

FOODSERVICE EAST PRESENTS

SECRETS OF **SUCCESS**

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An ongoing series of interviews with chefs, restaurateurs and foodservice operators, Secrets of Success looks at the paths taken to professional recognition and acclaim.



Sandrine Rossi

Co-owner, Frenchie, Boston, MA
By Foodservice East

Sandrine Rossi was born and raised in France. She studied business and environmental studies, and worked in China before going into the restaurant industry. In 2014, she moved to Boston.

FOODSERVICE EAST SECRETS OF SUCCESS

FSE: What were you doing before opening the restaurant and what led you to decide to do that?

ROSSI: Before moving to the US in 2014, I was an environmental engineer building infrastructures in France and China. Moving to Boston was a big change in my life, and it led me to reconsider what I was doing. I realized I wanted to lead a different life, more creative and driven to make my culture alive. What is more at the center of French culture than conviviality? And what is more convivial than food and wine with good company?

FSE: How did you meet Loïc and decide to partner?

ROSSI: The idea of opening Frenchie really came to me in 2015; at the beginning of 2016 I started to hunt for a restaurant space. In June 2016, after 6 months, I saw the 560 Tremont and fell in love with it right away! Loïc was also looking at taking it. The broker told me I should meet him, that we would be very complementary. I agreed to meet, and it was the best blind date of my life – business at first sight!

FSE: What is your background?

ROSSI: I do not have a restaurant background at all! I studied engineering and went to business school in France, and then I tried out different jobs, all related to environmental engineering. But food has always taken a big part of my life. I guess this is what most restaurateurs say.

FSE: What do you like most about operating a French restaurant in Boston and what's the hardest part?

ROSSI: It is a very creative and social job; I like creating ties between people. It is also a lot of work, sometime very repetitive.

FSE: When you go out to eat, what kinds of food/restaurants do you prefer?

ROSSI: My father is Italian so I am driven to Italian cuisine! I really like going to Sorellina. But Boston is also a seafood heaven; oysters and white wine are a must. I enjoy going to Select Oyster Bar. For French food, I cannot love a restaurant more than Petit Robert that is the truest French restaurant in Boston, but French food inspired so many chefs here that you can find great French food in a lot of restaurants.

FSE: I understand you serve a family wine or wines? Can you tell us about the wines, names, etc?

ROSSI: My father is a co owner of a winery in Medoc (near Bordeaux) called La Tour de By. We do serve at Frenchie their Cru Bourgeois – Cabernet

Sauvignon, Merlot and Petit Verdot grapes, which is a medium body wine with the refined aromas of Burgundy Pinot Noir. It is a favorite of mine, but also people who have difficulties picking a red wine love it!

FSE: How does Frenchie's menu differ from those at other French restaurants in the city?

ROSSI: There are already amazing options for French food in Boston. We did not try to compete with them, but to be complementary. Frenchie is the easygoing version of a bistro or a French café. Actually, the word bistro means “fast”, French bistro in Boston tend to be closer to a Parisian brasserie that is already a higher end type of restaurant. We wanted to be approachable and to give the option of having a light meal with a glass of wine. If we were in France I would have defined Frenchie as a café – open all day long, possibility to eat light or heavy meals, have coffee or wine/beer... But the word café here means something else.

FSE: What was the hardest part of opening Frenchie?

ROSSI: I cannot complain, things have been smooth especially thanks to Loïc. My biggest issue was probably facing the amount of anxiety that type of projects generates.

FSE: What do you enjoy most (and least) about what you do?

ROSSI: Most: creating new experiences for people and making them feel good
Least: micro management, so many small tasks are required to make a restaurant work!

FSE: What are your upcoming plans for Frenchie (wine dinners, Chris tells me your family from France may come and cook with their chef)?

ROSSI: Yes it is a possibility for the beginning of 2018, but as they just open the new restaurant they are not sure about what their planning is going to look like. It is definitely something I want to do next year, for sure! We are planning several events, from improbable wine pairings nights (what to drink with chicken wings!) to champagne and macaroon tasting. I am also always looking at new products for the restaurant, especially from Europe. Last time I went I tasted amazing hot chocolates in Austria, for example.