then returned to the Eternal City to study international politics. He minored in the study of trattorias, spending at least as much time at the table as he did in the classroom. After graduating from Trinity College with a degree in Political Science, Danny landed in Chicago and took a job as Cook County Field Director for John Anderson's 1980 independent presidential campaign. Pursuing his true passions for food and wine, Danny later gained his first restaurant experience in 1984 as an assistant manager at Pesca, an Italian seafood restaurant in the Flatiron District of New York City. He then returned to Europe to study cooking as a culinary *stagiaire* in both Italy and Bordeaux.

In 1985, at age 27, Danny launched **Union Square Cafe**, pioneering a new breed of American eatery pairing imaginative food and wine with caring hospitality, comfortable surroundings and outstanding value. A critical success from the outset, Union Square Cafe has twice garnered *The New York Times*' coveted three star rating and has been voted Zagat Survey's Most Popular Restaurant in New York City for an unprecedented nine years. In addition to redefining the casual, fine dining restaurant, the restaurant is widely noted as having sparked the dramatic resurgence of the Union Square neighborhood over the past twenty years.

In July 1994, Danny opened **Gramercy Tavern**, offering refined American cuisine and warm hospitality in an historic landmark building. The restaurant has twice earned three stars in *The New York Times*, and was voted Zagat Survey's Most Popular Restaurant in New York City in 2003, 2005, 2006 and again in 2007.

In late 1998, Danny welcomed guests to yet two more restaurants, **Eleven Madison Park** and **Tabla**, each situated in a stunning art deco building that overlooks 150-year-old Madison Square Park and the Flatiron Building. With the opening of these restaurants, Danny also officially formed Union Square Hospitality Group. Eleven Madison Park features Chef Daniel Humm's pure, market-driven cuisine rooted in Provence. The restaurant earned three stars in *The New York Times* and the designation of *Grand Chef Relais & Châteaux*, joining the ranks of one of the world's most exclusive associations of hotels and gourmet restaurants. EMP's ground-breaking neighbor, Tabla, serves Chef Floyd Cardoz' exquisite New Indian Cuisine. Tabla earned three stars from *The New York Times* and has been Top Indian Restaurant in NYC in the Zagat Survey, Citysearch and *Time Out New York*.

In Spring 2002, Union Square Hospitality Group opened **Blue Smoke** and **Jazz Standard**, offering New York mouthwatering real pit barbecue and world class live jazz. The restaurant and jazz club were named “Best Barbecue” and “Best Jazz Club” respectively in 2003 by Citysearch.com. Blue Smoke led the list of *New York Magazine*’s “Where to Eat Now 2004” and has been named “Best Barbecue” by *Time Out New York*.

In 2004, Danny incorporated more of his childhood interests – frozen custard, hot dogs and art – into Union Square Hospitality Group. In summer 2004, USHG launched **Shake Shack**, a food kiosk in Madison Square Park, serving Chicago-style hot dogs, burgers, frozen custard, wine and beer. Following in the footsteps of Eleven Madison Park and Tabla, Shake Shack is the latest development in the renaissance of historic Madison Square Park. A second location of Shake Shack opened on Manhattan’s Upper West Side in October 2008, marking the first time in USHG’s history that it has expanded one of its businesses.

On a larger scale, in 2004, USHG was honored to be selected by the Museum of Modern Art to create and operate the dining facilities at the newly renovated and expanded MoMA. The facilities include a fine dining restaurant, **The Modern**, two cafes, **Cafe 2** and **Terrace 5**, catering, and even the food service for MoMA’s staff. The Modern is in the top 20 of the Zagat Survey’s Most Popular Restaurant list, and its Bar Room has received three stars from *The New York Times*.

In 2005, USHG created a fine dining, full-service catering and sports and entertainment business, **Hudson Yards**. Offering a fresh approach to catering and events, Hudson Yards provides our guests the excellent cuisine and warm hospitality they have come to expect from each of our restaurants. Hudson Yards produces off-premise events ranging from small, elegant dinner parties to corporate events serving 1500 people, to a barbecue wedding reception and a high profile opening of one of the city’s most prestigious publishing company’s corporate headquarters. Hudson Yards also brings its services to sports facilities such as the Mets’ Citi Field Stadium in Queens, in addition to entertainment venues and large-scale event production across the nation.

An active national leader in the fight against hunger, Danny has long served on the boards of Share Our Strength and City Harvest. He is equally active in civic affairs, serving as Co-Chair of the Union Square Partnership and on the executive committees of NYC & Co and the Madison Square Park Conservancy.

Danny is active as a public speaker and educator, and has been a presenter at *Food & Wine*’s Aspen Classic, Saveur’s Texas Hill Country Festival, Culinary Institute of America, Cornell University, National Restaurant Association, and others. He has also been featured in countless tv, radio and print media. Danny has been profiled by *People Magazine*, *Town & Country*, *Gourmet*, *CNN* and *CBS Sunday Morning*.

Danny, his restaurants and chefs have earned an unprecedented 19 *James Beard Awards*, including: the first-ever Outstanding Restaurateur; Outstanding Restaurant of the Year; Best Chef; Outstanding Service; Outstanding Wine Service; Humanitarian of the Year; Who’s Who of Food & Beverage; Best New Restaurant; Best Restaurant Design; and Best Graphic Design.

Danny co-authored the ***Union Square Cafe Cookbook*** (HarperCollins, 1994) with his partner, Chef Michael Romano. The book earned the IACP Julia Child Award for the best new cookbook by a first-time author, and was followed up with the highly acclaimed ***Second Helpings from Union Square Cafe*** (HarperCollins, 2001). Danny’s latest book, ***Setting the Table***, examines the power of hospitality in restaurants, business, and life (HarperCollins, October 2006) and has been named a best seller by *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal* and *BusinessWeek*.

Danny lives in New York with his wife, Audrey, and their four children, Hallie, Charles, Gretchen and Peyton.