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A NIGHT OUT WITH | KATIE LEE JOEL

## Downtown-Uptown Girl

By TATIANA BONCOMPAGNI



Annie Tritt for The New York Times

**BURGER BOUND** Katie Lee Joel, armed for signing copies of her first cookbook. She celebrated with root beer and a hamburger.

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BEFORE heading out of the four-story West Village town house she shares with her husband, the musician [Billy Joel](#), Katie Lee Joel bade goodbye to her makeup artist and one of her two pugs. “Be a good watchdog,” she called to the dog, which was slumbering on a silk-covered armchair in the lavish living room.

Dressed in head-to-toe Yigal Azrouël, Ms. Joel, 26, climbed into a black S.U.V. and directed the chauffeur to West 58th Street and the Hudson Hotel, where 300 guests were to celebrate her first cookbook, “The Comfort Table.”

There, at the Hudson Cafeteria, several cooks were busy preparing dishes from the cookbook. With the kitchen as backdrop, Ms. Joel, who is a correspondent for

“Extra,” the entertainment-news program, was interviewed by her friend Beth Ostrosky, the fiancée of the radio host [Howard Stern](#).

“You’re the only person I know who lost weight writing a cookbook,” Ms. Ostrosky exclaimed on camera. Ms. Joel offered her friend a spoonful of macaroni and cheese.

“Wow, it’s really good,” Ms. Ostrosky said. “I was just doing the script, but it’s actually really good.”

In mid-taping, Mr. Joel arrived wearing a wool scarf, which Ms. Joel implored him to take off. “I think it’s too hot outside for that,” she said.

“They don’t know that,” Mr. Joel said, referring to future television viewers.

By 8 o’clock, Ms. Joel had signed dozens of cookbooks and posed for hundreds of photographs. Mr. Joel left to take his daughter, Alexa, and a friend out to dinner, and Ms. Joel returned to the S.U.V. with three of her friends, Gretta Monahan, Marcy Blum and Ahmad Sardar-Afkhami. “I feel like I just got married again,” she said with a happy sigh as the car sped to BLT Burger in Greenwich Village.

Once settled at a rustic wooden table, Ms. Joel turned to Ms. Monahan — a reporter and spa and boutique owner — and said: “I need a drink. I didn’t get anything to drink at the party.”

“I’m getting a chocolate milkshake,” Ms. Monahan said.

Ms. Joel ordered a root beer, a burger and fries topped with bacon, cheese, sour cream and jalapeño peppers.

“You must be so tired,” said Ms. Blum, who planned the Joels’ wedding in 2004.

“I’m not now, but I will be,” Ms. Joel replied. “I still have to go home and make cookies to take to Howard Stern’s show in the morning.” She removed her glittery earrings and handed them to Ms. Blum, their rightful owner.

“I would share clothes but her stuff wouldn’t fit me,” Ms. Blum joked. “That dress would be like an anklet on me.”

Ms. Joel picked at her hamburger and Ms. Blum’s onion rings before proclaiming that she was full. “I ate too quickly,” she complained.

“So you guys are going to Bungalow 8?” teased Mr. Sardar-Afkhami, the architect of a renovation of the Joels’ town house, speaking of the velvet-roped night spot.

“I’ve never even been there,” Ms. Joel said.

Outside, the S.U.V. was waiting to take Ms. Joel home to her late-night cooking project, her dogs and the Piano Man.