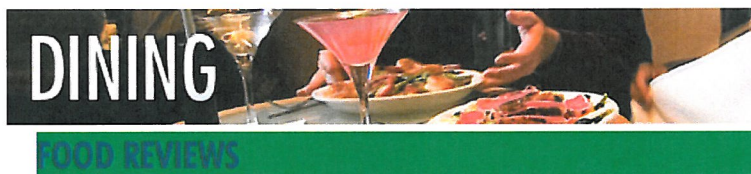




home > dining > food reviews > bobby-q's bob sikora

## DINING

- RESTAURANT LISTINGS
- ENTERTAINMENT
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### BOBBY-Q'S BOB SIKORA

**Author:** Geri Koeppel  
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*Bob*



Photo by Richard Maack

Bob Sikora, owner of Bobby-Q Great Steaks & Real BBQ in Phoenix, has run restaurants and bars in the Valley since opening a pancake joint in 1959.

From the 1960s to the 1980s, Mr. Lucky's, his 20,000-square-foot venue on 35th and Grand avenues, hosted the likes of Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson and Glen Campbell. "We all sort of grew up together during that period," says Sikora, who became friends with Nelson, Campbell and Charley Pride.

In 1971 he opened Bobby McGee's, a rollicking nightclub that began on 27th Avenue north of Northern Avenue in Phoenix and expanded to include 24 locations nationwide. It was the

first in the Valley to play pre-recorded DJ music.

After more than 30 years, though, the building needed to be remodeled, so Sikora sunk \$3 million into it and transformed it into Bobby-Q. Virtually the entire building except for the walls is new. He raised the ceiling and added a wrap-around patio. He used reclaimed wood from old houses and antique bricks from a torn-down schoolhouse to give the interior a roadhouse feel. But it's not kitschy - the dining room has a handsome, classy ambience.

"I didn't want just another barbecue shack," he says. A nightclub is still adjacent, but he says the restaurant is his "baby."

**How did you go from slinging pancakes to running a nightclub?**

My first nightclub was a broken down coffee shop serving breakfast, lunch and dinner that I had on Indian School Road. I added on a room for a band and a dance floor.

**Now you're running a barbecue joint. What's your background with barbecue?**

I had a passion for barbecue and thought I'd have a knack for executing the product. I went out and researched barbecue for a couple of years before I opened this place. Kansas City, Memphis and everything in Texas - where the hot barbecue joints were. I went through trial and error before I got what I wanted to get. It was a team effort with Chef Mark Hittle.... My coleslaw recipe dates back to the second restaurant I ever owned, the Townhouse Restaurant.

**Is the sauce vinegar-based or tomato-based?**

Tomato-based. Vinegar-based attracts a small portion of the barbecue people. I'm more of a Kansas City-type barbecue (person). It has more mass appeal. I have a tomato-based regular sauce and a hot and spicy. We have it in gallon jars and also pints.

**What's the secret to your fall-off-the-bone meat?**

Our smoking process. The brisket is cooked 18 to 20 hours in my wood-burning smoker out back. The ribs, the same way - they fall off the bone with great flavors.

**Being an entrepreneur in the hospitality industry for 50 years, you must have seen it all. What is one of your best memories?**

There are a lot of stories that come out of that, but not a lot of stories to be

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publicized. We had a lot of fun. A fun adventure.... I'll never retire. I'll probably be in the business another 20 years.

**Bob Sikora**  
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