

James Gandolfini (RC'83) & Mario Batali (RC'82)

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“Two lucky mooks from Jersey”

That’s how Batali describes himself and Gandolfini, who were both inducted into the Rutgers Hall of Distinguished Alumni in May.

What else they have in common

Gandolfini’s best-known character, Tony Soprano, lives for a great Italian meal; Batali, the successful Manhattan restaurateur and star chef on the Food Network, is unparalleled at making one.

With friends like these . . .

The pair told the *Home News Tribune* that during college they would hang out after work. Jokes Gandolfini: “We’d go back to one of our houses and he would cook and I would pretend I liked it.”

distinguished alumni

Mario Batali was named to Rutgers University’s Hall of Distinguished Alumni during a gala dinner and reception at the East Brunswick (N.J.) Hilton. Batali graduated Rutgers College in 1982, studied Spanish theater, but later became enamored with cooking and trained in both London and Italy. He won the James Beard Foundation’s Best Chef: New York City Award in 2002.



Pictured with Batali is actor James Gandolfini, who graduated from Rutgers College in 1983, who was also inducted.



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