# Keith McNally reveals secret five-year relationship with Alan Bennett in new memoir



Keith McNally, a New York restaurateur renowned for his celebrity hotspots including Balthazar, has disclosed in his forthcoming memoir, *I Regret Everything*, that he had a five-year relationship with celebrated British playwright Alan Bennett. The revelation comes with a twist: Bennett, now aged 90, allegedly wished to keep their affair confidential.

In his memoir, McNally, 73, shared that he has had two significant gay relationships, one being with Bennett. He emphasised the importance of honesty in his writing, stating, "He didn't want me to write about him at all, but I had to be honest." He acknowledged Bennett's artistic influence on him, mentioning that the playwright often incorporated characters inspired by him into his plays. Despite their shared history, McNally noted that Bennett was displeased with the mention of their relationship.

Their connection reportedly began in 1968 during the production of Bennett's first play, *Forty Years On*, which featured Sir John Gielgud. At that time, McNally was an aspiring actor, and their relationship continued until he relocated to the United States in 1975 to pursue a career in the restaurant industry. McNally later married Lynn Wagenknecht, with whom he shares children, including actress Isabelle McNally.

Contrastingly, Bennett has established a long-term partnership with Rupert Thomas, former editor of *The World of Interiors*, in London.

In addition to his personal revelations, McNally has made headlines for his strong stance against perceived misbehaviour in his restaurants. In 2022, he famously banned actor James Corden from Balthazar after a series of complaints from staff regarding the comedian's conduct. McNally branded Corden as "a hugely gifted comedian but a tiny cretin of a man" after Corden allegedly berated waitstaff over a hair found in his food and demanded free drinks, among other grievances.

The situation escalated further when Corden expressed dissatisfaction with an omelette ordered for his wife and reacted vocally when the replacement dish was served with fries instead of salad. Although McNally initially imposed a ban on Corden, he later reversed the decision following an apology from the comedian. Reflecting on the incident, McNally mentioned feeling "really sorry" for Corden after he received a call from the actor apologising for the events that had transpired.

Balthazar, located in New York's vibrant Soho district, continues to be a beloved destination for both locals and celebrities alike.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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