

Keith McNally dinged on Instagram for seeming defense of Ghislaine Maxwell

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Restaurateur Keith McNally jumped to Ghislaine Maxwell's defense on Instagram. Restaurateur Keith McNally has served up yet another heated Instagram controversy — this time, by coming to the aid of Ghislaine Maxwell.

The dining mogul behind such eateries as Balthazar drew backlash and boycott threats Wednesday when he decided to spend the day acting as a white knight for the accused child sex trafficker and Jeffrey Epstein pal.

“Let’s not rush to judgment. [Maxwell] is currently innocent. She must be given a fair trial. Due process is the core of democracy,” McNally, 69, **wrote on the social media site.**

The seemingly pro-Maxwell take left a bad taste in the mouth of hospitality professionals and foodies.

Food Network champion chef Adam Greenberg called McNally’s post “disgusting and disrespectful” to the families who “endured the wrath of Epstein and her.”

McNally, however, didn’t back down.

“I will wholeheartedly agree with you if she’s found guilty after a fair trial,” he responded online. “By the way, do you have any firsthand knowledge of Maxwell’s guilt? If so, please tell me right here on Instagram.”

In another post, **McNally said he’d be “reluctant” to say she’s guilty publicly** “until she’s given due process and found guilty by a court of law.”

Another commenter pointed out that Hitler wasn’t tried in court. “Are you on the fence about him?” they asked.

“No, because he had a silly mustache,” McNally quipped.

When another social media user asked if Maxwell had frequented one of McNally’s buzzy establishments — which include Minetta Tavern — he

replied, “once or twice, but I neither met her nor knew at the time. Regardless, it wouldn’t have made a jot of a difference.”

When reached for comment, McNally doubled down — and even compared Ghislaine’s case to famous wrongly convicted people of the past

“Think of Rubin ‘Hurricane’ Carter,” he posted, referencing the **infamous case** of a boxer who spent 19 years in prison for murders he didn’t commit.

“Like everybody in [the] western world, Maxwell deserves due process,” he wrote. “What prompted my post was Al Franken’s case, where hysteria and false accusations led to lapses in due process,” he added, referring to the former comedian and Minnesota senator who resigned in 2017 after several women accused him of sexual misconduct.

McNally told Page Six that Maxwell may be “guilty of this vile crime,” but he refuses to “join the frenzied masses who are dead certain she’s guilty.”

It’s still unclear why McNally had Maxwell on his mind in the first place, but he concluded with a Thomas Paine quote: “An avidity to punish is always dangerous to liberty. It leads to men to stretch, to misinterpret.”