

Conversations with Food

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Have you ever thought about how your food might feel if you told it the honest truth? Not just that you like or dislike them, but the kinds of things you think about when they're around. What does their taste have to do with your taste? Do you enjoy the same types of food you loved when you were younger? Are you someone that enjoys sugary sweets? Maybe you like savory meats. Heck, maybe you're also a godless vegetarian who doesn't believe in the very simple concept of the food chain. That's okay. Here you will find my conversations with foods I've just tried, foods whose smell makes me think of home, and others I wouldn't want rubbed in my eyes. Welcome to my strange relationship with food and eating.

Bone Aperteet.

1. Chicken Pot Pie (store bought) (Family size)

Hi CPP, I'd like to take just a second of your time. When I realized that I had the weekend all to myself I thought it would be a good idea to go food shopping. After all, a guy gets to eat what he wants when the wife is away. I was planning on getting a steak or some ribs, but instead I saw you sitting there. You, a family sized premade, prepackaged chicken pot pie. You had an industrial look to you. I felt that if I thought about it hard enough I would be able to picture you being assembled on a line where no human except for OSHA representatives have worked. Ever. You were exactly two and one half pounds. Your packaging said you contained five servings. But let's get something straight here. I am a man. A man doesn't eat one serving. That's ridiculous. Who ever thought a guy would have that kind of prissiness? No. I bought you and brought you home and shoved all two and one half pounds of frozen you into the oven. Three fifty for at least an hour. Then I went and watched a movie. The Lion King. Good short movie. Then from the other room I smelled you. I smelled you the same way a cartoon character gets those wavy lines and floats towards the food. Somehow your smell left me famished and I needed you. When I took my first bite it was far too hot and I burned the roof of my mouth. Probably just your defense mechanism against people who have decided that a plate is unnecessary when you can just eat over the oven until things cool. But I started eating and when I finally looked around I realized you were gone. Poof. Magic. My belly felt engorged and a little wobbly. You spent the next six hours trying to make an escape out a way you did not enter through. But you were good. So very good. Perhaps the next time the wife goes away I'll once again enjoy your moist chicken, your too-many peas, and your large carrot chunks.

2. Deli Ham

You're tasty. Never change. Also, if you could not tell my Nana I've had you, that'd be great. But when I get you fresh sliced and don't think specifically about trichinosis, you are a great time. You are also one of the ingredients in my favorite hot sandwich, the Cubano. More about that later. But see, I don't think I could eat you at a festival meal. Even as a guest to someone's Christmas dinner. I see them carving it hot out of the oven or stove and, in that case, I get just a bit of acid reflux thinking of having you hot. I'm not a huge fan of that. Cold cuts are called that partially because they are cold. Or chilled. Not sure which is colder. I want the one that is ready to eat and not frozen. Does that help? My mother is going to hate this.

3. Pomegranate

The lock-box of fruits. I just want your sweet seeds and yet you hide them away under a hard-to-get-through outer skin and then if I ever actually do get past that, suddenly you're all honeycombed with the seeds. Other fruits aren't like this. I think your polar opposite in this world would be the avocado. One gigantic seed. But you, you are the worst. I've never had to work so hard for a piece of fruit in my life. Seriously, what could you possibly need that many seeds for? Okay, pollination? I'll accept that. But first you need that skin to fall off. And I don't want to be there for when it rots away. That's just gross. You should be ashamed of yourself. Oh, and let's not forget that of almost all the fruits out there, you are the one who stains most of all. If there is even a slight peek of white cloth you are all over it. And yes, I know I can buy you in juice form but then there's preservatives and additives and all other -tives to make me sick. I want those seeds, Pomegranate. I want them cleanly, efficiently, and unstaining. Get on that, okay?

4. Veal

I feel bad. I'll get that out of the way before you even start to think about how heartless I am. I'm fallible just like any other person. I don't think I'll ever be a vegetarian but even saying that, I know you get the short end of the stick. People eat cows and pigs and chickens but a lot of those are free range. As for you, if the rumors are true, you live in a dark box so that you can't move or grow over a certain amount. It makes your meat tender. It makes your taste more succulent than any other meats. So yes, I forgo eggplant parmesan for the veal parmesan because it's something I don't have every day. So again, apologies. But have you ever tried you? You're great! I think that could have been framed a bit better but I don't want to feel like I somehow built your box. I'm just the guy at the end who got to eat you. It's like fwa gra right? Is that the right spelling? Doesn't matter. Anyway, I'm not the one force feeding those geese so something magical happens to their livers. I hope you get to grow old and see those free ranges but if I'm not eating you, I'm eating the calf in the box beside yours. Seriously, I'm going to go and have some of you right now. Good stuff.

5. Tuna Sandwich (From Subway)

Hello tuna sandwich from Subway. I think we need to talk. It appears you are just shy of a foot long even though it clearly said otherwise on the sign. But I won't blame you for that. I would like to know about where your ingredients come from. Are you duplicitous just because you know I'll eat you either way? Because you are the only thing to eat right now. You were made to my specifications. Did you know that? I asked for tuna and they scooped four scoops then squished you down with a blunt knife. American cheese next and then toasted. A bit of old lettuce, a few pieces of onion and pickles. Oh! And I forgot the tomatoes. All in all you taste just as expected. Not cardboard but not decadence. You filled the literal void in my stomach where there would otherwise be nothing. Plus for a buck extra I got a coke to wash you down. That's a great pairing.

6. Last Bagel in The Break Room

Hey there little fella! Nobody chose you, huh? Don't feel bad. It's just that you're an Everything and people don't bring floss to work. How would it look to a customer if their salesman has sesame seeds in their teeth? But listen, I have no place to be and a day without meetings. We were destined for this moment. Do you mind a bit of warm cream cheese? That's my favorite. I'm going to eat you fast.

7. Spearmint Gum

You are disgusting. You are an abomination. You do not smell crisp. You do not give me good smelling breath. In fact, your entire being is built on the fact that only grandmothers choose you. In a world of fruity gum, you think you can waltz in and pretend to be refreshing? I call bullshit. Go haunt someone else's mouth.

8. (Dollar Store) Ginger Ale

I got four bottles of you for two dollars. Does that make you feel cheap? Does it make you wish you were a different beverage? What about when you are mixed with alcohol? Does that feel good or does it make even your thoughts diluted? Honestly, I think you are a bit of a masochist. People call you names like "ginger fail" just because you are made and sold on the cheap. Me? Hell who am I to judge? After all, I bought you. But why do the poor, those who frequent discount shops, need subpar soda? It makes no sense. This is America dammit. We were built

on the cornerstones of truth, beauty, and a natural aversion to real sugar. You know what? I just figured out the big difference. You burn the throat. Other ales don't do that. And it's not your bubbles. Don't tell me it's bubbles. We all know the difference between bubbles and burning. I really should get up the courage to look at your ingredients someday.

9. Pulp Orange Juice

I didn't ask for you. Growing up in a no pulp house I was always happy with the clean crisp taste of a good Florida orange. But then, staying at a boutique hotel in New York I was suddenly thrust into a full pulp morning buffet. Again, I didn't ask for you. So imagine my surprise when you were, well, pulpy. You felt thick but in a half-hearted way. Not like a smoothie. No, those are truly thick. No you were more like someone didn't bother to do the amount of work to make you normal. Because pulp is not normal. It's stuck in teeth. It's stays with you all day. But that also means never after toothpaste. That's the big thing people tell each other. But I tried it and I've come to realize that each of those people were right. It's disgusting. But my question to them would be why did they drink you after brushing? Because it seems like they are doing their morning routine in reverse. Everyone knows a morning goes like this: alarm-pee-shower-glass of juice-toast and eggs-brush. See how juice and brushing are at opposite ends of the list? You are a great drink even if you are so acidic that you give a heartburn like no other. But I'd ask that you stay away from toothpaste. Thank you for your help.

10. Ice Cream Sandwich

On a hot day you are the best. A little chocolate, vanilla ice cream in the middle. Mhmm. Good stuff. One change I'd make. Last longer in the sun. Please. A person just wants to sit back, relax, and have some solid confection. But you start melting right away. Then you drip everywhere. It's like having a cone of ice cream except there is so little of it that when you start to melt it's all tongues on deck to make sure all four sides are being taken care of. One question. Why are there no strawberry ice cream sandwiches? I don't want one. I just want to know. You melting bastard.

11. Mac and Cheese

I don't mean to be rude but, powder or liquid? I mean your cheese of course. Because it seems to me that powdered is the best kind for the true Mac and cheese meal. Now some would say that it's artificial but I would argue they both are. So which are you? Also, how do you feel about the mix-ins trend? Personally I think I like you with some diced chicken. Or maybe broccoli. I've been on a health kick recently but even I need some comfort food now and again. Green veggies are a good source of all kinds of things. I do think people are bullshitting when they call you "gourmet" when served at a nice restaurant. But sometimes you taste better. Hell, some days my lactose intolerance leaves me alone. It's all a flip of the cards. You even showed up in college as a microwaveable portion sized cup. That was great. That was also powdered if you're keeping track.

12. Quiche

Can I just call you Keesh to keep it clear? Pronouncing you is a real mess. Now I think you are pretty good except when I remember that you are basically a large omelet squeezed into a pie crust. Personally I am a vegetarian when it comes to you. I like my broccoli, mushrooms, even spinach. But you, Keesh, you always try and lure me in with a lady. That's right. Her name is

Lorraine. And she's known for bringing ham into the equation. Don't get me wrong, meat has its place. But not in you. It's an abomination to have non veggies in there. I want to savor the greens. I want to walk away thinking about how great the vegetables worked together to give me a taste sensation I can't find anywhere else. So Keesh, the next time I see you hanging around with Lorraine I might just have to call it quits.

13. Clams

You must be frightened all the time. You live your entire life in a self-made cell hoping nothing will come in. But people have learned how to open you and, as we do with many things, tried to eat you. This was a step forward in cuisine but a step back for you and your species. I mean, here you are under sand and silt and then down comes a rake or spade to pull you out. Then we purge you of anything we don't want and follow that up by steaming you out (ie killing you). If we ever find out that another planet is ruled by you I'm pretty sure there will be a few awkward faces at that summit. But for now, my little bivalve, rest easy under the sand and may thoughts of dark safety nestle in whatever you have that's close to a brain.

14. Rock Candy

The first time I tried you, Rock Candy, hell, the first time I even knew about you, I was twelve years old. I was with a school trip to an old mill and they had a gift shop. And much like any gift shop at a somewhat touristy place they had candy for sale. Very much the way that certain shops in New Hampshire and Maine always have fudge. But there you were. Plenty of different colors and you were on small wood dowels. What intrigued me most about you was the sharp edges. Very mineral-esque. I bought two of you and proceeded to try to figure out the best way to consume you. There were no directions and you couldn't be licked like a lollipop, so what to do? The fact that you were pure sugar wasn't an issue for me. But I did think that the best thing to do would be to simply bite pieces off and chew them. That was when I learned the secret! You DO bite into Rock Candy. But, you don't chew the piece. You just suck on it. That weird texture in your mouth can last a long time. Those two sticks lasted a few hours. But then a week later I went to the dentist and he told me you were bad for my teeth. But the story doesn't end there because I still enjoy Rock Candy every once in a while.

15. Cheeseburger

Let's talk for a second, Cheeseburger. For a long time I knew you existed but we were never formally introduced. The fact is, for a long time I couldn't eat you. It went against my beliefs. Then one day I realized that there was no reason to be denying myself food in an age where food keeps a hell of a lot longer. But then I was at a barbecue and someone said "who wants burgers!?" and I sidled up to get one. And right there on my plate was a bun with you, a perfectly cooked burger, topped with American cheese. Goopy cheese too. The kind of thing they fake in commercials to get our mouths watering. I looked at you then looked around to see if god was watching. I deduced he was not and if he was he didn't care. I was about to take a bite when my friend stopped me. "No toppings?" She asked. I was confused. A burger gets ketchup. That was what I knew. But she said to me, "You need all of these." And she pointed to a table beside the grill. On it were all sorts of things. I ended up putting cooked mushrooms, onions and mustard on you. Then and only then did I realize why people like burgers so much. It was a revelation. You were my revelation.

16. Pigs in A Blanket

You adorable little hotdogs. I just want to eat you all up! You are the main reason I go to fancy parties. hors d'oeuvres make the world go round and among them you are royalty. Let's talk about you for a minute, okay? You are a tiny hotdog wrapped in puff pastry. Baked in an oven so you are perfectly cooked. And you know what? I've never had a bad one. Never. You can tell me that not everyone makes Pigs In A Blanket perfectly but I wouldn't know. Just the mention of you, just a water wearing most of a tuxedo saying "hello, would you like some pi-" and I'm all over it. If they have you on toothpicks, I'll use every knuckle I have to grab at least five. And you know what? I realized in the store the other day that I can actually buy a lot of you. In fact, at Costco I can practically buy a case. But I don't. I don't do it. I think maybe it's the same reason I don't buy that huge crate of breaded mozzarella sticks (I do love the breaded kind). Because if I did I would die. I would die and I would die happy but I would still be dead. And you would have been the one to do it.

17. Beef Teriyaki On a Skewer

Nothing says "eat this! Faster!" than Beef Teriyaki On a Skewer. You know how you are moist and tender all on that piece of spiked wood? Well I'm here to point out that you might not taste as good if you were off the skewer. Then you'd just be a moment or two until you became dried out beef jerky. But whether it's at a party or in a Chinese food takeout, it's imperative that you get eaten fast. Really fast. Just get glorped down while those who are doing the chewing are trying to decide if we can just take a bunch of little bites or if we can forgo social mores and put your entirety into our mouths without stabbing our uvulas with the pointy spear you came on. Good try defending yourself. Your point means nothing to us.

18. Pears

Every year I buy you and every year you disappoint me. I'm not sure what I keep expecting. I mean, even at your crispiest you are basically a mushy, watery apple. And nobody wants that. But I buy you. And I eat a few bites of you wondering why you look like an old apple whose balls have dropped. Thin on top with thickness on the bottom. I've heard the term pear shaped being applied to some women's bodies. I can't think of a meaner phrase. You are fleshy and seem to be the shape of a water balloon juuust when it hits a table top. It's not right. You aren't right. And stop telling me you're ripe. You're never ripe.

19. Face cake

Birthday cake is good. I think we can all agree that it's one of the quintessential cakes of our time. And people put words on them and flowers and a whole mess of whatever. But Face Cake? You are the ass kicker of party themed delicacies. The way we can print any image on you. Granted, I once tried to get Shaw's to print a mildly rude image on a cake and almost didn't get it done. The two bakery ladies had to consult with each other and giggle over it. But you, Face Cake, there is just something sublime about eating someone's face. Personally I go eyes first. You kind of need to do that because nobody wants to have to watch themselves be eaten. And if you are a full-body image? Then it's eyes followed by crotch. I don't make these rules. I simply follow them blindly.

20. Huge round flat lollipops

You are the unachievable. You are the candy above all others. A lollipop so big that nobody has ever finished one. That was always the rumor. Parents would tell us to get a tootsie roll pop instead. Those were manageable. But who wants to manage candy intake? I spoke about rock

candy before and the fact that it was not on a stick but on a dowel. But your dowel is enormous. It could be used to prop up a front porch. I remember as a little boy holding you in my hand, the sheer diameter of that dowel was extraordinary. But you, Huge round flat lollipop, you were the dream. You were the closest any of us got to Willy Wonka. And now I'm older, I've visited dentists and have had my share of cavities over the years. I see you now and know that all you bring is decay. Hours of it. Weeks. You are nostalgia and a warning.

21. Coleslaw

Sigh. Okay Coleslaw, what have you got to offer that a salad can't give me? Cabbage and carrots. That's a big draw? I'm sorry but that's about a quarter of a salad and we are topping you with what? Oh, gobs of mayo. Perfect! Listen Coleslaw, you're only popular with people over a certain age because they thought you were an amazing delicacy at some point. You're not! You are a waste of a side. I'd rather have creamed corn.

22. Chocolate milk

You are for wannabes. There, I said it. The story goes that everyone loves chocolate so why not stir it in milk. Hideous. Try again with something else. Chocolate was made to be eaten, not drunk, as a candy bar. And it's great in bar form. Especially with nougat. But stay out of my milk. Because you, Chocolate Milk, you are a bastard that sits at the bottom of the glass and if not stirred enough your syrupy goop just goes up the straw for a chocolate slap to my mouth. Get stirred properly and only then can we maybe talk.

23. Strawberry milk

You are the opposite of chocolate milk. You are sweet perfection. Never change.

24. Beans

You are the most fun and funny vegetable. Legume? No time for research. All I know is that if there is food that can make a kid fart, you know they'll eat it. That's you. You make children happy. But to me you will always be one kind. Vegetarian baked beans by the Bush company. I don't need the pork kind. I'm a purist. You know what else I like about you? If I cut up hotdogs and submerge them in you and stir over a medium heat, I get Beanie Weenies! Tasty and definitely guaranteed to make farts. Hilarious.

25. Mushrooms

Once again we have a foodstuff, yes you, that has many varieties. I will do the best I can with the limited space I have. Overall, you are the lil' umbrellas of nature. Now some would point to trees but I don't often stand under trees when it's raining. Sure there's the safety aspect with the lighting and whatnot, but if I was a teeny tiny person I'd stand under you. Full coverage, that's all I'd be looking for. You guys are everywhere! I even knew a kid at school who was so gross that you guys were growing out of his bath mat! True story. Other than bath-mattery, you are good for dipping at parties though not as refined as baby carrots (they were made small for easy handling). You have that crazy cap thing going on. I do love a good mushroom cap sandwich. But what about the stem? I apologize, YOUR stem. I know that people will eat it and slice it and dice it but is it really worth it? I am not a fan of the veggie burger but you are often an ingredient in that. I think you are a decent, utilitarian additive and when you cream, it makes great soup.

26. Yogurt

Well well, look who is trying to reinvent themselves. Not just plain vanilla or blueberry anymore. Now your fruit is on the bottom or in a little container on top. And you have a variety of fruit options. Good for you. Getting out there like a college freshman who wants to shed their high school image. But wait, now there's not just fruit but actual mix ins to make you taste like pie or cookies or any number of sweet treats. But here's the thing, I'm not sure you can keep this up. Yes people are buying you and eating you but how long until you need to change something else? Personally I'm a fan. I'm just worried about you. I think you are evolving too fast. Pace yourself and let people enjoy your stages one at a time. Maybe a fruit on the bottom followed by fruit on top followed by mix in flavors. Just watch out. You don't want to go too far and end up like cottage cheese when they added pineapple chunks.

27. Soft serve

Also yogurt just frozen! (jazz hands). You advertise yourself as a better alternative. But you are like fashion, cyclical. Stores open with all different flavors and then close after a year. You are a recurring fad. Ice cream goes nowhere. It's gone through a few iterations but basically stays the same. But frozen yogurt? You don't need better branding. You need to stop. And stop being sold by weight! I want toppings, dammit. You are making me choose between more of you or strawberries. You have a question? Go ahead. Which do I pick? BOTH! Obviously. Too much of you and too much topping. Good for you frozen yogurt, I'm fat again.

28. Ice cream

You think I forgot about you? Making you feel big? Ooh scoopable. Who cares? It's the same amount I'd get from soft serve. And can we call a moratorium on waffle cones? Just give me a sundae I can slowly enjoy that won't turn me into a walking, melting Picasso painting. You, Ice Cream, need to stay cool and not run down my arm. And the trucks. THE TRUCKS! with that song beckoning little children into the street with money they stole from their mom's purses. By the way, do you count frozen confections as part of your purview? I don't, which is why I'm asking. On a more personal note, no more mint. It's not nice as a treat. It's like eating toothpaste.

29. White wine

One thing is clear. You. Ha! Ugh. I am so sorry for that one. You are my favorite type of wine. I find others to be too heavy, too aromatic, too... well, I don't really like wine so let's leave it at that. But the difference is that I can tolerate your taste. Subtle hints of blah blah with just an afterthought of blah blah. People talk about you less than other wines. No one is looking is really looking for a healthy Riesling these days. There are people who collect wine and even they think you're kind of stupid. Besides, you pair well with seafood and I feel like once someone has an oyster in their mouth the only reason they are drinking you is to use one bad taste to get rid of another.

30. Beer

Howdy Beer. Think you'll get away with things that Wine couldn't? Think again. You have even more to answer for. Kids don't always go for wine. But beer? If you can get your hands on beer as a teenager, you are the damn king of the party. And nobody throws the beer back in

your face and says it's not the right kind. Any beer is fine. Regardless of taste. People drink you because you are cheaper than wine and you can usually give someone a pretty good drunk where wine needs time. Beer, why is it that people think they need to play games in order to drink you? Beer pong. Flip Cup. Quarters. Each one just putting more of a distance between people and their drinks. Just drink it! Sorry, drink you. But the worst part? The worst part about you is that you change how people behave. You take their normal behavior and then drunk it up. I myself have succumb to your pressures before and it was so stupid. See, I end up divulging secrets and arguing about stupid things like 80's cartoon show continuity. Beer, you are just a liability that none of us really need.

31. Loaded Nachos

Bar trivia nights. Is there anything more fun you can do with your friends on a Tuesday? People need to find the bar, get there early, get some drinks in them, figure out a funny name like "The Pursuers of Trivia!", and get their table an order of you, Loaded Nachos. Now, when we say loaded what we mean is that you have pretty much everything on you. You are a stack of chips which, when done correctly, has layers of cheese, beans, garlic, onion, possibly some meat, and more cheese. You also tend to have sides of guacamole, sour cream, and salsa. People love you because you look like a great sharing item for the entire table. But all have been deceived.

32. Water

You basic bitch. Seriously, we've had you forever so how about letting us try different beverages that improve you. I don't want nestle water. That's stupid and gross. I want you as cubes in soda. Everyone talks about how refreshing you are. Bullshit. Lemonade is refreshing. And I know I need you to make that, but that's the whole point. You are no good alone. It's a known fact that you are a jerk. Hell, you took out the Titanic. And don't tell me that was you in a different state. Water has three states and frozen is one of them. You are a utility player in life. We need you to live but we don't live to need you. I'm all for you in bath form. Heck I even like a good shower. But you won't catch me drinking from either. There are just so many ways to use you in conjunction with other things that you shouldn't try to be a standalone beverage. Now if you'll excuse me I have to pee.

33. Salad

Must you include everything? There was a time when we could say "I'd like a salad please" and they would bring us chopped lettuce, a few veggies and a dollop of dressing. But now you've gone insane. The last time I ordered a salad you were brought to me as a full wedge of uncut lettuce doused in creamy ranch dressing and bacon bits. What happened?! You used to be the healthiest option on the menu but now you are some Frankenstein monster sewn together and called Cobb Salad or Greek Salad. And what about that restaurant where I ordered a Caesar Salad and they put you down in front of me: one leaf of romaine, a crouton, one anchovy, and a smear of dressing on the plate. Are you kidding me? Do you feel bad about being represented like that? It's a real shame. The only true salads existed in the late 80s where people went to salad bars and piled things on plates then drowned them in as much dressing as they wanted. Each person a scientist, subtle changes but still called salad. Talk about identity crises.

34. Lobster

A delicacy so disgusting we need to drown you in melted butter to make you palatable. You are an underwater infestation. Insects that people can't wait to eat. These same people see an Asian market selling fried beetles and they lose their lunch. But why? You weren't always the height of cuisine. In fact, people used to protest the fact that you were fed to them too often. Then something changed. Now you get steamed and boiled, cracked and slurped. Your meat is prized and allows shops in Maine to charge twenty dollars for lobster rolls. Did you mean for this to happen? Was it always your plan to be a huge shrimp? I hear tell that you can live forever if left unchecked. Constantly growing and shedding your carapace. But the larger you are the tougher your insides get. They also say you don't feel pain. Well I actually hope you do because maybe that will keep you from getting into traps. You are a pointy, grabby, unholy mix of an armadillo and a tarantula. Go away.

35. Cilantro

The way I see it, half the people think you taste great while the other half thinks you are a glorious herb. That's 50% in my book. And everyone knows 50% ain't no passing grade. You fail.

36. Sushi

A lot of people get sick at the mention of raw fish. It conjures images of dead sea life washing up on a beach surrounded by plankton. They get an imaginary whiff of low tide at the pier. Just bad stuff all around. So when they are introduced to you, Sushi, they immediately recoil. Explaining you to skeptics is pretty hard. "Well," I say, "it's very tasty. You have the fish wrapped in rice and then that part is wrapped in seaweed. Plus you can add some ginger to it or, if you really want, wasabi. I'm sorry, what is wasabi? It's this root plant that gets all crushed up and can vaporize your throat and nose should you take too much of it." I'm not seeing a lot of takers with that explanation. But I will say this: I became a convert years ago when my friends brought me to a sushi place and there was nothing else to eat. They started me on California rolls and I worked my way up from there. You are tasty, there is no doubt in my mind about that but you are a tough sell. Also, you can be super expensive. The amount of times I've ordered delivery and paid forty dollars only to have two rolls show up, I mean, its prohibitive. But at least you introduced me to the joy of eels. Don't get me wrong, you are tasty, but I think going forward I'll just stick to Chinese food instead. Lots more bang for my buck that way.

37. Pizza

You are confusing. I looked it up and there are 61,269 pizza places in the US. The problem is that all of them make you differently. There seems to be no consistent recipe. Now, I'm all for diversity in product but even a regular cheese pizza (sorry, cheese you) is going to differ between places, even if they are on the same street! You have all types of dough, all types of red sauce, even white sauce. Some places put tons of cheese, others put on dollops of ricotta or mozzarella rounds. That's another thing: how to eat you. Sometimes you are greasy as all hell causing some people to hilariously dab you with napkins. Then there are those that eat you with a knife and fork instead of folding the pieces. Not sure what your thoughts are on these differences but all I know is that you are easy. People who want easy food can just order a slice. Convenience is important in a meal and nothing is more convenient than you. Here's a joke for you: what kind of pizza is more at one with the universe? Chicago style because it's deeper. HA! By the way I am all for pineapple/ham Hawaiian pizza. Take that haters.

38. Calzones

Before we get too far away from pizza we need to talk about you, Calzones. You often cost more than a regular pizza when we are all aware that you are a pizza that's been folded over. That doesn't make you better. It's like eating a pocket book full of ingredients. So no, you aren't better than pizza. Stop the self-delusion.

39. Steak

I am such a fan. You are so succulent and make me feel animalistic when I tear at you with my teeth. You seem curious about how I like to eat you. Let me tell you. I think once I'm done you'll wish you could eat you too. First of all you come from cows. Good cows. Grass fed. HA! No, but seriously I hope you're grass fed and not stuck in some shit-covered pen. One thing you should know is that I've never had to see where my food comes from. I'm lucky enough that I haven't had to slaughter anything. The closest I've come to death is holding my cat as she was put to sleep because she was so sick. But we had no intention of eating her. But cows are great. Big animals with an ample amount of meat on their bones. And then we come to you and your myriad varieties. I don't care if you are flank steak, flat iron, hanger, rump, or sirloin. You are the truest, manliest food around. Because of you we have grills. Did you know that? You are so beloved that we made a special machine just to make you in all your forms. Plus, we get to stand around and act like we know exactly how to cook you. Nothing quite like going to a barbecue and finding out your host doesn't know the difference between rare and medium rare. I'm a fan of juicy steaks. I don't want you burned. I want you moist and flavorful. I hear what you're asking: Do you marinate? The answer is yes. Often with soy sauce or teriyaki. I'll stab the hell out of you so the flavor really gets in you. Right now I have a real hankering for you with a side of mashed potatoes and corn. If you'll excuse me.

40. Frozen peas

Frozen vegetables are strange. Picked and then immediately flash frozen so as to last a very very very long time. Growing up there were always frozen vegetables in the house. I don't think my mother ever bought fresh produce except for apples. But Frozen Peas, you were always there, whenever I opened the freezer to find ice cream you would be tucked into the door shelves next to the frozen carrots. I think my mother thought that since everyone worked full time she wouldn't be able to take time to really cook. So the peas go on the counter for the day to thaw and then then they get put next to a bunch of fish sticks (more on those later). This was home cooked in my family growing up. You were a staple that we didn't actually eat. My parents were never of the clean-your-plate mentality. You at what you could and that was that. Since that time the only thing I use frozen peas for is if I need an ice pack. They work quite well.

41. Chinese Food from Down the Street

Let me explain something about you, Chinese Food from Down the Street. You seem to think that you are the best place in town when, much like the Pizza places, there are far too many of you to count. But your particular spot is supposed to be the best? Tell me, were those handmade crab rangoon or did you buy them from Costco like every other store around here? Not to say they were bad. I think your food is not healthy, not top of the line, nor flavorful and interesting. But you are, as I've already pointed out, convenient. You never have a minimum amount I have to purchase in order to get a delivery. In fact, I'm pretty sure that when I do ask for delivery you send out whoever happens to be washing dishes that day. And portions. Woohoo! Let's talk about that. You gave me so much brown rice the other day I thought I

should plant them and start a farm (that's how rice works, right?) and did I get a belly from that. But you provide me with the least ethnic of all ethnic foods, topping it all off with a American made fortune cookie. One thing I've noticed is I can calculate just how much food I bought for myself based on the number of fortune cookies in the bag. If there are three of them and I'm eating alone it means I've ordered too much. Still, that means I can choose which fortune I want to follow. So thanks for that.

42. Veggie Burgers

I get it. I get that some people don't want to eat animals and therefore abstain from the practice. But these same people really like the convenience of the "patty". That burger shape and design we meat eaters know from places like McDonalds or every barbecue ever. This is when you, Veggie Burgers, make your appearance. People buy you because they want the illusion of a burger without the guilt of one. But they forgot something when making you, didn't they, Veggie Burger? Come on, let's both say it together. Ready? 1...2...3.... Flavor! That's right. You taste like ass because you're made of it. I don't want chunks of corn, pieces of tofu, or some kind of mock-teriyaki sauce mixed in with my burgers, veggie or otherwise. But these people have this delusion that something made out of mushrooms and soybeans has the same mouth-watering taste as real angus beef. Veggie Burger, how the hell did you get these people to think that way? It's fascinating that you have created this illusion of taste where there is none. And to all the vegetarians and vegans out there I want to know that you're okay. Because to believe that these two things taste the same is so completely off base that you might need to speak with a mental health professional. As for you, Veggie Burger, congrats on the charade. At least its working out for you.

43. Fish sticks

This one will make everyone mad. Fish sticks, you are great. I love how you distill the fish and bread experience into cigar shaped, easy to handle meal. Or snack. Or whatever. Did you know that you are one of the most popular meals among people under 3 years of age? I made it up but it sounds right. You put a toddler in a high chair and throw a few of these on the plate and you've got a happy kid. You are the perfect size for tiny hands to handle. And what goes with you? How about moms special sauce? So good. The recipe is strangely easy: mayo mixed with ketchup for a pinkish sauce that works oh so well.

44. Chicken

Cock-a-doodle-shut-up. Please know I feel bad about eating you. And I do eat a lot of that tasty body of yours. It's weird, I'll eat the still hot skin straight off your body without a second thought. It never occurred to me that you could just not have even a second thought about how tasty a flayed creature could be. But, here we are. You are also one of two animals (the turkey being the other) who dad's make jokes about: "I'm more of a breast man myself, right? Right Helen?" And then they wink. But you are super factory farmed. I've seen the videos and it's horrifying. And yet... I mean here we are. Still eating you. Whose fault is that?

45. Bananas

Everyone loves you. Whether they're cutting you up to put on cereal in the morning or simply peeling it back to see how far back in their throat they can go before gagging (It's supposed to be erotic). But here's the thing. You cause annoyance. And I don't mean that you are hard to

eat or that you get mushy too soon or any of that stuff that definitely describes you. I once knew a man who ran his own company. He was always being asked to go and speak to large groups of people. Then one day he came into the office and had a bunch of you in his hands. He asked if we wanted to hear his motivational speech. As he was the boss we all nodded and obliged. That was when he held you up and told us we'd been eating you the wrong way. Instead of pulling at the stem he went for the other side and pulled there. You peeled easily and with no stringy bits. The boss smiled and nodded encouragingly and said, "sometimes you need to see the world from a different angle because it might just change your life." When he left the room we all laughed and called him names. So I don't dislike you. I dislike that because of you I needed to have that story in my brain.

46. Hot Tea

I've been drinking you for a good portion of my life. Always with a hefty amount of sugar. Then I went to a restaurant that had you for free. This seemed like a bargain and after they put the cup in front of me with you in it I began to look for sugar. My friends pointed out that it wasn't right to put the sugar in and that we are supposed to have you plain. Plain (remember how I felt about yogurt?). And you know what? After all my bullishness and grumbling, in the end, you were still just not good. But hold on. Here's the thing. In the intervening years I have had my share of tea. Sweetened or otherwise. And what I've learned is that there are actually all kinds of tea. Flavored ones too! Did you know I can get a nice chamomile before bed and sleep like a baby? You taste like pressed leaves but that's the point. I'm just so sick of you that once I'm done I'm tuckered out and fall right to sleep, dreaming of sweet and low and heavy cream. I stick with you though. You are still better than flavored seltzer (we'll get to that soon) because regardless of what kind you are and whether I like the flavor, at least there is actual flavor. Tea, here's to you. You taste exactly like you were marketed to taste.

47. Eggs

I'm curious how you feel about a few things: 1. The fact that you aren't terribly useful on your own, 2. That weird people put you in blenders as part of power drinks, and 3. All these companies separating you into yolkless liquid. All of these things are, I suspect, a tad grinding. But I just- wait, I forgot the big question: how do you feel knowing you might have turned in a beautiful bird, albeit farm-raised? It just seems like a waste of life. Do you know there are places in China where people eat you with a fetal bird inside you!? It's called a Balut and I don't want to think about it. In fact, I'm sorry for ever bringing it up. Quite tasteless of me.

48. Salt

Fun fact, one word I only associate with you is "granules". Not sure why. Just wanted to put that out there. I'm American so I put you on almost as many things as sugar. Hell, I might use you both at the same time! But anyway. You bring out the subtle hints of taste from a variety of foods. I could name them but I'd rather remind you that if you are spilled, we need to throw you over our shoulder to keep out the devil. Yup. That's the big deal. Keeping the devil away. Honestly there's nothing else terribly interesting about you so thanks for all the help with the devil...I guess.

49. Beef Jerky, in fact, all Jerkies

Why? Why are you so popular? I put you in the same category, taste wise, as chewing tobacco. I find no happiness in trying to chew on you or trying to get to grips with your many

flavors. There are recipes online (I just looked) for a Blood Mary Jerky, a Dr. Pepper Jerky, and even a coffee one. Just stick to the beef! Why is everything so complicated with you? Oh yeah, I could get the low sodium version of you but hot damn that has got to taste terrible. If I'm eating something that was originally made to be salty, I think it should be salty. That's the same reason I won't drink modern Coca-Cola since they took the cocaine out. What a bunch of food fiddling fudge brains.

50. Popcorn (movie theater)

There are choices in life that can have a ripple effect on everyone and everything around them. You are one of those things. First of all, of course I'm going to get you at the movies. How could I not? Sure you cost the same as my ticket but so what? Everyone complains about that. I'd like to raise the devilish choice we are all offered. Namely "would you like to make that a large for just twenty-five cents more?" Most people say yes. Even though they didn't want a ton of you in the first place but the small looked too small. Then comes the butter. We add it to you because we want to die. There is no other option. We bought you, you're bad for us, so we see it through to the inevitable conclusion. Nowadays we the people get to put on our own butter. But this is a problem. We used to tell the person to fill up the bag halfway with you, put butter, top off the rest with you and then pour more butter on top. Ooooooh, and add more salt! Like I said, we all want to die. But the biggest compliment for you is that most of us finish you before the first frame of the movie. It's like we've never eaten before. Just stuffing you and your over-buttered and over-salted selves into our gullets. And after? We're gross and hate ourselves because we failed to die and now we are sweating butter. Good movie though.

51. Bleu Cheese Dressing

"Bleu"? That's the spelling we're going with? Fine. Straight out of the gate and I'm already annoyed. When people say Americans are fat, you are the reason. Right here. Smear on the constitution. The fact that you are chunky salad dressing is bad enough. But the amount of you that people put on salads is Ah-mazing. Now let's just get a few things straight. These are large people telling themselves that they are having a salad so they are eating healthy. Never mind the bacon bits and extra croutons. And then to top it off with you? YOU?! Insane. These are people who think ranch isn't flavorful enough. But there you sit, at every restaurant and buffet (all you can eat, of course) just calling out to people with your chunked out, thick as a brick creaminess. You see their eyes wander straight past the garbanzo beans and vinaigrette to you. And you have a ladle! Can't just dunk once. Gotta get a twofer. I don't know bleu cheese. I just don't know.

52. Ketchup

"On everything." That's my standard answer when people ask me what I like you on. I mean, you are the condiment of choice for people the world over. But some people abuse you. And I'm sure it hurts. You know there's stuff out there that you really shouldn't be on. A good steak. That's a great example. A person gets that wonderfully juicy perfectly cooked piece of steak and they want to slather it in you!? As a matter of fact, my mother does. But she also likes her steak cooked until it's basically a cinder. Anyway, you are a very utilitarian condiment. You even come in small packets for those of us incapable of dealing with perfectly salted fries on their own. I actually heard that a lot of major fast food restaurants put extra salt in you to make them thirsty so they'll buy drinks. Not sure if you're allowed to tell me that. You know what? Pretend I didn't ask. We can keep this civil. Do you remember when Heinz made you in different colors to appeal to kids? Purple and green. I was at a baseball game getting a hotdog

when I saw the purple kind. I couldn't do it. It went against everything I thought I loved about you. And I know your taste didn't change and that it was essentially just food coloring but – GLORP- sorry I threw up a little. I guess my point is that if people were actually able to cook properly and season properly then maybe we wouldn't need you and would just go back to eating tomatoes the old fashioned way.

53. Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

You are the undercover spy of the cookie world. Your only job is to infiltrate the mouth without being identified as what you really are. Then you wait as you are chewed, first fast, then slowing with dawning realization. You were supposed to be a chocolate chip cookie but no. No, you had to be stuck in that bowl at the party with a variety of other cookie types. But you love that, don't you? The old bait and switch. I find it repulsive and rude. To participate in such an obvious charade that when people are offered homemade cookies they go to reach, then pull back, and then ask the question, "are these chocolate chip?" If the answer comes back that, no, they are healthier. They are you. That is a home baker we will never acknowledge again. Don't give me cookies if they aren't delicious. And you are not delicious. I think you were literally invented to piss off the common folk. You look so much like chocolate chip. So much! Yet here we all sit, avoiding you at all costs. But you sneak through. Somehow you always sneak through. One of these days I hope to be allergic to oatmeal and raisins so that when I die, whoever made them will be put away for life without possibility of a kitchen.

54. Multigrain Bread

I want to be healthy. I want to live a long life filled with nature walks where I stop on a cliff with an amazing view to have a lovely sandwich. But this isn't just any sandwich I made and packed before heading out. This is a chicken salad sandwich and I made the chicken salad myself with my own recipe. But as I take a first bite, looking off into the distance and seeing forests and mountains, something is wrong. I mull over what it could be. Not the view. That's lovely. Not the weather, which is a crisp autumn with just a few clouds. The chicken salad even tastes particularly moist in all the ways it should. But no. It's you! The bread I used. I don't know who made you but we need to talk about what actually makes you you. When I think of you I think rolls, I think breaded foods, and I think of sliced white you. Simple. Spongy in a probably-has-chemicals kind of a way, but fair. And then I think about what I'm chewing and why I even bought you in the first place. You know why? Because that guy who I always see shopping that is a trainer at the gym bought you. So I figured how could that guy be wrong? He has muscles on his muscles. When he sneezes, every blood vessel rises to the top. But anyway, he buys you and seems to like you. "Nine grains" the bag says. That seems excessive but why not? Little did I know that I'd essentially be eating a bird feeder. It was like they made you using no dough and quite a bit of sesame seeds. It's like trying to chew through pulped paper goods. And so I sit down on a rock, throw away the top piece of my sandwich, and eat the chicken salad like a dog, just biting and licking until I run out and throw the other piece into the woods. I'm sure an animal will make a bed out of it because they won't like your taste any more than I do.

55. Coffee (Caffeinated)

You pack a punch that gives most people the boost they need to leave their house and go to jobs they hate. Then you are also available at work to get those same people through more of the day. Now you come in tiny little buckets that get stabbed in a machine that not only produces a cup's worth of you but also the opportunity to throw away the little bucket and pollute

a lot more than before. Good thinking. The other thing you do is make it easier for people to poop. A lot easier. Not sure why that is but I've done my crowdsourcing research and many people expressed to me that too much of you makes work a bit harder as they are running back and forth to the bathroom. But at least you've woken them up enough to know where the mens/womens rooms are. Thanks for that. The other thing is how strange you are with different people. There are people that can't have you after ten in the morning and others that could have you at eleven at night and sleep like a baby. I stay awake too much. None of you for me. You throw my anxiety off. So again, thanks for that.

56. Fish

This time we aren't talking about fish sticks. Instead we are looking at You, fish. Flat ones, big ones, small ones that get eaten by the big and flat ones. The fact that you live underwater will not spoil this conversation. For we, the humans, have developed ways to extract you from the oceans called "hooks" and "nets" which you go after for some reason. Now let's talk about the big controversy in the room: wild or farm raised? Tough call. On one hand farm raised equals sustainable but in the other hand, wild is expensive as hell! Have you priced you lately? And I've heard all the horrible farm raised stories but damned if I don't really care. You swim, you eat, you poop. Who cares if you do all that in a single small tank? Not my wallet. And I know people will also say we are fishing the oceans empty. And while that does make me sad it also solidifies my point about the farms! Hell, cows are farm raised. Ducks are sometimes farm raised. Hell, even that symbol of American freedom, the mighty eagle is far- wait, that one doesn't count. Also disregard the duck thing. I want this to be totally factual if I'm putting my name on it. So yeah, you and cows. Both tasty, both pooping where they live. Gotta really stress that part.

57. Burritos

This will sound bad but you are slightly "complex". Bear with me! What I mean is I didn't grow up eating you and now that I have eaten you I think I've only had fast food versions of you. I go places and they have me choose what I want. Meats, veggies, rice, beans. I just want to go to a nice restaurant that serves me a great burrito. Because you taste great. If the fast food version is good then the high class version must be the pinnacle of food. Your concept is great. You are the original wrap. Big bites, lots of flavor, probably not something I can or should eat all the time. I'll have a great one of you someday. And on that day I will hold you high in the air and proclaim you king of cuisine.

58. Hot dogs

We've already chatted about pigs in a blanket but I feel You are the original barbecue treat. I remember the first time I tried you. I was seven and it was my birthday. But my mom forgot to get buns so we ate your cut up carcasses straight from the plate. And damned if I didn't fall in love. You are made by a lot of companies now but the only kind I like are when you are kosher. No filler. No pork. Just beef (Probably also some mouse excrement if we are being honest). And you are lovely. So simple. So phallic. Some people say grill you, others say boil. I used to be a boiler but you are so much better on the grill. A lightly charred exterior and scalding interior. I like you smothered in yellow mustard with ketchup on the side for dipping. Side rolls are best. The top rolls are just depriving us of edible spill cleanup area. You are easy to make, easy to serve, and always a great thing to have after spending what feel like hours in Costco.

59. Powdered potato flakes

Mashed potatoes are just one of the best uses of the potato. The problem is all the work it takes. You first need to find a potato (good luck in today's economy), find something to heat it, something sharp to cut it, something to squish it, and then you add toppings like butter. The hassle is real. So people move away from potatoes. They think back at how their ancestors prepared food and how the main issue was immediacy. People would think, "wow I really want mashed potatoes now at this very moment!" And what happened? They got bored and ate radishes instead. Nobody wants that life. That's where you come in. All I need is to boil water in a microwave which takes no time. Then dump in your powdered, salted, buttered flakes and stir. DONE. Finito. Before you know it I've gobbled you right up. Who says you need to be a side dish? Main course baby. I never even touch a real potato anymore. Not worth the hours of mind numbing back breaking labor. You are fantastic. Keep it up!

60. Buffalo wings

Hey. You're pretty hot. I didn't take any notes so I'm just going to wing it. Heh. I will say this; I've never been good with spicy foods so I was nervous to try you. I asked for the mildest kind and they gave me ranch dressing, carrot sticks, and celery. Little did I know that veggies are meant to cool my throbbing mouth. I thought they were just some light snacks. Nope. My mouth was burning but in a way I found pleasant. I've heard tell that you are sometimes so hot that it feels like a chemical burn, not flavor. I like you with flavor that doesn't make me sweat and then burns a second time when I... well, you know. Regardless, good for you. You've made your voice heard. No more plain chicken! You've won. Now if I could just remember not to wipe my eyes when I've been eating you with my fingers. Woof. That hurts.

61. Crab Rangoon

You are near and dear to my mouth. Crunch on the outside, creamy warmth on the inside. I love you. Really. It's an honest emotion. In fact, I can't tell you how often I've wanted you so bad that I ordered Chinese food I didn't want just to make the order minimum. It's funny really. They've taken crab meat, swirled it with cream cheese and, I can only assume, sunlight. You brighten everyone's day. And those who haven't tried you are rejecting heaven right here on earth. Where do I place you on the love spectrum? Below my wife but slightly above my two kids. Well, the younger one. I wonder if people have tried to "rangoon" other things. I've never heard of lobster rangoon or peach rangoon. So it's just you. And you are perfect the way you are. Now if you could tell me how to buy you in bulk that would be very much appreciated.

62. Corn on the Cobb

You were never fun when I was growing up. We'd have you but not on the cobb. It was always frozen with green things like peas and chopped-to-hell carrots. Then I went to camp. Being an outdoorsy place they had a thing called "camp crafts" where you learned how to make fires and play hide and seek in deep woods where my friend Matt got lost that one time and ended up two towns over. Yeah, "camp crafts". So one day the guy running it said we were going to make you over a bonfire. I could not fathom how that would work. Did we have to unfreeze you? Were we just going to throw you on the flames? Was there some type of satchel that was impervious to flames but within which you could be cooked? And then the guy pulls out you on the cobb. ON THE COBB. I had never heard of such a thing. It was a revelation. You put butter on it? Wow. Wait, salt? Double wow. And there are all my friends munching away. I

thought I could copy them so I looked at one of my friends and he was eating you like a typewriter. Just chomp-chomp-chomp along the length then DING, rotate, continue chomping. The taste was fantastic. It wasn't the taste of you fresh out of a boil bag. You had this sweet, aromatic odor which complimented your taste and I just thought this was the best thing ever. Years passed. Sometimes my dad would make you on the grill, wrapping you in tinfoil but not putting much on you. Even now I don't really think of you that much while food shopping. I guess you remind me too much of my childhood.

63. Caviar

Aw, lil' fish eggs. You are so damn adorable. Some call you roe. But I don't like formalities. I recently had a chance to try you and I'll say this, for sturgeon eggs you were pretty good. Salty as all hell but still good. Then again you are an acquired taste. But see, what I said earlier about you being adorable, that is a true statement. Everything about eating you is cute. First off, you are super small. Second, the spoons they make for you are super tiny! And third, you get spread on eensy-weensy crackers. What a paired down expensive snack. And you are expensive. It's nuts. I think it's because they need to get you out of the sturgeon and that costs serious cash. And that means very little savings passed on to me, the literal consumer. But like I said I got to try you, feel you popping between my teeth, and then find a mirror to clean you off my teeth. But still, five stars. I might even catch some sturgeon on my own, make myself some home recipe of you. Couldn't be that hard, could it?

64. Oysters

You are a hidden treasure. And for something that is essentially a big muscle (yes, that kind of muscle) holding your front door shut, I'd say you are pretty neat. We have had to develop special tools just to get inside your personal bastille. Even with these tools you are still super dangerous for us to open. The way we've always done it is by stabbing something into you and prying your house open. But the way we hold you means we are just asking for a knife through the palm. And it happens. Believe me... Wait, I made that sound like I've done that to myself. I never have. I use a chainmail glove and if you think I'm joking, I'm not. You scare the hell out of me. Not that you'll do anything but that there have been quite a few times where that glove made sure I was safe. And so I was. The other thing about you that I find so very interesting is that there are so many different varieties of you. The family tree is huge and also submerged. Nobody knows just how big that family of yours actually is but they do come down on one of two sides: Are you a delicacy to be savored or a piece of underwater nose boogie trapped in a rock? Tough choices. Then you also get the people who put sauces on you to "aid the taste". I call bullshit on this particular method. All those people are doing is masking, not helping, your natural flavor. And let me tell you, people who love you also love describing you like some kind of nautical sommelier. I am not a big fan of yours, I'm sorry, but the people who grow you and farm you describe you in terms I can only describe as irrevocably questionable. "My oh my, but this Boston Carbuncular has a decided oily taste but brief undertones of thyme." Or "the taste of this Givvenci Dos is by far the angriest aftertaste I think I'll ever have. Let's go buy diamonds." I imagine that's how these people talk. And you know I'm probably right.

65. Soy Sauce

All I know about you is that you are a great compliment to sushi. I also know that you sometimes ruin sushi because you are too strong. Stop being so strong! Another thing I've

been hearing is that too much of you gives men gynecomastia or, as we all know it, moobs. Man boobs. Big ol' breasticles. Now I don't know just how much of you I need to ingest for this to happen but I'm pretty sure my diet will cause this to happen anyway regardless of you. And yet here I am eating sushi, which will give me mercury poisoning and topping it off with you, who will give me B cups (as a guy I'm not quite sure how large B cups actually are but I know A is the smallest so I'm going to assume B is a happy medium). Here's the other thing. Whenever I go to get some sushi I am always greeted at my table by two of you. One normal, one low sodium. After what I've just discussed above I don't think I'm caring about sodium. When I'm eating a mercury-rich diet that will give my children extra eyes I'm not thinking about salt content. The fact is the meal I'm describing is horrible enough in its endgame and you play such a pivotal role that I might just give all of it up right here and right now.... But I just can't quit you.

66. Rice

You are adorable. And there are so many of you! Do you know there was a time when I thought you were only a few tasteless white things that kept being dumped on my plate in childhood? Never with anything else. And that is the problem. You are great with food that has sauce. Soak it right up and really infuse your entirety with a great texture that not only succeeds at rounding out flavor but with a playful little feeling that is nice in my mouth space. And you are so diverse. Have I ever told you that? You come in white (racist much?), brown, sticky (hmm), and basmati, which if I'm being honest I don't really know where that falls on the color spectrum in terms of inclusivity. But to know that you are doing so well, especially in the Asian and Latino communities, is really saying something for how much joy you bring to people of all races and creeds but mostly races. And since we've been talking I just ordered some Chinese food with brown rice which is very helpful in rounding out a meal. Keep it up!

67. Generic Store Brand Cereals

Sigh. Okay, it's come to this. We aren't even covering name brands anymore. Now we're just talking about you and your genericness (real word I just invented). None of your Fruit Loops here, no, you are Flayva Circles. Rice Crispies? Crisp Rice. Nothing more generic than that unless you were looking for Honeycombs and ended up buying something called Bee's Nest. But you, Generic Store Brand Cereals you are just knocking these out of the park. Listen, there is nothing like saving money at the grocery store, but sometimes even when people know that the taste is going to be the same, they still go for the name brand because the alternative, you, GSBC (as I'm referring to now), is just too weird. Sometimes people need the comfort of the brands they know and trust even if there is a huge sale on GSBC. Do you mind me calling you that? I hope you're cool with it because its not changing anytime soon. I have often purchased you because I am poor and poverty leads to some pretty wonky purchases when it comes to food. Lots of as-is boxes or half priced beans. But cereal is where you can really save a few shekels. I prefer when you come not in a box, but in a bag. A big bag. A four pounder. Something that when people see you with it they think "wow, they must have a pretty good sized dog at home". The problem is that you buy something like that and only get about a quarter of the way through until it becomes stale no matter how much milk you pour on it. May as well crush it up and turn it into cheap insulation for your home or apartment. That being said, your price can't be beat. I've been to every cheap knock off place I could find and you, GSBC, always come out on top. Thank you for making my breakfast less of a pain on my wallet.

68. Cheese

I'm trying to figure you out because man, you are just one crazy category. That's right, you are yet another product that has way too many options. There are whole festivals for you all over the world! There is actually a contest, held every year, where people run down a very steep hill to try and nab a wheel of you that is also going down the same hill. People die! For a stupid wheel of you! I've even heard that there is a type of you that isn't allowed in the US because the process of making it involves maggots. You should be ashamed of yourself. Putting horrible things into oneself is never a good idea, especially if they are live things that creep and crawl. However, I have always been a fan of fresh mozzarella. And the holes in your Swiss version are quite vexing. I assume they are just air pockets? Right? I don't know but I can tell you that melting you in a sandwich is like food for kings. One more thing I like. I really like when you come in snack-sizes wrapped in wax. That is so great. I can never have just one so instead I have a few and then use the wax to make small dinosaurs that fight each other when the TV doesn't work.

69. White Chocolate

You aren't real chocolate. Let's get that straight. Most people have only had you in Toblerone form and therefore associate you with triangles and the Alps. I've never been a fan because I don't tolerate poseurs. You want to be chocolate? You can't. This isn't Pinocchio and you can't just wish to be better. You're not better and you never will be better. I'm sorry for the harsh truth but there it is.

70. Angel hair pasta and meatball

Let's rate you: 7/10. Bam. That was-ah so eezy! Sorry for the accent, that was probably insensitive. But wow. An Italian dish made popular the world over for its simplicity and sometimes for its difficulty. It's funny, I went to a restaurant once and ordered "meatball with angel hair pasta". It sounded good to me except that I didn't see that meatball wasn't plural. So out comes this huge plate of angel hair and sitting on it, as if the moon had fallen into my lap, was the single biggest meatball I'd ever seen. It was like someone took a meatloaf and skooshed it into a ball. But damned if it was delicious. Sorry, that's a lot of time talking about a meatball and not your entirety, my good friend. I'm so used to meals with smaller meatballs but in this case your angel hair was cooked perfectly and served to very much combine itself with that one looming ball. Where I live there is a dearth of true Italian restaurants. Quite a few masquerading as truly Italian but not really. I need to find a place where a guy owns it but his elderly mother is in the back making everything and you keep hearing "stoppa the cry mama! We got-a customers!" from the kitchen. But that's family for you.

71. Five Pound Gummy Bear

Jesus Christ. What the hell kind of glutton buys you? I get that its funny and its kind of a gag gift for a friend but how the hell are you supposed to be consumed? See, that was a trick questions because I looked you up online and found a few answers. The main one being that nobody should just bite into you. What we are all supposed to do is lay you on your back and cut you into slices like a birthday cake. Or any kind of cake actually. And then you get eaten. With a knife and fork. A gummy goddamn bear you eat with a fork. You abomination. Guess how many calories you are. Guess. Come on, one guess. Wrong! You are 6,120 calories. That's the equivalent of 1,400 regular Gummy Bears. The thought of that makes my stomach turn. So much sugar. I can't believe that we have created something so unnecessary. Okay, I'll strike that comment. In the US these days, you are what we produce here on 'merican soil. You keep fattening us up and giving us diabetes simply because we like sweet things and some

jerk thought that why the hell shouldn't we make a huge sugar bear? You know what else they made? Other than you? A five-pound gummi worm. IT LOOKS LIKE AN ARM! Again, you cut it the same way we cut you. Fillet-o-gum. I am so disgusted. I'm also looking to see if there are any better ways to mainline sugar. But I think you're it.

72. Milk

In the interest of total honesty, I should point out that I am lactose intolerant most of the time. But I love you. I really do. There was a time I couldn't eat my favorite cereals because dousing them in you made my tummy go crazyflops. But now that there is a Lactaid you and I couldn't be happier. I use you with everything. Cereal, recipes for cereal, and of course, as has been mentioned before, strawberry you. There is just something about the term "lactose intolerant" that makes me feel like an evil person. I'm not intolerant. I'm unable to process. Lactose Intolerant makes it sound like I have some deep-seeded hatred towards milk and that I burn straw cows just so predominantly cow areas know I'm not kidding around. No, I'm not intolerant. But I'll tell you this, if you want to enter this body (phrasing, I know) you need to have "Lactaid" in your description. Now, let's be fair and point out that regardless of all of this, the fact that I'm drinking you at all is weird. Someone, somewhere had to have crawled under a cow and pulled at its udders, then seen stuff come out, then think it was kind of like what came out of human breasts, and then decide to squirt it and drink it from some kind of bucket (they had those back in the olden days, right?) (I think that's all they had. One bucket for everything). And now we drink you. We drink you right up. I mean, the one good thing is that the cows that produce you aren't being slaughtered. They are serving a purpose. Although I did see a documentary where the way they clean random stuff off the cows is with a quick flick of a blowtorch. True story. I think it was on Dirty Jobs. But I digress. We drink you, you are something that makes some of our favorite frozen delicacies, and I think regardless of where you come from we are all enjoying you. So thanks.

73. Crab

We've discussed lobsters. Now we're on to you. You creep me out more than lobsters. In fact, you are so creepy that when I saw one of you at the aquarium I wanted to run to my mom. And I was twenty-nine at the time! Sure I've watched TV shows where they go out and catch you in the middle of huge storms from huge traps on the bottom of a huge ocean. But that show takes place far away from where I am. Now, is your meat succulent? I imagine so. Can it be mixed into salads and other fun foods? Sounds like a plan. But can you justify how effing scary it is to see you walking around with really long legs and a small body so you are basically a zoomed-in version of a daddy long legs? No you cannot. You know what else? You are too complicated to eat. I said it. Just like the lobster we need tools to crack you, tools to find your (apparently) succulent meat. It's a whole show of effort that is really not worth the work. I know others will disagree with me and say that you are just so amazingly wonderful blah blah blah. I'm sorry, but even smaller versions of you, like a softshell, is horrifying mainly because it can be eaten whole. The whole thing is edible. Your entire softshell body can be chucked in a sandwich and wolfed down without any bones or other body parts needing removal. I think that's gross and I think you do that because you spite us for eating you in the first place so why not make it worse for everyone involved. No. I won't eat you. So you've got no threat over here. You monster.

74. Ice

We touched a bit on you in our talk about water. But you need a direct talking to. So... um... been cubed much lately? These days I think we're all used to you being small and cube

shaped. But back in the day you were enormous and cube shaped. There were men who specifically road around with big cubes of you in the back of the car/cart to deliver to houses for their refrigeration units. Nowadays it's a bit different. People now have dispensers in their refrigerators. But it's also changed your shape. Now you come out in what seem to be a shape like... um... lemon wedges. Yeah. That must be a shape that's easier to work with than the cube. And we take you for granted. Nowadays people complain their drink is too warm? Toss a few readily available cubes of you in there and wait about six seconds. Instant cold. Well, six seconds then cold. But you're being corrupted. Now instead of cubes, people are buying molds so you come out looking like a Star Wars character or a video game character. That's got to be humiliating. The fact that you can be manipulated like that. Oh! And how's this. I've been told that whenever I go anywhere, if you have a hole in the middle it means it's not safe for me to consume you. Not sure why. But I suppose Montezuma's revenge. And can you and I agree that when people freeze things like juice in tray, that isn't you! It's just frozen juice. Glad I got that off my chest.

75. Avocado

All hail the superfood! Jeez, do people love you. I can't buy anything without you being offered. Salads, sandwiches, burritos. It's like you sprung out of nowhere only to be the top of the fruit and vegetable ruling class. You are also a dangerous lil' fella because people are constantly hurting themselves trying to prepare you. The problem is that you've got that monster seed in your middle and for some reason there exists a segment of the population who think the best way to get it out is to simply stab right through with a knife. But that seed is great at deflection and so off to the ER we go! A knife skewered through you and into the palm of the idiot who tried and failed. I adore you in sushi. For the most part I like your creamy texture which compliments fish very well. But again, prepping you can be time consuming. Slice, dice, and don't hurt yourself twice. That's my motto and it reminds me that I don't have to be one of those self-stabbing miscreants. The thing is, I've never had you alone. At least not that I remember. You seem to work with a lot of other foods but have trouble playing alone. Hopefully someone out there is using you as is because I wouldn't want you getting a complex that you can't cut it on your own. Good luck to you my single-seeded berry.

76. Kabobs

We continue our journey of all things on sticks (see teriyaki skewers) with you. Now I used to have a real issue with you and your ilk. This was mainly because I was never a big fan of vegetables. And that is half of what you are. It goes like this: protein-veggie-protein-veggie. Back and forth. So it's a lot of false starts and stops of me trying to eat and then pushing a piece of onion or pepper off and onto my plate where it would hopefully disappear. But my palette has grown and now I see the joy in the wonderful mix of flavor. Especially when you are cooked on a grill. Maybe some marinade and glazing? So good. But I'm still a bit scared of eating you because your skewer looks very sharp and pointy. And the truth is I love both my eyes and my mouth space. So I eat you only when seated and never in a car or earthquake zones.

77. Olives

A fruit with range. I think that describes you pretty well. There are quite a few kinds of you. But today we are going to be discussing one type: Kalamata. Now I'm doing this because I'll be damned if I'm going to spend a lot of time on what is basically utility produce. Now don't get upset. I've seen the jars, cans, and mix-your-own sections of grocery stores. I know that there are as many varieties of you as there are types of wine. But I'm not willing to talk about typical

black olives or even green with pimiento. No. We are sticking with Kalamata because I like Kalamata. We cool? Good. Now you are just the kind of food I like. You come from Greece, which I like. Makes me feel international. You have a light salt and vinegar taste and you keep your pit inside. It makes me happy because I enjoy eating cautiously. One thing I've noticed about you is that I have either had you as you are or in dips. Not that that is a bad thing by any means, but you really seem to compliment a good hummus. That being said I think I actually like you more on your own. I could probably snack on you between meals and feel okay about it. Except for that pit. Gotta be careful and wary of that pit.

78. Pie

Let me get to one thing straight away. I love you. My two favorites are Key Lime and Strawberry Rhubarb. Both tart but in their own separate ways. Whereas cake is sometimes too much about the breaded parts, you are all about the inside. The flavors that go into making you solidify you as the kind of food to be eaten every so often. If I had you every day I'd be even fatter than I already am. Funny enough, I've never tried to make you. I've never been much of a baker and I don't want to use any ready mix type ingredients. If I'm going to make you I want to do it from scratch with real ingredients and measuring and that movie thing where the people have flour all over themselves but they look happy and relieved as the timer dings with the promise of fresh pie. Also the whole apple-you thing as being American? I don't get it. Apple-you may as well be a big bucket of granny smiths with some crust thrown on. I do not care for that particular type. One that seems to be utilized in a very specific fashion is blueberry. I feel like that is for one specific activity: The pie eating contest. An American past time if ever there was one. No hands, all face. That should be the "American as _____" poster boy. Gluttonous behavior where people scream and yell for their overweight counterparts to devour as much as they can in a certain amount of time. Now if you'll excuse me I'm going to recite the pledge of allegiance.

79. French Fries

Oh man. Ooooooh Man. I am so torn right now. Because I am of the mind that McDonalds makes you the best. BUT, and this is a really big but, you need to be fresh. If you've been sitting out and given to me, I don't want you. I want fresh out of the oil, just tossed in salt, and given to me with extra salt packets. But like I said, if you aren't fresh then I don't want you. By the way, did you know that (apparently) McDonalds puts extra salt in their ketchup to make you thirstier? Not sure if I believe it. On to other things. Many people go for you when you are curly. Others see you as only good if you are steaked. To me that is too close to home fries than I'm looking for with a burger. And the curly ones? I feel they get overdone with spices. I've tried making you before but it never works out. Plus, so far in my life I have yet to see one of you that can last a reheating. You turn all mushy and tasteless. Now, some will say to heat you back up in the oven while others say microwave is ideal. Neither is ideal. The most ideal situation is just going back to the restaurant and getting new ones. However, you are also not an everyday snack. Got to temper ourselves and avoid temptation. Otherwise we just end up adding on to our "front porch". I mean bellies. Did that come across?

80. Pickles

Ah yes. Second only to the cucumber in phallic physical comedy. Big ol' green donger. But we aren't here to talk about your induenous side (made that word up). You are a versatile vegetable™ that I enjoy by yourself, sliced thin in a sandwich, or as a surprise spear beside a deli sandwich. Not sure why I'm surprised anymore since you always come with a sandwich. Unwritten rule. I know what you are thinking of asking and I will say "kosher dill" is my favorite.

Not a huge fan of the tiny ones but I've been known to stab one or two at social occasions. It just seems like you've saturated your own market with the variety of tastes. Hipsters are canning you with their own brine recipes because they think they invented you or something. Wrong-o! They'll call it Artisanal and tell you to go back where you came from. Well let me say this, Vlasic had it right when they had that stork mascot who would say things like "it'll make your toikey poikey". Not sure why he said that. I've never wanted a perky turkey, but those sold like crazy. I wonder if they'll give me something for the name drop?

81. Coconut Water

This is going to be quick. If it comes from a goddamn fruit then it isn't water. Water comes from the sky. Coconuts, although they do fall from far up, are not from the sky. I refuse to talk more about this abomination that also tastes gross!

82. Bagels

The rings of my people. Everyone points to New York when it comes to you. But you are often the food most associated with Jewish culture. But there are many places that have taken you to new places. It used to be I could get you plain, with everything, or poppyseed. Now it's rye and blueberry and egg and chocolate and on and on. I once had one with salt that immediately following it I felt like I needed to drink all the freshwater in the world. Some people like you toasted with some butter. Fine. Boring but fine. Calorie counters will cut you in half, scoop out the inside, and then maybe add something. But everyone knows that the only real way to eat you is as a sandwich filled with cream cheese, lox, tomato, onion, and lettuce. We call it "The Fastbreaker". Not that people can't stick to the basics: raisin with a shmear of scallion cream cheese. I can say I'm not a fan when people put egg and bacon on you. Seems... too treif. Not sure what that means? Go ask a Goldberg. They'll understand.

83. Watermelon

You are one of those fruits that's hard to tell if you are ripe enough. People knock on you, listen very closely, and then get home to realize they didn't knock properly. I have no idea how to tell. So I get one that has a flat white part where it was sitting on the ground. When I get home I find a large sharp knife and slice into you. Then I wait to see how red you are. Most of the time you look great. But sometimes there's a lot of rind to be cut away. I used to throw that away. That white part between skin and meat. But then I met my fiancé and learned she didn't much care for the succulent red meat. She preferred the white rind. I nearly took the ring back. But I spoke to her father and he said that yes, it was her favorite part. Mine used to be the seeds. Not for eating. For spitting. But now all the watermelons are seedless. Thank science for that little miracle. I also think melon ballers are a great invention. Also people who carve you into amazing shapes and designs. Two years of art school and they never covered that. What a waste of an education.

84. Tacos

I'm not sure about you. It always felt like you were the starter pack for those people who didn't understand Mexican food. Also you have that hard shell that can be destroyed with one bite leaving the rest of the filling to fall out and just turn into a taco salad. But you are also one of those foods subjugated by fast food. Taco Bell? Crappy food at crappy prices that make you never mind. The one thing I see a lot of younger more hip people order is you with fish. A fish-you is like a cool drink at Starbucks or a new pair of boots. Something to take a picture of and

hope other people find you cool. And you are not hard to make at home. So all these places that charge too much for an inferior product should be avoided and people need to just visit the grocery store. Dummies.

85. Asparagus

Ah yes, you. The vegetable that makes pee smell like you. I never partook in you during my younger years but in the past five I think we've been well acquainted. The thing about you is proper seasoning. The fact that you are so obviously a green vegetable that is a firm member of the "movies and TV always portray them as gross" club always made me think I would never try you. Things change when you meet someone who actually understands cooking and flavor. I made a great steak dinner and my significant other decided to handle sides. She asked if I wanted you and I very graciously said NO. But she decided to make you anyway. She roasted you in the oven with some salt and pepper and some oil and... well... you were good. In fact you were very tasty indeed. I had to eat you quickly though because once you are no longer crispy it becomes very apparent why people don't like to eat you all that much. But I'm hanging in there. You now have a place at the table and are a permanent fixture in my diet. When I have kids I will make them eat you and they will like it or they will go to bed with no supper. I'm going to be a great parent.

86. Matzah

Let's get Semitic for a second. Jewish people love to eat. Every holiday has food with a side of self-loathing. Probably the best example is you, matzah. Here we have Passover, a great holiday on paper. Slaves for years, guy shows up with God, guy yells at Pharaoh, Jews leave and escape to freedom. What a story! It truly is the greatest story ever told. So why not balance that out with a week of restricted diets and prunes. Because you, you are the base for a whole mess of food that gets made. Granted when we fry you up with some egg it tastes pretty good. Or if we use you like a sandwich and put some peanut butter and jelly in there it's all right. But for two of those nights we smear you with horseradish to recall the plight of our people. Horseradish. To celebrate. The lord works in mysterious ways. You are essentially a very large saltine, minus the salt. Granted one of the ways people consume you the most is with butter and kosher salt sprinkled on top but hey, we're a wandering people. We don't always have time to roast a duck. Every year we buy you, every year we switch out all of our dishes for one week, and every year we sit and suffer while trying not to bear down. Fun holiday but you are not my favorite.

87. Meatloaf

Another item that was fine until I grew up a bit. See, when my mother made you she would use eggs, meat, and breadcrumbs. The end. All stop. As I got older I would see you in restaurants and you were almost unrecognizable. You had vegetables in you. Sometimes cheese. And often with a barbecue glaze on top. How to resist? Eating you with all those extra ingredients was so very different. I've learned I'm not actually a huge fan of diced veggies being a part of you. Not sure why but I think because I just want to get to the meat part. I've always been a bit of a purist when it comes to food. So get me a big piece of you and throw some instant potatoes next to you. Now that's a plate!

88. Mozzarella sticks

One rule when it comes to you. I don't like when you are just a friend piece of cheese. I want you crispy and breaded with some marinara sauce beside you. If I wanted the first kind I would just buy string cheese and throw it in a fryer. But when you are breaded? There's nothing like you in the entire world.

89. Peanut butter and jelly

Classic. The ultimate going to school sandwich. I was always a fan of creamy peanut butter and strawberry preserves. Mainly I liked biting in and getting a chunk of strawberry. Mhmmmm! And although I did not request this I know many people who liked you best when your crust was removed. I couldn't have cared less. Some days I'd eat them and others I wouldn't. Never a huge fan of crunchy peanut butter but I'd eat it if that was all we had. Also never a huge fan of grape jelly. It never tasted right to me. Wrong texture or something like it.

90. Soup

Ah yes, the liquid that may contain solids. Pretty good staple food but not really a first date food. If I'm ordering you on a first date then I am definitely not shelling out enough money. You do not get people any extra points towards a first makeout sessh. I like French onion. With the cheese and floating bread. Yum. But, again, not on a first date. There is not enough mouthwash to get that onion off my breath. However, let's say it's a fall wedding and I'm served a warm pumpkin version of you, I'll definitely have my spoon at the ready. Time and place, soup. Time and place.

91. Grilled cheese sandwich

The ultimate comfort food. The thing you have on a rainy day when your mom is trying to keep you occupied. I've tried all different kinds and I need to say that I think I found my favorite. White bread, Muenster cheese, and tomato. Obviously add butter to both sides of each piece of bread. That's the best. Now some people add things like sliced turkey and avocado. If they do this, you are no longer grilled cheese. You're a melt. So stop pretending otherwise. Recently I saw an argument over two things: 1. Should you be served with soup and 2. Should the soup be tomato or chicken? Easy answers. Always with soup (for dipping) and the soup is tomato. I will hear no arguments regarding this pairing.

92. Fried Calamari

I didn't want you the first time you were offered. I was creeped out. But then someone had me try you with hot peppers and some kind of dip. That's all it took. I know a lot of people get creeped out when they see tentacles but not me. I'm game. You taste just chewy enough but with the nice fried texture. Flavorful and they never serve a large enough portion of you. Just when I hit my stride my friend swipes the last of you. I have not attempted to fry you at home because I think I'd screw you up. And you can be expensive. So for now I'll partake in you on special occasions.

93. Pretzels

My favorite is Auntie Anne's that are found exclusively in malls. The smell gets me first and the buttery salty taste is in believable. How do they do that to you? And how do they know that people in a mall want a soft version of you? It is a quandary. Okay, second favorite is rods. To

this day I pretend you are a cigar and I talk like a Chicago gangster. Then I eat all the salt and eventually the rest. Third is thin normal twist. Anything else is below that. You are a great go-to snack and I appreciate you and your many tasty forms.

94. Craft cider

I dislike beer. But a few years ago I was introduced to you, hard cider. You've got taste, something beer seems to lack. I had one of you the other day that was pineapple flavor. It was great! I would have definitely been drunk in college a lot more if you'd been around. But alas You've only just arrived in the past ten years. Therefore, I now have a bunch of your different flavors. You make me feel quite sedentary. Drinking for taste and not to get wasted. I know some people will huff around and tell me that I'm a wuss because of my lack of getting trashed every night but I refuse to give in to bullies! They can harass me all they want, damn kids, and I'll make sure their parents hear about it from me. And no parties! Drink responsibly. Amen.

95. Edible underwear

This idea is so late 1970s. The concept of chewing off your partners undergarments probably sounded good. But honestly, that was a time of... much hair. The fact that you probably melted a bit also meant that certain things would get grabbed and eventually pulled. Painfully. Plus, I've heard that you never really even tasted that good. You were, and definitely are, a novelty. It's probably a lot sexier to tear off real underwear with one's teeth. But yes, you mean well. You want to put a smile on our faces. You also want to make us supremely messy and uncomfortable. So thanks but no thanks. I'll either find a better snack or take an existing one and use it in a dirty way. Thumbs up!

96. Waffles

I miss you. I don't think I've had you in years. A lot of people say that you are full of things I shouldn't have because it will negatively affect my body and health. The thing is, I don't believe them. How could you be bad for me? You taste great and once toasted I find you to be a great delivery system for a PB&J sandwich. You melt the peanut butter just enough. I've also felt that looking at you seems like an aerial glimpse of Paris or New York. Perfectly parallel lines forming a cohesive whole. A beautifully crunchy whole. You were a cornerstone of my childhood and then... I suppose we drifted apart. In college they had a Belgian you maker. It was good. Especially with whipped cream and strawberries. But it often gave me a tummy ache so I stopped indulging. I hope when I have kids that they will again continue your proud tradition.

97. Pancakes

You give me crazy tummy aches. I don't know why but it might have to do with how many of you I can eat in a sitting. Anytime there is one of those all-you-can-eat days at a pancake house I'm out my door faster than you can say blueberry syrup. But what's not to like? You are fluffy, you get mushy when any amount of syrup is drizzled over you, and you wear butter as a hat. Adorable. Also, I've seen those videos of people making you at home and using food coloring and precision squirt bottles to make faces and animals. Overdone. Nobody needs that. And it makes the kids of regular pancake makers look bad. My kid says he wants an elephant pancake? I'll make a regular one and cut it up real poorly. I don't even have a kid yet and here I am already yelling. I'm sorry. Go team pancake!

98. Clam chowdah (Clam Chowder)

Nawt kwite soop. Yaw moah like a stew aw watnawt. Ok. Enough Boston talk. Chowders, much like yourself, have a thickness to them. It's like one day someone was making a broth and adding clams to it but added too much. Maybe they dropped a ladle, I'm not sure. But you were the end result. People like you for your taste but also that thick texture of yours. I think the best way to describe you is hearty. The kind of thing people love during Boston winters. Everyone heads straight for the comfort food. You warm us up belly first. So between you and a fire in the hearth we can be cozy. Nice ending.

99. Fondue

This is a bit of a niche as I don't believe everyone knows who/what you are. You were far more popular in the late sixties/early seventies. Then gone. Probably the work of a newly health conscience public. Your name actually means melted. And that's what you are. Either a pot of hot melted cheese or hot melted chocolate. Then people take pokey metal sticks and shove things into you. The cheese could have... I can't really think of what to dip in molten cheese. Broccoli? Maybe? Actually, over on the internet it says people sometimes dip small soft pretzel bites. It still sounds overpowering to me. If I decided to have you at a party, I would definitely do chocolate only. So many different things can be dipped when you are in chocolate form. All the berries: Strawberry, Blueberries, maybe even a blackberry or two. Cookie dough? Mmmm, yeah, that'd be fantastic. But that's a lot of chocolate. Not sure how you feel about yourself when it comes to this kind of thing and about being a bit of an outdated foodstuff. So how about this? If I get asked to dinner and they have fondue, I will return to this entry and rewrite it accordingly. That seems fair.

100. S'mores

Everyone thinks I'm going to badmouth you. Or that I'm going to be way too nostalgic. Guess what? Everyone wins! Because here's the thing: business found you. Do you get what that means? It means that someone, somewhere, probably at a campsite thought that their melty marshmallow went really well with some chocolate. So they glued your predecessor together but it was too hot so they got messy and everyone laughed and loved it. The next time they went to get chocolate and marshmallows they looked over and saw graham crackers. Bing! An idea! Why not melt things into a sandwich that everyone could enjoy? Thus you were birthed into the world. But now? Now places sell special packages with everything needed all in a box that insists on proclaiming how great you are. Not sure about everyone else but I know you are delicious because I know what your ingredients taste like apart and I know just how great they are when they melt, so why am I being told? Now there are endless commercials telling me that it's not summer unless I've had a campfire with you. Goddamn it! Let me live my summer and stop taking things away from me and my friends. We had you every summer because it was a fun and sticky thing to do at camp (among other things) (ew) and I don't need people raking my memories to boost company sales. I'm looking at you Hershey.

101. honey

Well hello there! I was told that you last forever and never go bad. That's pretty sexy in a Methuselah kind of way. And you are mysterious as well. One of those foods I'm shocked we ever got to try what with all the stinging and nest anger. Can't disrupt the bees, no sir, they need to be coddled from a safe distance unless you have on a beekeeper hat or you are one of those idiots who goes in naked and makes a beard out of bees. That guy's an asshole.

Nobody wants to be that guy. But at what point did our ancient ancestors realize A. that you came from bees, B. that you were edible, C. that you did NOT in fact also get made by wasps in their nests? There had to be a lot of fiddling around with bees before we got to you. But oh my are you tasty. I've eaten many things in my life prepared by many people but you are the first that came from the hard work of another species. I've seen the open honeycombs that National Geographic takes photos of that are under cliff ledges where native people have learned to cut them, catch them, and use them for food. But I don't think I've ever seen a true bee's nest up close. I've seen the kinds that beekeepers have where you are produced and shelved like files in the Papel library. It amazes me that even when the first person got stung getting to you they still thought for a second, looked at the bee sting and thought, "Perfect! Let's go back for seconds!" I guess my overall point is that I don't understand my ancient relatives but I love dipping apple slices in you and overtly double dipping.

102. Hard alcohol

You know, cool people in movies only drink you. They approach a bar, yell out something about "a double!" And in return receive a tumbler with a small amount you in it. And then they do one of two things: slowly sip while monologuing about their long day or just throw you back all at once and then immediately say something like "time to roll." Not me. I've tried you, lord knows I've tried. But see, apparently my body wants to protect me from whatever you actually are. Even if there's an ice cube for some reason, we avoid it. One of my problems is i like to smell a drink before "enjoying" it. And you all smell like the devils ass the day he burned up all his toilet paper. I mean, goddamn! So maybe you are cool. Maybe James Bond always has the perfect order. But me? I'll stick to cranberry juice even though...even though I once had a waitress talk to me in a baby voice when I ordered one at a bar with my friends. "And wood mistew cwanbewee wike anuvah wun?" She was pretty so she got a pass but lord help me if she'd been ugly. Not sexist. Truth! So yeah, I stay away from you guys. Let the bro-dudes order some after their big rugby/lacrosse tournament. Didn't want you anyway.

103. Grapes

I think we all remember a simpler time when you came in one variety: red with seeds. Remember those days? Now you are red, green, you taste like different things, there are all manner of strains. I don't understand when this happened. One second this, next second these. Do you feel spread too thin? Like all your powers are so stretched that you never feel like yourself anymore. I've felt that way before. There was this one time when- ah no. That would be too much of a digression and we have much to discuss. Have you ever considered not being so damn tasty? I mean, come on! You are a perfect snack to travel with. You burst with flavor but only after you've been bit. It's like the lord himself bade the angels, "create for me the ultimate natural, easy to carry fruit... and not that weird penis thing. The yellow one. Right, banana. No more bananas! I'm decreeing that." I recently had a cotton candy version of you. It's you but you taste just like cotton candy. They call it selective breeding. I call it plant eugenics. It's what took away your seeds. Sure it made you easier to ingest without the hassle of spitting but at what cost? I just think the fact that you were relevant and then kinda weren't, and now are again is a wondrous thing. Also the green kind hurts my belly.

104. Raisins

You are grapes for people who waited too long. All shriveled and squished in a way that makes you seem like old lady fingers after a long bath. Taste-wise I'd say you aren't as fulfilling as

grapes but some would comment that you are an even better snack choice. Also, when you come in that small red box the box can be used as a kazoo. It's true. You would all be eaten before that but take my word for it. When it comes to recipes I've found that you are best when covered in chocolate and eaten that way. I mean, I guess you are also okay when mixed with peanuts and put out in bowls for company. But they rely too heavily on the peanuts. Not sure if people are allergic to you but who just goes and buys you anymore? I'll tell you who: moms who bake the dreaded oatmeal raisin cookie. If your mom does that you are legally allowed to do two things: spit it out on the floor and petition the court for emancipation. Idiot moms think you are the best. "A healthy alternative". Sure, for all those kids who hate chocolate chip cookies. Ugh.

105. Tom Kha Gai

Whenever I am looking for a really good Thai restaurant I always check the menu for you. My love for you started when I had you as a free side from a restaurant takeout. I must say that I have never been a huge fan of coconut and I feel that coconut water is a blight on this otherwise lovely planet of ours. That being said I was completely blown away by your taste. A bit spicy, which is fine for me, chicken, which is a great addition to any meal, lemongrass, mushrooms, and sometimes a few sliced cherry tomatoes. Now I know I just listed your ingredients but that is only because separately I'm not a huge fan of everything in you. But together? What a taste. You are a perfect synthesis of flavors. Now, do I think that you could be a standalone meal? No. You're soup and we've already discussed soup. But a bowl of you reinvigorates me. It clears my sinuses and warms my body, especially when it's cold outside. I have not attempted to make you myself but that is only because I'm pretty sure I'd mess up the recipe. And I don't want anything to ruin our relationship, especially if it ends up being my cooking.

106. Plain Toast

There are days when I wake up and everything hurts and opening my eyes to the light of the morning is equivalent to taking a firework to the iris. The kind of day when you are absolutely sure you need to call out sick but you are too sick to even find the phone. When a stomach hurts and there might even be a few trips to the porcelain altar to return some food you ate the previous evening. In these cases we look to you, Plain Toast, not because we want to. Because we have to. Nothing else is more bland. When it comes to bland foods you are literally the plain toast. I should point out I am not saying toasted bread with some butter. No, just the bread. Probably white bread is best because people don't want some seeded loaf giving them more trouble. You are the kind of food that when our mothers brought you to us when we were younger and stuck in bed, we didn't complain. We didn't ask for no crusts or to have you cut a certain way. We ate you. Slowly. Under duress but knowing that we needed something in our stomachs to soak up some of the evil that had taken root. Of course, as we got better we would add melted butter to you, then a bit better we'd add some cheese and make a grilled cheese sandwich. That was when mom knew we were feeling better and could probably go back to school the next day. Still, you start us on the road to recovery and we all appreciate your good works.

107. Mochi

I'd like to thank Japan for you. Many years ago I had you for dessert at a restaurant. You were not, as I would later learn, traditional mochi. You were more of a daifuku. I've had you with ice cream in the middle and also with flavors like red bean. Both types are plays on traditional versions of you but are still enjoyed around the world. You are the kind of snack that I could just have all day except for the fact that you have a lot of sugar in you and sometimes whatever

flavor you are has a lot of additives, especially if you are shelf stable. I have never enjoyed the shelf stable version of you. I prefer the cooled version or the frozen. Either way you are very tasty and you make me think that I am being worldly in some way in that I am eating some kind of traditional foodstuff. I feel the same way when I eat fried green tea ice cream. A true man of many cultures coalescing into one formidable whole.

108. Applesauce

I bought a box of you. A box of you filled with the squeeze bags meant for children. I did it for two reasons: there was a sale and I haven't had you since my wisdom teeth were removed a very long time ago. Now to be fair, the box contained two different types. You alone and you mixed with berry. It was funny actually. I had one on the way home from the store and it lasted all of three minutes. Such a small serving (remember, for children) that I was done before I started. But you tasted great. I think as a society we believe that you are primarily for two groups: Children and the elderly. One because they are getting teeth and the other because they are losing teeth. But all us inbetweeners are left in the cold. We are told that if we want something adult and better that we should go for yogurt. I call foul on that one. Your flavor profile is always a delight. Your texture makes my mouth want to take a victory lap. I wanted to rip open the little squeeze bag and lick the insides. Of course the problem is that I finished your entire box within a day or two. Convenient snacks are convenient for a reason, you see. And when I returned to the store I thought about buying a large container of you. But I didn't. Mostly because I was afraid I'd overdo it and end up only eating a little bit. Oh well. Not just for kids anymore!

109. Muffins

In this entry we will be discussing a variety of topics. However, the main topic I'd like to bring up right now is whether or not you need a smear of anything on you. Some people are reading this and are already in a virulent rage because they can't believe such a question can honestly be asked. But hear me out. I think that it depends on the flavor. What I mean is that if I get a blueberry one of you I would personally eat it plain, as is. But if I were to go with a cornbread variety I think it would need something. Probably just butter but I can't rule out jam.

110. Dirt

Not recently. Stop judging. The fact is when we are young we put everything in our mouths. They say babies and small children shouldn't always be totally clean because they need to be exposed to microbes and other stuff I don't understand. But you, you are the great carrier. Hell, we live and walk on you every day. So a little kid putting you in his mouth is just helping himself down the road. I've heard said that you should eat a pound of dirt in your life. I assume that means mostly when young but I'm not one hundred percent sure about that. I just think you can be so dry. Or at least lose all of your saturation during the chewing process. But like I said already. I'm sure I've eaten my fair share of you. And I'm feeling quite healthy, thanks!

111. Spiders

The big question is how many of you have I ingested in all my years on this planet. I was told that since I am a mouth breather whilst sleeping, I am literally leaving the door open for you guys to make your way into like some kind of nightclub with no bouncer. So I was wondering if other people on the planet have the same problem. THEN I thought about places in the world

that have way more of you than where I live. Places like jungles where there are much larger versions of you. Do they experience the same thing? Do they drift off to sleep in an open lean to with their mouths open only to have not just larger, but deadly species of you crawling and maybe even getting chewed? These questions plague me. Please don't be offended or send your minions after me. Thank you.

112. Lobster roll

First we select only the plumpest roll and soak it in melted salted butter. The roll is placed on a grill plate in the oven. As one side toasts, we flip the roll over for that golden brown consistency. Take it out of the oven carefully and allow it to cool for five minutes. Then take only the freshest ingredients and just-cooked lobster meat with a smattering of mayo. That is how you are made. The first bite is buttery soft with a hint of crunch as one begins to taste the lobster salad. It's juicy but full of flavor. You are all these things, and I can tell you that if anyone tells you that your lobster had been previously frozen you have my permission to "accidentally" fall out of their stupid hands. You are pure, you are a taste explosion, and you are everything right with summer in the northeast.

113. Cherries

Let's talk knots. It's supposed to be this big sexy thing when someone can tie one of your stems into a knot using just their tongue. Like that is the pinnacle of sexy. I think we can both admit that since I'm saying this I can't actually perform this feat. We are both correct. But in my defense I have a learning disorder. Aaaaanyway, you are a very juicy fruit. Biting into you gives a nice firm squish. But watch out people! There's a big pit in the center. And you, cherry, just hide that secret or wait until someone forgets and either crack their teeth or make them swallow the pit. That'll leave most people choking. Is that a defense mechanism? Seems silly. Like when a bee disembowels itself just to sting you. Doesn't seem like you would get any pleasure from that. But hey, you're great in pies, I love you in a Shirley temple, and nothing tops a sundae like you. However they should never added you to Coke. That was not the taste sensation. I think we can all agree that you are, at the very least, a nice garnish for drinks. So stay in your lane.

114. Klondike bar

What would I do for you? Maybe a few laps around the track. But you are super melty and I'd rather not get sticky, bee signaling hands this summer. Thanks.

115. Salt and vinegar chips

Oh yeah. My kind of chip. Salt the hell out of you and pour in the vinegar. I want to feel my tongue burn, then my lips, then the world. You have that power. Here's the thing about people: most of us have guilt. Guilt we are sure will get us sent straight to hell. So here on earth we secretly believe that if we can make our own suffering then perhaps we'll be able to avoid hell. So we eat you. Because you are the chemical blaze of the sun. You leave us with no working taste buds and painful swelling inside our cheeks. Yet still we endure. All we ask is that you burn us with sweet pain so we know heaven is waiting. Burn us. Burn us. Burn us.

116. Toaster pastries

You taste fine, I guess. I actually don't think I've ever actually toasted you? If anything you were

a last grab as I fled out of the house towards the bus stop before school. Maybe you taste better toasted. Hold on. Let me go check. (Please hold) [5 mins later] wow! So damn hot! This is like molten strawberries surrounded by frosting. Is it possible to feel cavities actually forming in real time? Woof! Okay, deep breaths. I think you are tasty either way but I wouldn't want to be handling the toasted version of you on my drive to work. That'll burn ya. Also I don't care for your s'mores flavor. I believe I've already pointed out my anger at the politics and consumerist views of s'mores. So I'll stick with strawberry and keep it room temperature.

117. Thanksgiving turkey

Better than Christmas ham? I'm going to say yes. And you know you are. When a turkey is cooked properly and basted often and stuffed to the gills, perfection. I mean think of it, you need to be huge to accommodate an entire family, you need to be thawed with enough time to then be in the oven for nearly four to six hours, and you need crunchy skin. That last bit was because I think crunchy skin is the best part. I'll cut a guy for taking skin before me. I also think I'm a white guy. No, I know I'm a white guy, I mean white meat. Don't paint me as bigoted! I'm talking about your meat. The problem is when people cook on too high a heat or don't baste you properly. You gotta have a system. Usually it's dad's self-appointed stewardship that makes it all work. He'll ignore guests and stay in the kitchen just watching the clock, taking temperatures and wondering out loud why the hell the damn thing is hovering at 175 when it's been in for four hours. And maybe another guy comes in and maybe he brings Dad a beer. They look at you and scratch their heads trying to figure you out. But neither wants to tell the other they are wrong. Thanksgiving is the man's only true holiday where he can pretend he's chef for a day. Mom is totally fine with it and only pokes her head in every so often, no words said, just looking at dad's face. Quick recognizance. And depending on how Dad looked at her you can hear her announce that if "folks would like a refresh on their drink" or, "everyone can start heading into the dining room". And all because of you, the perfect bird for the perfect holiday.

118. Bacon

Here's the thing, I didn't taste you until I was in my twenties. But growing up, the smell of you always indicated breakfast. Not at home but at restaurants. When you can picture something cooking just based on the sound of the sizzle, you know it's a craving. I think the first time I had you was in a BLT made by a friend. You were obviously the big draw as I'd already tried lettuce and tomato and found them to be generally tasty. You had a strange duality. You were crispy but also had some give. You weren't rubbery at all. That first bite gave me all the ingredients at once. Challenging flavors being experienced together for the first time. I could taste the toasted bun, the creamy mayo, firm tomato, fresh lettuce, and you. Perfection. Since then I've had you sporadically but I've yet to hate you. And I can't eat you when my grandmother is around. She'd probably kill herself just to spite me.

119. Brownies

I once had a job where easy baking was an activity held every day. This meant every month I'd head to the store and buy thirty boxes of your mix. Once, while in line, the cashier looked at all the mixes and stated that I "must make a lot of pot brownies". All the people behind me laughed and pointed. It was super embarrassing. I smiled, shrugged, paid, and speed-walked to my car. The fact is you are so tasty that it doesn't matter if you are store bought or homemade. You always taste great. However, the perfect version of you has a firm, almost cracked outer crust and a warm, spongy interior. Sure you get burnt every so often but you are the only really

chocolates food I really enjoy. Oh! And I don't like when you have stuff in you. No chocolate chips or anything. Keep it clean, keep them keen.

120. Munchkins

You are bad for me. I'd even go so far as to call you an enabler. When I go to buy some of you I have two options. Either 25 or 50. I tell myself I'm going to see friends and it'll be great to bring something. So I ask for 25. I then specify that I only want glazed, jelly, and chocolate. None of this other stuff. And they grab 25 of you and I'm on my way. A minute into my drive I pop open the box and look down to see a layer of glazed. I have one. It's good. Then another. At this point I don't look anymore. I just reach and eat. It's a surprise every time. Glazed/chocolate/jelly followed by chocolate/chocolate/glazed. I continue on this munching mania trip and pretty soon I've eaten most of you. But I've also eaten too much to bring the box in as a gift. Plus I now have what feels like thirty pounds of you lodged in my chest somewhere. Not my fault. I cannot stress this enough. It's your fault. I could have simply purchased a regular donut and left your box alone. It I didn't and I hate myself for it.

121. Hummus

The healthier way to dip chips. You are one of those foods that was a definite fad. But you became so popular that you are now in every store in a variety of flavors. The flavor I most enjoy is garlic. Because plain is so boring that I may as well eat a foot. A clean foot, mind you, but a foot nonetheless. There is even a dessert version of you now! Chocolate and cookie and all kinds of things that shouldn't be made with chickpeas. Now listen, we both know that if I'm having a shindig at my house I'm going to have you out for people to snack on. Probably pair you with one of those chip brands that has ingredients like tree bark. And I'd like to also point out that I know a lot of people who eat you every day as a snack at work. They bring you in in a small and adorable Tupperware container. "Just enough" they say as one scoop of pita takes the entire batch "just enough". You are not a portion control kind of food. To me, on the rare occasion I have you in a non-party situation, it's me on the couch sitting like an otter with scoop chips in a bag on my left and you in a tub on my right. Extract, dip, eat, repeat. I don't even taste you. You are there because I was lazy and convinced myself, yet again, to give you another try. Thanks for nothing.

122. Pad Thai

Very few things get me to eat vegetables. But somehow you sneak them right past the front door. Yes, I am the guy that orders the same basic stuff at a Thai restaurant. And what is more basic than you? Noodles, veggies, and the occasional crispy chicken. You take zero time for places to make and you are truly a meal unto yourself. With lime and peppers, onions and slurpy noodles. Also peanuts. But as I said, you are the easiest item on the menu. But I'm nervous about the pad see yoo, the massaman curry, or even the country style pad Thai. Wide noodles creep me out. It's like they are trying to over achieve. But you, you are a perfect takeout food. You stay hot and your chicken is never overcooked. I even eat bean sprouts! That's nuts for me. I'm not a sprout guy by any means. But you seem to make everything work without me having to pour some kind of sauce on you. All built in. I like that. Thank you for being an easy meal that doesn't make me feel even more hungry when I'm through with it.

123. Reuben Sandwich

Dear lord I fall in love with you every time we're together. I forget just how amazingly good you are and how I weep for every vegan with each bite. If meat is murder then for the love of god there must have been a massacre. So much meat! So much sauerkraut! And the thousand island dressing! Okay, too many exclamation points. But do you get my point? Eating you truly makes me happy, as all good foods should. That being said I've never attempted to make one on my own at home because I'm afraid I'll get the recipe right and end up dying from eating about a thousand sandwiches in a week. Did I mention the toasted rye bread? I don't think I did. Now where is the best place to get you? New York City. No question. Best sandwiches in the world and they make them about three feet high and charge you a buck and a quarter (or something close to it). Also, and I only know this because I just had a hunch, that there is a vegetarian version of you? Yeah, they use mushrooms. I think I'd throw it all up if I ever was able to get it all down first. What is wrong with you vegetarians? Leave our time-honored recipes alone! P.S. I love you Reuben.

124. Baba Ganoush

I have to say that I really just like your name. It's fun to say and if I giggle while saying it I probably come across as kind of rude. So I won't say it out loud. However, after some brief research I found that you are made primarily of eggplant. I can't abide that. Have a nice day.

125. Donuts

We've discussed my self-loathing when it comes to eating munchkins (donut holes) but I'd like to take a moment to discuss you in general. When I eat you I feel an immense blockage in my torso for a few hours. And it hardly matters what kind. I think it has to do with the kind of dough you're made with because it feels... wetter than say, a loaf of bread. It's funny, I've never really sought you out as a quick breakfast or snack but if offered I will say yes. But I can also limit the amount I eat. Which means one. You just fill a sugar urge, allowing me to have a brief window of manic energy followed by a crash that not even a demolished building gets to have. I know they'll keep making you and I will occasionally buy you. But we've never really been a thing and probably never will.

126. Peanuts

You're a real dick, you know that? How many goddamn kids are you planning on killing? Poor little guys and gals just trying to enjoy some homemade cookies and KAPLOW! Suddenly their throats are as swollen as a priest at a strip club. And what about epipens? Better hope someone has one handy or else our little friend ain't gonna make it. How do you feel now. I mean, I get that things need to protect themselves. Bees have stingers, cats have claws, etc. but here you come, hurting people because why? Because they ate you? You already lost the fight! You got picked! If this is some kind of FU to the world I'm sorry you feel that way but we won't put up with it. You know that because of you my kid can't have peanut butter and jelly sandwiches at school anymore? Not because he's allergic, because everyone else is. I think you are selfish and I think you know it. If you want to be left alone start evolving thorns. Jerk.

127. Cannoli

Classy move. I mean the whole high class/common flavors thing really seems to work for you. That shell is a beautiful, tubular creation. And your filling, though extremely rich, gives bakers a

place to try new things. That is why flavor wise people love to see you as a dessert option on a menu. They know overall what they should expect, but it's the details that really bring it home. I've been quite happy with a lemon curd flavor and another with chocolate chips. As point of fact the largest one of you I've ever seen in person was ten feet long with an eight inch diameter. It was at a free dessert fair. When the event ended, a bunch of nuns cut you up and gave you to a soup kitchen. So maybe you're good after all. It must be nice to be rich.

128. Ice cream cones

Hey fellas! Did you know that as people age they also change their preference for your various types? Truth. They start with wafer kiddie cones with flat bottoms and a honeycomb shape inside. One scoop of ice cream. Then they get a bit older and they are on to sugar cones. Usually two scoops on there. And the kid feels great. It's a rite of passage. But then... oh, then they see it. The ultimate version of you. The waffle cone. Twice the size of the sugar cone and you get three to four scoops! After that, people just go on with their boring lives. Waffle cones are it. After you? Bad jobs, old age, and death. It's all about you.

129. Mint

People find you refreshing. That's fine. I agree. But I only agree in the cases of toothpaste and mouthwash. Other than that you are a no go. You are not food. You are not meant to be in drinks. You are certainly not an ice cream flavor. I can't stand you in food. When people are all thrilled and delighted because you are their favorite "flavor" they are wrong. They might not even know it. I feel bad for those people because what that says to me is "I have no palette and should be ignored if not shunned by society at large". So stop garnishing and leave people alone to choose real flavors. Please.

130. Eggplant

My mom refuses to eat you because you are purple and she believes no food should be that color. So growing up you weren't really involved in my meals. But every so often we'd have you-Parmesan. Not fresh! Lord knows my mom has always been a reheater. Head to Costco with an idea of how much space is in the freezer and fill it. My ongoing experience has led me to not only enjoy fresh you-parm but also fried you as well. Simple recipes that pull my taste buds away from my mom's food and towards bolder, savory, and might I say indulgent flavors.

131. Lasagna

What an excellent meal you are. A bunch of things all rolled into one. Well, layered into one. You are a real delight, either homemade or done in a restaurant. I have, in fact, made many of you. However, I do shy away from putting meat in. The sauce can have some meat base to it but I've never really used it in my recipes. I prefer it with vegetables and a lot of shredded cheese. What kinds, you ask? Why, all of them. Every single kind that's on sale, I go for it. It makes for a variety of taste explosions. The only cheese I haven't used that often is fresh mozzarella. I did use it once but I sliced it into disks, I did not shred it. It was enjoyable but needed more cheese! I also subscribe to the notion that you don't boil the lasagna before stacking. Have I blown your mind? The way I learned is that you layer everything first and then pour water into the dish, cover the entire thing tightly with foil and it cooks everything inside the dish! Figure that out, all you true chefs. Good luck recreating my masterpiece. People do love my lasagnas. So thank you for working with me while feeding friends and family.

132. Macaron

So tasty. So expensive. I'm not sure what your plan is here but you seem to be doing pretty damn well for yourself. The other day I saw you in a shop window for three bucks apiece. A piece!? And you're so tiny. But you do pack a flavor punch. Personally I like a more fruity taste. Biting through that meringue and tasting an overwhelming sensation of elation is what you are all about. There is no answer for just how many flavors you can be. And that is what makes chefs slobber all over their non-slip shoes. It's an open field. Find a flavor and whip up something everyone will be clamoring for. Even if you are expensive as hell. I still indulge from time to time.

133. Black licorice

I must say I am as much a fan of you as I am of mint. Which is to say not at all. You have an almost surreal quality where people seem to really enjoy you or they can't stand you. Strange how some foods are like that. Black and white with no grey area. A friend recently bought fennel for a salad and while she cut into it the smell was you. Identical. Now I haven't done much research but if fennel isn't in your ingredient list I'd be very surprised. I have tasted you before and found you to be very strong tasting. Not horrendous like mint, but just not something I'm ever going to like. I hope you understand.

134. Onion rings

Hoops of fun! Deep fried and crunchy. Great for dipping in a bit of chipotle ranch. You are for people that don't always trust a restaurant to have decent fries. I remember a restaurant that had you piled like a pyramid with a huge one at the bottom and gradually rising to a small one. I wished they had given me a plate but they were trying to be creative. So two points for that creativity but a few points off for the plate thing. But let's talk about your texture. Your outer breading can be just a bit salty. Not in a bad way at all. And then your inner onion. Crisp, crunchy, lovely. But I'm not sure if people have the same problem I have with you. It's not that big of a deal but when I take my first bite I often end up pulling your entire onion out! I end up with a piece of outer shell in one hand and a mouthful of onion. Maybe it's just me.

135. Chicken nuggets

Why eat a good piece of chicken when you can blend all the chicken parts into you. Genuine chicken parts. Oh, and bread it. Gotta bread it. I think your problem is that people don't trust you and what you're made of. For years you've coasted as a stable choice and an easy meal for kids. But wow have you recently had a bad time. Remember when someone took videos at the place McDonald's made their version of you? The machine that produced the "pink slime"? Yeah. That was awful. But even though a lot of people were mad, McDonald's still sold and even now still sell the nuggets. I'm an avid fan of yours, but not the fast food kind. I'd prefer an organic chicken version of you. Trust is a big thing and I'm happy to pay a bit more for you at the market. It makes me feel better about what I'm eating. Who knows what parts you're made of? I guess I just need to trust.

136. CCCD (chocolate chip cookie dough)

I mean, how could I have anything bad to say about you? I'd have to be some kind of monster. But I'm not a monster so let me just open my praise vault and fish out a few

compliments. The fact that you exist is both a testament to how lazy people are while also proving we love anything that tastes great. When you were first introduced in your pre-made form, mothers everywhere were still telling people they would get salmonella poisoning from the eggs. But you know what? Didn't happen. To anyone. Ever. Instead you turned into a shared snack for people getting high or single women watching sad movies alone at home. It is a well known fact that you help elevate mood and tastebuds. I think I might go pick some of you up at the market. Thanks for reminding me that happiness has a flavor.

137. Hot peppers

How hot can you get? A bunch of Scoville's I'm sure. The way you add flavor to a dish is so much fun. I don't know exactly how heat works but I know that if someone can find one of you whose heat is just a little above their comfort zone it enhances quite a number of foods. Heck, I once saw a place where you could get "heat infused ice cream". No, I didn't try it. Mostly because I'm chicken and have a very low heat toleration. But I have been having more peppers on sandwiches. Sure they're banana peppers but that still stings a bit. I also know that as people get older and taste buds start shutting down the more heat people crave because it is more flavorful. But I'm not that old yet so I'll stick to my banana peppers.

138. Garlic

Another great addition to almost any recipe. You kick up a stir when added to stews. You are great when combined with bread and butter. I even like the fact that you are a protector of the innocent when they are face to face with a vampire. Why they hate you, I have no idea. But legend says you are second only to a stake through the heart. That's great. I know that sometimes it must hurt your feelings to be seen primarily as a deterrent but we don't choose our fates. And don't worry about vampires hating you. Think more about how you are protecting every single human on the planet. Stand tall. You've earned your place.

139. Sandwich cookies

I'm going to focus on something that we can all agree on: you are the best kind of cookie. The balance of two cookies with frosting crammed in the middle is glorious. And I'm talking everything from chocolate and vanilla all the way to vanilla lemon. You have crunch. You have cream. And over all you have the sheer flavor to wrap yourself in such a delightful package. Nowadays people can even get you with extra frosting in the middle! I'm telling you, the world we live in is full of marvels such as yourself.

140. Croissants

You look like a shell. Without touching or tasting you, you definitely look like a shell. And you're French. I'm sure some people find that notion exotic. I find their notion to be weird. Not that I dislike you. No ma'am. The fact that you are buttery and flakey is a wonder of taste. One thing I've noticed with you is that you are out pacing the English muffin when it comes to breakfast sandwiches. And that was a dominated field. It used to go bagel, English muffin, etc. you weren't even on the list! Now it's bagel, you, English muffin. You've truly done well for yourself. Keep it up and perhaps you can usurp the throne from the bagels.

141. Kiwi

I'm sure you get this a lot but you are just too adorable for words. Tiny lil' fuzzball. I'm sure the first people to cut you open were shocked by what they found inside. You have that distinct green meat dappled with a distinct pattern of seeds. When I eat you I get sort of a fuzzy feeling in my cheeks. Not sure if everyone does or if I'm reacting somehow. But it's not an altogether bad feeling. And you taste great which is one reason people love putting you in fruit smoothies. Just such a distinct taste. Plus, like I said, you are an adorable, little, mildly hirsute testicle. No offense meant.

142. Mango fried rice

Fried rice is a staple of American Asian takeout. Chinese, Japanese, and in my case, Thai. There is a place near me that has you with the normal veggies mixed in but we can add things like chicken or meat. Or, in this case, mango. I'm fairly new to mangos but I've come to enjoy them when mixed in something else, as a utility food/flavor. But mixed with fried rice? Spectacular. I think it's mostly a texture thing. After biting and chewing veggies there is something nice about a squishy texture accompanied by a burst of fruit flavor. You are my Thai food standby meal and that's nothing to scoff at.

143. English muffins

So this is England's answer to breakfast? A puck-sized, uncut type of bread? They used to talk about your nooks and crannies. Translation: you have a lot of air holes that will be good for storing butter or jam. Who cares? You are a tasteless piece of bread that requires (underline!) things to be spread on you. You are a vessel for better food. You are the wallet of breads. Nobody cares about you unless there's something worth it on the inside. Disappointing.

144. Trifle

Desserts! Desserts! We all want our just desserts! And you are a whole bunch of desserts in one. Layered. Beautifully layered. Let's get the full rundown of what's in a traditional version of you. Let's see now... fruit, usually berries. That's a good start. Whipped cream, tasty and light. Oh and sponge cake soaked in alcohol! That sounds great to me. You are quite delicate though. Delicate and decadent. So probably the kind of thing a favorite aunt brings to a summer cookout. You get my seal of approval. I hope it matters.

145. A hunk of cheese

I've done this before. Go to a cheese shop, grab a hunk of smoked gouda and just slouch on the couch cutting pieces off with a knife until I'm all cheesed out. But I only buy you for snacking. I'm not the guy who gets pre-sliced cheese. It's you or nothing. Well, not totally true. I mean, for a sandwich I would. Who wouldn't? But not for snackin'. I'm not sure if this counts but I also love a fresh ball of mozzarella. Does that count as you? I can never decide.

146. Protein bar

Me no likey. Everyone scrambles for you because of their need to stay vital and thin and fit. Not me, pal. I see through your facade. They might advertise you like a candy bar but I know your truth. Stuffed with nuts, grains, and other ground-level crap. Probably worms and crickets too. No-bah-dee likes you. Those that say they do are lying to themselves. The kinds of people

who drink “energy” drinks when they may as well pour sugar straight down their throats. It’s a scam, you’re a gimmick, and I’m not buying!

147. Zucchini

You are the innuendo of produce. There is not one teenage boy who finds himself in a grocery store that doesn’t pick you up and hold it like a dick. Big green dick. The Incredible Hulk dick. You’re just hilarious. Your taste is a bit lacking but you do provide a great crunch in a sandwich. Some veggies add taste to an item but I firmly believe you only add texture. But please don’t think that’s a bad thing by any means. People use you all the time. In fact, when you get mixed in with other veggies to be roasted you also provide the mix with a little something extra. I think in my case you weren’t on my radar until I really understood your place. And now I’m quite happy to call you food.

148. Cheesecake

Much like the 1% you are very rich, which makes you my first political/food crossover joke. The thing about you is that you can’t be an all the time food because we’d all die. We’d die happy but that’s not the point. Personally I like you with berry flavors. I know a lot of people go for chocolate flavors but I need chocolate in smaller doses. I think if I ever ate a full piece of chocolate you then I’d refrain from chocolate for a year. But berry? With some whipped cream and a cascade of fruit dripping down in my plate? Well call me Charlie and hand me a fork because we’re going to war! Pacing is also a word I don’t associate with you. I’m like a dog protecting his bowl of food. No mister waiter, I’m not done yet! There’s a plate to lick, thank you very much. So rude when they pull that stunt.

149. Blueberries

You, my friend, are purple. Don’t be ashamed to come out as you are. This facade is making everyone so awkward. I’m telling you because I’m not afraid to use the P-word. We aren’t going to love you any less. You be you and we will make sure people know the score. Trust me, we will make this right.

150. Fish and chips

Beer battered and fried. With fries. We’ve already discussed fries but your fish is a great meal. Practically an entire side of haddock. Some tartar sauce on the side and depending where you are there might even be some coleslaw. From-a-tub Coleslaw. None of that made fresh crud. But the whole meal together is such a great balance. Growing up keeping kosher, this was one of the few meals I could eat outside the house. But rather than getting sick of it, I love it. A great standby meal at some restaurants and also a first choice meal at others.

151. Pierogis

You are a great snack and a great meal. I used to dip you in ketchup but my now refined palette uses only the finest sour cream in town. My preferred flavor? Glad you asked. I’m partial to potato and onion. I’m also a baker not a boiler. I always think you should be more crisp than chewy. Others can do what they want. I also think it would be a waste of resources to make you myself. I’ve never been great at making the homemade version of purchasable foodstuffs. But I

think I will be branching out and trying new fillings and dips. You know what you might go well with? Creamy ranch dressing. Ok. I'll report back once I try you again.

152. Hard salami

There are parties people end up at in various points in time. Parties where they don't do chips and dip but rather cheeses, fine crackers, and you. These same parties give out very small plates which allow for very little tiny sandwich construction. And so it's you and your mild spice combined with odd cheeses which can be so hard to decide if people like. A meal for a person the size of a chipmunk. I'm really sorry that you have to be associated with this level of "foods". You're better than them. Never forget that. Some day your ship will come in.

153. Meatballs

You lively sphere of influence. And by that I mean that you influence me to like Italian food way more often than I should. Not that that's a bad thing. I've often thought that people get spaghetti and you mainly for you. But I'll let you in on a secret: I've been duped before. I've slogged through some rough spaghetti just to have you and it became quite obvious you were, dare I say, previously frozen. I know it's hard to believe but places do it all the time. But when the opposite happens and you are created in an Italian kitchen with top quality meat and seasoning? Mmmhmmmm. A definite must have. I've even been to restaurants where they advertise you as "spaghetti and meatball", singular. Then out comes a plate that looks like someone dropped Epcot center onto a pile of snakes! You're huge! But oh so damn tasty. Here's to the Italians!

154. Plums

Hello my fruity friend. You palm-sized and preeminent perfect prunus. I'll say right here that you are one of my favorite fruits. But you need to be watched very closely. Your habit of getting soft is not a good one. I like you rosy colored and hard. I want to take bites, not slurps. I want to bite and slice if need be. Just sit on the back porch with a few of you, a knife, and a pool on a hot day. And believe all the hype about yourself. You are so juicy I can't believe it. But once you are squishy and soft you go right to the compost pile. So stay firm and fresh and you and I will have a lovely I-eat-you relationship.

155. Mayonnaise

I'm white. So obviously this is only going to be praiseworthy. You make sandwiches taste better, you are one of two ingredients in my mom's secret sauce, and one time I mistook you for sour cream. That was definitely a bad thirty seconds I still remember. But you are great as the glue in a layered trifle and god forbid someone makes macaroni salad without you. Ooooh, and tuna. Tuna is good. But with you it's great. And none of this "lite" nonsense. I want you smeared all over my bread and only then should the loaded tuna be added. My favorite condiment.

156. Cotton candy

If a really hairy guy dyed his crack pink, it would look just like you. And if he also tried to make himself look like a unicorn by squeezing a paper cone between his cheeks it would be a dead ringer for you. Now let's just state the obvious. You are sugar. Spin sugar plain and simple. A staple of the American state fair circuit. You melt teeth and I'm sure many a dentist has

purchased a boat with all the money they've made off of your effects. Hell I bet there's even a boat named The Cotton Candy. My only complaint is that you are a sticky bastard. And with a beard like mine you can be a real hassle to clean. But fair play, you are popular and you remain. You'll probably be here long after I'm gone. Most likely on the moon.

157. Fried dough

Another staple of the great American fair ground. Just some dough that's been fried, sugared, and eaten like a t-bone in front of a hungry wolf. You are the kind of snack no child wants to share. And you are so good. It's unreal. In fact, I'd venture to say that the more rundown the fair, the better you are. Old fry oil in an unclean deep fryer. Just horrible food trucks that have zero oversight. The kind of place that a food inspector lives for. I get shivers just thinking about you.

158. Popsicles

Not better than ice cream. But healthier and often with whole pieces of fruit in you. You melt fast and attract bees. You are also something we can make at home if we have time and a freezer where stuff can sit for way longer than we feel comfortable. Hell, I'm not fooling anyone. I go store bought every time. Get myself one of the double-stick kind. The kind moms would try to crack in half so people could share with siblings only to have them crack unevenly. And sometimes you are blue. Often red. And not white unless people wanted coconut flavor (which nobody does. Ever.). Thanks for being an okay standby.

159. Seaweed salad

This is weird for me. See, I like seaweed wrapped around sushi. But as a wet salad with vinegar, soy sauce, and mirin... you are not that good. I mean, to me. Other people gobble you right up. A fact which I find just a bit nauseating. And I know all this seaweed is coming from the same places but when it's dried I find it more palatable than your wet gloopiness. I feel like they sent someone named Taesung down to the ocean to gather as much seaweed he can carry in the basket of his bike. When he gets to the restaurant they grab as much of the weed part they can, chop it up, and there you are. Effing gross. Stay in the ocean.

160. Maple syrup

Someone noticed you dripping down a tree and instead of thinking "that's sap. Can't eat sap." They decide to stick their hands in it and lick. And it's you. You are coming out of the tree. But which tree? How do we know? And once we found out, what's the best way to get at it. Then some guy says "hey, let's find a metal straw we can bash into the tree and put a bucket under it!" I mean, it's a plan but who thinks that way? Anyway, you're the type of thing that both Canadians and people from Maine claim ownership over. So now you are used over pancakes, made into lollipops, and molded into candy. No wonder people use you so much. Very good publicity.

161. Tomatoes

Cherry, grape, beefsteak. There are a lot of great types with a nice variety of flavors. And if history has taught us anything it is that if you find yourself invited to a terrible night of theatre, pack some of you guys. Big, soft ones to launch at the worst performers on stage. And don't worry about ushers confiscating you from people. Ushers are prewarned not to even ask if

people have you. It's as strong a rule of the stage as the bare bulb in an empty house. Plus, you might be interested to know that every year in Spain they hold La Tomatina. A festival where hundreds of thousands of you get thrown at everyone in attendance. It's essentially a large, you-only food fight. It seems a bit wasteful considering how you are a pretty good staple food for many people. But I've never thrown you at anyone so my hands are literally clean.

162. Scoop chips

You are like small crunchy buckets containing cheese, veggies, meat, or dip. As if we weren't getting enough stuff in our mouths with regular chips you come along. You are pretty helpful, I suppose. You are truly an American chip masquerading as something else. All we want is more food. And in that battle, we are true allies.

163. Sour candy

So here's the conundrum. I love you but you hurt me. You hurt me so good. You lay waste to my tastebuds and cause me to salivate like a Pavlovian dog. But damn! It's just... how are you so addicting? Any flavor you offer is destroyed after three or four anyway. And then we come to a point where we still eat you. By the end of a bag I think that my cheeks are burnt and my throat is pulsing and the glands in my mouth are working overtime to hydrate the devastation I've wreaked. So double down damn, the second my mouth heals and I forget about you, it's on to a brand new bag.

164. Eel

When you are in sushi, I love it. You add something to the rolls that make them even tastier. The problem is how you are prepared. Now let it be known that I've seen video of you as you go from alive in a tank to being in sushi. And here's the thing. They nail your head to a board, slice around your head, and pull your skin off. That was very unpleasant to watch but I don't think I care. Awful, right? Not to mention you aren't even sustainable. So every time I have you that is one step closer to extinction. But that's how humans think. We want HERE and NOW and the hell with tomorrow. Some places are adding catfish to the menu and getting rid of you. They say you taste the same but you don't. So put your head on this board and stay still.

165. Scrambled eggs

I'm pretty sure you were a mistake. Don't get me wrong, I think you're pretty great. It's just that looking at you makes me think someone was trying to make eggs, screwed up, and just stirred until you were lumpy but cooked and ouila! You. When I make you I add shredded cheese, salt and pepper. So you essentially end up as a messy cheese omelet. Add a few pan seared tomatoes beside you and we've got ourselves a breakfast!

166. Baguettes

Also known to idiots as "that long bread" you are a taste of France that can be purchased at any grocery chain. So, "authentic cuisine" may not apply to you. However you are yet another foodstuff that teenagers use to mime having a big penis. I used to think that was hilarious. And at the time it was. But now? The only reason it's not funny anymore is that I'm just too damn hungry to make jokes. Just let me tear a piece off of you, slap on some butter, and leave me alone. In movies people love to buy you when they are shopping for any kind of food. The

character reaches, last minute, into a wicker basket containing twenty of you, grabs one, puts it into a pristine shopping basket that contains no impulse buys and heads home on a lovely yellow bicycle with you in the basket. In those movies you are the only believable part. Good on ya!

167. Cereal (cold)

Texture is your friend. I had an experience with grapenuts recently that left me a bit convuzzled. I poured it into a bowl and added milk. Now it was crunchy at first but then it got real soggy real quick. And that upset me because people like a cereal with texture that holds up for most of the bowl. But it just doesn't happen. All that crunch at the beginning but at the end just plain gross and soggy in sugar milk. There has got to be a better way or some kind of horrible yet tasteless chemical they can add, right? We cured smallpox, so why not soggy Cheerios?

168. Milk

A lot of people are lactose intolerant. I mean a huge chunk of the population. But why? Because we idiots get you from cows. Someone thought it was a great idea. But after taking some very liberal sips, that person had to hightail it to the bathroom for an old fashioned sit down. What I find strange is that we don't drink the people version of you. Its considered gross to even bring it up. But what's more natural? Women lactate. It's a thing they can do. So wouldn't it be less of an issue for everyone? I mean, it might take some getting used to but I'm sure there are women who would be happy to get paid for it. I just think people need to open their eyes to the mammary glands of their fellow humans.

169. Banana chips

Bananas are, by nature, a little mushy. At the very least, soft. And that's great. Spread a lot of peanut butter on them and you've got the goods. But one day people thought drying them out and slicing them thin would be a great alternative. And that's where you came from: An idiot. You are not good. You are someone's idea of okay that wasn't in their right mind at the time. Some people even say you are healthy. But bananas are healthy all on their own! So please stop the act. Please. You are fooling people into a false sense of reality. Go away and leave us our regular fruits.

170. Cabbage

You are wannabe lettuce. You sit in the produce aisles of supermarkets, waiting. Appearing to mind your own business and getting lightly misted in the meantime. But you're a thinker. You understand how time works and how people are. They rush through their days and sometimes, if they don't pay attention they buy the wrong thing. And that is your window. "Look over here," you say, "I'm just like that other guy over there." And so they buy you. Now, have we made the most of it? Yeah. Of course. There are some great chefs out there who do amazing things with unwanted product. They adapt. That's how we got coleslaw and Waldorf salad. Nobody wanted them but here we are. Lucky you.

171. Candy corn

The Halloween treat that was never meant to eat. The pure sugar rush that we can't get enough of. Although I will say that the pumpkin version of you feels a bit much. It's the difference

between you as a snack or you as a meal. I don't want the meal. I want a whole bag of snacks. And that the strange thing. I can eat through a ton of you before getting fed up but I can't eat three pumpkin ones in a row because it feels like too much. I think my grandmother said it best when she proclaimed, "too much of anything isn't good for you." Wise words. When I was old enough to finally buy my own candy I think you were some of my first. Just the feeling of watching a movie and having you all to myself was wonderful. But no amount of brushing stops those cavities, I'll tell you that. So keep doing your thing. I'm still going to enjoy you. Even if it is in some kind moderation.

172. Carrots

You look like a very weird magic wand. And (sigh) yet another food that people pretend are penises. God, there's a lot of them. Anyway, it turns out you weren't always orange. That's just a strain that people learned how to breed. We can still get odd colored ones. Purple seems a popular option for the damn hippies. But for us regular folks, orange is the way to go. Also, learned a new fact. Did you know that people say you improve eyesight? Turns out, not true. It was a lie made up by the British during dubya dubya two. Trying to make the baddies freak out. It worked! And that's why people tell their kids to eat you. Lies! But you are pleasantly crunchy and a good dipping food while in your "baby" form.

173. Worms

Ok, not for people. But fish love you so I need to jump in. But why? What is it you do that attracts them so much? You guys are usually non swimmers but they go for you every time. You are the bait people think of when they think "bait". Some people get Minnows. That's fine, I guess. But for sheer fish attraction you guys are it. Maybe it came down to being both free and widely available wherever dirt existed. I don't know. But I suppose you have a purpose, regardless of it being a good one.

174. Rabbit

Do people still eat you? I've seen your meat in a few markets but it can't still be nearly as prevalent as it used to be. You're kind of gamey and not all that easy to find. I imagine people used to eat you a lot more back when they lived off the land and had to get manage their own food. I'm pretty sure I can't just purchase you from a pet store and prep you as a nice stew for my family. First, the cost would be prohibitive and second they'd start asking a lot of questions around the third or fourth week. No, I think these days the greater public has shied away from seeing you that way. Stay safe out there.

175. Trail Mix (GORP) (Good Old Raisins and Peanuts)

There are so many things that need to be addressed here. Deconstruction if you will. Healthy people eat you properly. The rest of us look at raisins and peanuts, shrug, and think that it needs more. So we all throw in chocolate chunks, some candy for taste, and end up with the real-person's you. It happens that a lot of us don't want to sacrifice taste for a boost in energy. We basically get all the food that, when scooped properly, tends to equal out in a good handful. I think your main attraction is that people need food. We love food and love to eat. But there aren't many stores in the woods or at the top of a mountain. So we waste valuable oxygen tank space by adding you to our stuff. But then there's the other kind of people. The kind of people

that see you and think, “I’m not going to hike but I’d certainly like some nuts, raisins, and those chocolate chunks while I sit on my ass in front of the television.” These people are my people. The couch surfers. The beanbag gamers. The comfy pillow posse. We might not know what we need but are fully aware of what we want. So you are essentially good for a large swath of the population. Different strokes for different folks. I made that up. Just now.

176. Potato salad

Depending on when this is being read it might just be barbecue season. And what barbecue would be complete without you? Some people make you at home while others buy you from the store. The thing is, as much as I like you, you are so damn unhealthy its beyond realistic. The amount of mayonnaise that goes into you is astounding. Not to mention eggs, vinegar, and even garlic powder. Those who consume you are essentially courting heart attacks. But the way I see it, you are delicious. And shouldn’t that be the only rule for foodstuff? Not enough people know how to enjoy anymore. Plus, a barbecue is the perfect place to just sit on a lawn chair, put our feet up, and have a little snacky snack. Plus, sometimes you come with red russet potatoes instead of just the normal kind. So much to digest, only so many minutes down the slip and slide that is our digestive tract.

177. Limes

Nothing like a little scurvy to kick start people’s attitudes to certain fruits. I learned the other day that the reason British people are called “Limeys” is because of their propensity to eat limes to stave off the scurvy. The fact that they were nicknamed this seems to suggest they though that you were a bit of a joke. Those silly Europeans. Thinking that you can’t stop certain viruses or illnesses. This is why they had so much trouble with the plague. Rats are carrying the disease and rats are eaten by cats so kill all the cats. Brilliant. You know, you are a great fruit to go with a variety of options but damn, I had to say something about how stupid Europeans were (are?). But back to the basics. I love a good pie and you are great in pies, and for that matter you are also great in drinks. Adding a little bite to a disgusting beer. Perfection. Hell of a garnish.

178. Granola

Often found in bar form, you are one of the aforementioned “good foods”. Basically you exist because people needed something to take with them on long hikes much like the GORP we spoke about earlier. But unlike GORP you have been a snack food for much longer. Wikipedia said that you were trademarked in the late 19th century. That’s a long time for such a stupid idea. Yeah, I said it. You are essentially oats, honey, and nuts. All the things that people eat on their own but no, you had to combine them all together in an effort to market it. The thing is, people will just add milk to you and pretend you are cereal. Seems wrong to me. Like calling stuff from almonds “almond milk” when there is no milking going on. Now I know I am on a side with people that hate things that everyone likes. I will say this: I have eaten you in a few forms and sometimes... Sometimes, I’ve enjoyed you. That was not a blanket admission. That was me telling you that I’m not making these opinions up out of whole cloth and a brief search of the internet. Fine, I hope you continue to find success amongst Millennials because I’m certainly not eating you ever again.

179. Chicken Salad

I think you are fantastic. Really. Tender pieces of chicken mixed with mayonnaise, diced celery, and some salt and pepper. That is just perfection. I’ll eat you on a big ol’ roll with fresh

tomato, a bit of onion, and lettuce. I might even add some mayo to the roll. Yeah, I'm kind of a risk-taker about things like that. I think the hard part about making you is making sure that the chicken is tender. If its over-cooked it won't have that juicy taste and smooth texture. I want a sandwich that I can really sink my teeth into. The kind of sandwich once its finished I get the I'm-too-full sweats. If I get you at a sandwich shop I tend to add more items such as banana peppers and pickles. Not a ton of them because that would overpower your regular flavor but they certainly help. The other great part of you that I have also attributed to other foods is your ability to also be a side. Just because you're on the menu doesn't always mean you're the main course. But you thrive in either case. I look forward to eating you again soon.

180. Orange Chicken

Can we just take a moment to discuss how tasty you are? I mean, I knew you were tasty when I saw other people eating you but until recently I'd always eaten something else. Chinese food in general is a pretty good bet overall but man, you knock it out of the park. It's funny. I think about different recipes I can put together and I would never have been the one to suggest pairing these two tastes. Yet still it endures. The other piece is that I'm not always thrilled with spicy food and even though you are not spicy by nature, many restaurants will serve you with a bit of red pepper mixed in. That slight burn is glorious. Now here's the thing, we are talking about American food. Chinese food, authentic Chinese food, isn't something we Americans think about too often. Our favorites are less healthy but some would say that they are far more addictive. Everyone wants you. I've often gone to Chinese restaurants with friends and the second someone says they are going to get you, suddenly the entire group wants to do a multi-plate family share. I hate that. I want you to myself, dammit! I don't want to share. So I don't. I make some stupid excuse and happily devour you with some white rice. Sharing is overrated.

181. Gnocchi

I once tried making you. I got all the ingredients together, I followed the recipe. I boiled water, I rolled you out and made small dumplings which were pressed with a fork. I placed you in the water as the recipe called for. I'm going to stop talking about this for a minute to ask a question: When something is supposed to be in boiling water for a short amount of time and instead of staying solid it turns into mush, does that mean someone did something wrong? I'll never know. All I do know is that I ended up with what looked like a pot of dirty water and a giant clump of potato mixed with all the other ingredients. Total failure. But I love you! You are so great and yummy and tasty and every other -y word that describes you. I just can't make you at home because apparently I'm an idiot. I can't recall the first time I had you but I believe it was at a friend's house where a bunch of us went for dinner. You know those kinds of parties. They used to end with Pictionary but now they end when everyone is sitting in the living room with one person playing funny youtube videos. That's when you know it's time to leave. But the food was delicious. And you were the center of the dish. I'm pretty sure some pesto was included as well. It made me realize that there are cooks out there who have their recipes down pat. And then there's me. I have exactly what I was given by my parents: The ability to pretend that burgers aren't overcooked, they're simply artisanal.

182. Crackers

Here's the thing about you. People enjoy you as you come in many varieties. But I want to know when did our society got together and agree that cookies were not going to cut it as a kind of sweet-tooth aperitif? Also, why are certain crackers okay at formal dinners but others are not? I can think of many a fancy dinner party where I would have loved a handful of Cheez-its. But

water biscuits are the only ones offered. I suppose it's all about two things: dipping and cheese. Because with a before dinner cracker you also get small sliced cheeses and various dipping options. The dipping is mostly for vegetables but the cheese has to sit on something. Plus, water biscuits are slightly larger and can accommodate that cheese. And yet some are just made to sit on the couch and munch until suddenly the box/sleeve is empty. I've already mentioned Cheez-its but there's also Pringles and Cheetos. I could sit on a white couch all day with any of those and the only thing covered in cheese would be my (obvious) white shirt. Those are some tasty crackers. But wait a second! Those aren't crackers, are they? They're chips. Chips are not crackers. Wow. I need to slow down because I was really on a roll.

183. Fried Rice

You are a whole new level of good, even alone. I think one of the best parts about you is that you can get me to eat vegetables. As I've previously said, I'm a grown man with no love for veggies. However, when they are mixed in with the brown rice I have no problem with them. Normally they add a crunchy element. Sliced carrot, bean pods, onion. The list goes on. When it comes to fried rice in general, everything can be mixed in. We've all had the traditional chicken or beef. Now if they'd only make you with squid, I think we'd have a real meal on our hands.

184. Macaroni Salad

I'm going to admit something here. I have no idea what is in you except the macaroni. The rest of the fun stuff is a mystery. Now, I could do what I've done for a few of these which would be to look you up on the internet. But this time I don't want to. All I want is to say that you are one of my favorite sides. There is something about your taste that grabs my mouth and chomps it into happiness. If there are hotdogs on the grill, there had better be macaroni salad nearby. I'll heap a plate with you and then, if there's room, I'll strategically place the hotdog and bun. But I think you need to understand just how popular you are to me. Do you know that I've purchased you in large quantities at places like Costco and kind of ate you...nonstop for a few days until my cholesterol went up and my mouth just couldn't take the goodness for another minute? True story. I hope to have you again soon and until that time I hope you stay as flavorful as ever.

185. Root Beer Float

Fresh out of the lab comes you, you beautiful bastard. Root beer alone is temptingly wonderful. A heavy flavor bubbling with sensations heretofore unknown to the common tongue. Vanilla ice cream, the original favorite, has always looked for ways to make itself useful. That's where you come in. Not only are you tasty, but you are a funny beverage as well. People either start by using a long spoon to eat some of the vanilla while others will start drinking the root beer from the bottom. Did I mention that the ice cream floats on top? Well, I should have. But the clean thickness of the vanilla when added to the bubbling soda gives us a taste of what it was like back when soda jerks were still a thing and people were happier. Well, some people. Others weren't allowed to vote. I take it all back. I think it brings us back to a time when we think white people were happier. What a sad sentence to write. Oh well, at least you've never changed.

186. Fortune Cookies

Not Chinese. That's a fun and true fact. It turns out that you are actually an American invention created to add some (fake) culture to the mass of non-Chinese people flooding in to Chinese

restaurants. Here's something I learned by getting a lot of Chinese takeout: If people think they may have ordered too much, they should count the number of you that are in the bag. That shows that they think X amount of people are going to be consuming this meal. I once got Chinese food for myself and received four of you. Four. That was a lot of lo mein. And the actual fortunes inside you? Just a bit odd. These days they try and stay positive and serious. Plus, the added bonus of hearing the parents of teenagers adding "in bed" to their fortunes in order to scar their children for life.

187. Duck

Also known as "Greasy Chicken", you have occasionally shown up on restaurant menus. The last time I had you was at a French restaurant that sat on the edge of the famous San Antonio River Walk. I recall the night exactly as it happened. I remember it being a little chilly and that we sat outside. The restaurant gave everyone heavy ponchos to keep themselves warm. I ordered the duck and not two minutes later I looked down into the canal to see a family of ducks just looking up at me with such scorn on their faces that I thought they were going to attack. But how did you taste? I'd say you were average. The meal itself was delicious and hit all the right notes but I'm not sure I would have enjoyed you in a different setting. But then, recipes are everything. The way they seasoned you and the way the ducks in the canal were looking at me. I guess I felt I was being a bit daring, a bit rude, and a bit evil. After a time, the ducks went away and I sat back realizing my poncho maybe didn't fit me anymore. I will recommend you and possibly try a different version of you at some point. Possibly Chinese.

188. Lamb

You are a tough one. This is almost as hard as talking about veal. See, the problem people have is that you are cute. Not when you're cooked, obviously. But when you are walking around with your short adorable tight curls. Kids think you're great and 4H clubs are always putting you on posters and signs. Hm. (licks lips thoughtfully) Yet we love eating you. Love it! Your meat is so tender and allows for people to have a good kabab sold by a street vendor who has a big piece of you just rotating around. Nobody ever asks how long you've been spinning but I think we all know the answer is "days". But we don't want to know that. Most people don't want their kids to think about you or where their meal comes from. Not me. I'm telling my kids everything. Heck, I'll even do a bit of home-grown taxidermy and plonk you in the living room next to the television so everyone can get acquainted with the outside of what we are going to be eating. Tender is probably the best word to describe your taste and texture. I'd love to think that you would be happy knowing that people like you so much but I get it. You don't want to be remembered simply as a foodstuff. You want to be up in the foothills grazing and not thinking at all about the fact that you're being led into a dark building that smells weird. Eatcha real soon!

189. Corn Bread

Ah yes, the perfect addition to any slow cooked meat. Any restaurant that specializes in the kinds of meats that drip off the bone should be required to serve you. Nothing else picks up those extra juices without needing anything else. I will say that alone you aren't quite the taste explosion people are looking for. Some people will melt some butter and spread it over you but the problem is that you are pretty dry to begin with. That's not so much a dig as it is a fact. Its why you work perfectly with barbecued and smoked meats. They have so much flavor that to simply dip you into them is like sponging off a steak. Do you think this is something you agree with? Because I don't see anyone wanting you alone. So yeah, keep up this whole side thing and everyone will stay happy.

190. Tater Tots

Potatoes are fine. We've discussed this. But you are one of the best things to happen to potatoes in a very long time. A staple of school lunches, you are crunchy with a soft center. Nothing too soft, however. A nice toasted feeling in the mouth. You are also one of the most traded items in cafeterias the world over. A handful of you could net a pudding. Now that's currency. I've also seen recently that people have started using the word "loaded" before your name. Essentially they treat you the way they do nacho chips. A layer of you followed by some veggies and condiments followed by another few layers of the same. I will admit to being a bit unsure of this evolutionary step but my goodness was it good. I think that you are fine on your own but wow, if we can make you unhealthy and make ourselves happy... hell, that's the American dream.

191. String Cheese

Okay, you are an interesting addition to any dairy section. Why purchase regular square pieces of cheese when we could get you for more money, more waste (individually wrapped), and in what is essentially stick form. People do like you, but the variety of ways to eat you really define different kinds of people. First, the correct way to enjoy you is for someone to hold you vertically while using front teeth to start a peel. This is where the string part comes in. It's like pulling apart long strands. It's the kind of thing that little kids love because it occupies their time for an extra thirty seconds. Then there is the wrong way. Just biting. That is a damn abomination because if someone is going to eat that way they may as well just buy square cheese or buy another type of cheese that isn't purposely in stick form. I'll never understand these people. It's the experience, not the actual staving off hunger. You are kind of a waste but people need to realize it and enjoy the skill it takes to eat you.

192. Pesto

A fairly new addition to the American palate. By new I definitely mean you've been around for a long time but not as long as... I guess ketchup. I've enjoyed you quite a bit when I first had you on chicken. After that it was a bit downhill when I realized that any restaurant that wanted to serve "authentic" Italian cuisine had some kind of you option on the menu. But up until then it had been all about red sauces and if the restaurant made it fresh. With you we have a different kind of taste while also being very bad for people with tree nut allergies. I just remembered I've even had you on salmon. I think this is a case of flooding the market. There is even a version of you that is in (I'm going to be sick) ice cream. That, my friend is strike three because I refuse to discuss things that gradually get worse. If I talk about you any further it will give others ideas. Next thing you know, we'll have you-flavored cereal. Please, nobody make that.

193. Garbage plate

I'm not sure if people have had you. I only found out about you a few years ago. You are one of those foods that someone used as a wall. As in "throw everything at the wall and see what sticks". In this case you are composed of foods that work pretty well on their own. Let me walk folks through your ingredients. We start with macaroni salad (previously discussed) as a base. On top of that we add some home fries, baked beans, and a cheeseburger. Over that we pour a special meat sauce. We pour it over the entire thing. You are essentially a decent meal that was about to be thrown away but someone stopped it at the last minute after it was jostled around and dumped sauce on it. I have actually tried you and I was... I mean... I guess I was okay with

you. You wouldn't be my first choice even though I really enjoy some of your component features. I suppose I'm saying that I have no desire to find the place you were first made. But hey, to each their own.

194. Cake pops

You were created to destroy diets and willpower. You just sit there on your high sticks in shop windows like a harpy, beckoning in those that think "one won't hurt. I'll get a flavor that isn't going to be too bad to me." Cut to the purchase of one strawberry shortcake flavor and the eventual 180 that has some poor sap buying one of each kind which they rationalize will be a "treat for the family" or "something nice for the office". But neither group sees those pops do they? I didn't think so. The cake pop is the start of a slippery slope that slides past birthday cupcake and ends at long weekend at home with a Carvel ice cream cake that gets eaten while wearing underwear. Alone. Husbands take the kids out and give mom a day all about her. And she wants cake. She craves cake. And, in her mind she deserves cake. And that was your fault, Cake pop. Your fault.

195. Carrot Cake

It's a good try. This whole "I'm cake but it's okay because carrots" is a load and a half. Ever seen real cake? Chocolate or vanilla. Two choices for a typical sheet cake. Whoever thought carrots would somehow fit in as a dessert was a complete jerk. I know I hate him (or her. I never done research) because people are being given false info about cake! Frosting is fine except that yours is kind of carrot. And your insides are even more carrots. Crunchy bits that are definitely not chocolate pieces. You are more like a cult leader. For some reason there are people who follow you like sheep. Zombies trying to function in a world where they apparently think that cake can be healthy. It can't. You aren't. Go away.

196. Gelt

Hanukah is a lovely Jewish holiday and part of it involves spinning a dreidel and betting on what letter it will land on. People bet with you. On the outside you look like a perfect gold coin. Kids love gold. That's a provable fact, I'm sure of it. But see, the best part is inside. That's right. You are just foil wrapped around chocolate! Perfect. Dress up chocolate however you want but it's still chocolate. This way, wrapped in gold foil is an interesting concept because some kids hold you too tight. This causes you to melt. And nobody wants melty chocolate. So forget that kid. Ignore his bets. His chocolate is worthless. And so is he.

197. Milkshake

Not chocolate. I know, I know. Everyone loves choc- wait! Also none of that mint kind they do around saint Patrick's Day. You have the potential to be great and do great things. But here's the thing, what should I say when asked if I want whipped cream? Because you know if I do agree then I'm given less shake and too much empty whipped cream space. I hate that. It's like movie theaters adding a shit ton of ice to your coke. You're basically buying water with a hint of cola. But a good one of you is when places offer a extra thick option. The kind of thick that stays in the container even when flipped upside down. But the brain freeze is a real issue. Then again I'd much rather a delicious drink that gives me brain freeze over some lukewarm ginger ale.

198. Raspberries

Tart. Very tart. Plus, to get to you I need to not care about thorns. You are quite protected. I don't mind you in a pie as most pies have a tart taste. But eating you alone is meh. Not great. I think you're too caught up in yourself. I think you see how popular things like blueberries and cherries are and you feel you deserve top billing. But you're just not going to be that popular. I'm sorry to be the one who has to tell you.

199. Shepherd's Pie

There are a lot of versions of you. Or at least variations. Whenever I've had you I'd call you a very hearty meal, regardless of portion size. When you are made I prefer you to have the following items within you: Peas, onions, ground beef, gravy, and topped with potato. Mashed please. Some people (me) will refer to you as a savory trifle, with each ingredient being its own layer. Although your ingredients are loose, the layering seems to give people all the right ingredients in one. That being said I don't think I've ever made you. But you are so easy! I think one of the issues I've had is that I'm not a huge fan of peas (we have discussed frozen peas in a prior post) but a lot of the places I've looked for alternative recipes has put chopped celery instead. I don't like that. Essentially you want to take something out that wasn't great to begin with and replace it with something that is so watery it will destroy the integrity of any gravy I've added. I don't need that. And as I said before you are a hearty meal. Not a watered down meal. The other piece to this is that if I put a bunch of veggies in you, then you are pretty much a pot pie. So then what was the point? I'll just make myself a pot pie (chicken, as we know, is my favorite). One last thing. When your mashed potatoes aren't a tiny bit cooked on top then you haven't been in the oven long enough and should stay the eff inside. Truth.

200. Jelly Roll

You swirly, swarthy wonder. Why should I have bread with jam on it when I can have you! You are basically a rolled cake with jelly and jam in the middle! Everyone likes a good roll, am I right? What's that? Depends on what they're rolling in? Hilarious. But honestly, all jokes aside, I think that when baked properly you give that great mix of moistness with the slight tartness of jam. I'll tell you this, if I saw you on a baking show (and I just might have)(stop asking me where my ideas come from!) I would immediately get cooking instructions and have someone make it for me. That's right, I'm a lazy person who prefers to eat versus make. But hey, how hard to could it be to make you? Bake, spread jam, roll, bake. Right? Oh my god, my oven! What happened!? It's everywhere! Oh the humanity!

201. Oatmeal

Oh you're good. You're real good. Sneaking healthy stuff into my mouth. And at breakfast, no less! That might be how you infiltrated my defenses in the first place. I'm still tired, I'm just waking up, and all of a sudden I'm eating hot oats. But you do have a pleasant mushiness to you, a kind of taste and texture that I'd love to go all out and fill a bathtub with you and just slide in. Actually, the next thing I was going to say was that I'd eat my way out but that just sounds disgusting. To eat a bathtub full of you that I've been simmering in with my body just sounds awful. I mean, would I use a spoon? Or would it just be sort of a scoop with hands, and dump you down my gullet. And, on top of that would you be plain or would you have brown sugar stirred in? I don't think I've ever eaten you plain. I always stir in brown sugar. I can't imagine how much I'd need to get rid of the tub taste and the taste of my own... gross. I'm ending this now. You taste good in a bowl under regular circumstances. Forget everything I just said.

202. Green Apples

Yup, I'm being specific. I hope you understand my reasoning. See, the fact that there are all different types of apples makes this a bit easier because even though I've chosen you to speak about, I have alienated all the other ones. But, they are a big group and can therefore take care of themselves. But you're my favorite. You know, my great grandfather used to eat you. He'd grab one of you, grab a knife from the kitchen, and slices off pieces. I didn't know this when I was told I do the same thing. Eerie. But I think the reason we both enjoy/ed you so much was that you are guaranteed to be crunchy and juicy all at once. With one of you there is never a doubt. If there is bruising, we can see it plain and simple and can grab a new one. Those red apples don't know what they're doing. And the yellow ones? Come on. Be serious. You are also, on the whole, larger and taste pretty good in pies. I think one reason I eat you the way I do is that I don't like biting into you and getting you stuck in my front teeth. And my front teeth can be a bit daunting. I'm no Freddie Mercury but I have some chompers on me. So I cut and nibble. Cut and nibble. Until just the core is left. Then I sit back and spend roughly five minutes not being hungry. After that I have to decide whether to eat another one of you or get something different. That is your only downside. You don't actually fill me up. You're fruit, not an entire meal. My great grandfather and I thank you for your time.

203. Fried Ice cream

This time I am going to be very specific again. Green tea ice cream. That's what I do. I really nail down the essentials. Anyway, Fried green tea ice cream was first introduced to me many years ago by a friend who had also introduced me to sushi. Well, to good sushi, not the crud I was consuming in college. But for my birthday we went to a small place in Rhode Island (everyone loves a good backstory) that, for dessert, served you. I wasn't sure what to make of this new menu item I'd never heard of. I thought about how it was impossible to fry ice cream as heat tends to melt things. Things like ice cream. But then they brought you out to the table, a round ball of fried dough which, as we cut into it, revealed an inner sphere of green tea ice cream. A flavor I had never tried to that point. That being said, can I just point out that green tea ice cream is really hard to find. I thought everywhere would have it since it is fantastic. But no, not even Ben and Jerry can come up with a cool flavor name for it. In my opinion they could use it for their advocacy line of ice cream. Something like "Green Tree Green Tea". That was awful. Anyway, so I'm told by my colleague that every bite needs to include the fried dough as well as the ice cream. And we dig in. And you were amazing. I was eating something completely foreign to me and enjoying it right away. There was no grace period of thinking about you. I simply knew that you had now entered the top ten list of Lee's favorite cold confection. I still buy you when I can at a handful of sushi places. But you are not everywhere so I eat you when I can. In fact, hope to eat you real soon.

204. Angel Food Cake

My grandmother used to make you for birthdays. I remember you being tall, that you were a version of childhood volcanos only frosted and flat on top. She'd also add sprinkles to you. You were fluffy and spongy all at the same time. Then her hands started to fight against her. The arthritis left her with disfigured claws. She never made you again after that. Even after having surgery to fix her hands she never went back to baking. I remember thinking one year that she had given up and that I was mad at her for it. After all, she was still alive and her hands were working again so what was the problem? After a few years I realized she had stopped because she thought we had all grown up too much to need birthday cake. As if there was a threshold where children became adults and adults just didn't go in for that kind of thing. It was a strange

realization from a teenager who wasn't even old enough to think about legally drinking. Even today I miss those cakes, their decadence, their sheer height and lightness. I miss my grandmother's baking and I think it's because I miss being a child. Nostalgia can be a sad thing. I'm sorry you had to bear the brunt of it.

205. Pixie Stix

I'm not completely sure of this but I'm pretty sure you are another example of American gluttony. A tube literally filled with colored sugar. Nothing else. A waste of plastic and an excess of sugar. When I was younger and went to the beach with my family there were always kids getting you from the food kiosk. I was never allowed to get one but I saw all the other kids with blue and pink lips holding thick straws that were at least two feet long. They always seemed pleasantly happy as their saliva mixed with the sugar and gave it a clumped texture. But I don't know where you came from or what you did to those kids' teeth. I imagine someone somewhere figuring out the whole thing. Give the kids what they want and what their parents were willing to pay for it. They probably settled on the fact that it only cost a few cents to make but they could sell it for a few dollars and parents would be happy to spend so little. What nobody thought about was the fact that only an hour or so later their kids would crash. Hard. That would leave them with too much birthday party as their parents tried to cram them and their toys back into the family van to head home. Wailing, crying, and just plain nonsense because the poor kids didn't know what to do with the feeling of coming down. But you did give those kids a good idea of what doing cocaine would feel like when they got a bit older. Kudos for that.

206. Cranberry Sauce

You are a few different things depending on who you talk to. I have always liked when you come out of a can and keep the shape of the can. It's gross but great all at once. I was introduced to some other kinds as well. Homemade versions of you with whole cranberries and sometimes small pieces of orange peel mixed in. It was good except it always had stems in it. You shouldn't have stems. It's weird and it sucks as a texture because I am constantly left thinking I was going to be choking on something. A wannabe hazard. But I still enjoy you and recently had a cranberry relish which I think is different but I can't see how different it actually is from your various tastes and iterations. If it's not then that is my favorite version. So tart. I do love tart.

207. Blue Raspberry Iced Drink

The ultimate movie drink. Everything else makes me just want to pee. But you are a great alternative. Some people like the cherry version. I call them idiots and fiends. Real people know that a large version of you that comes with a domed top and one of those straws that has a spoon end for easy suck-ups. Plus, added bonus: you turn tongues blue. You are quite a bit of sugar but the real rule of going to movies is that we don't count calories. If we did then we'd just make ourselves hate ourselves for the duration. People should order you based on whatever size comes to mind first. No calculations, just a size. The size we all cry out is "large!" every time. We're Americans. It's our go to. Except for that one time when McDonald's had the super-size version. Then everything was super-sized. Those days are gone. But even if you order a medium the kid at the counter will offer you a large for only a fraction more. We are required to say yes to this. But only if asked! We can't just change our minds as he gets our cup. But don't worry about that because we always say large anyway. I think you should

know that since I learned about you I've never had another drink in a movie theatre. It's you or nothing.

208. Flavored Vodka

I'm not a drinker. But I know this much: There should be a purity to alcohol. I'm not really the one to talk about this since I've always liked ciders and spiked lemonade. However I will continue on this particular venture because flavors can cancel out certain things. This is the dictionary definition of you, vodka: *An alcoholic spirit of Russian origin made by distillation of rye, wheat, or potatoes.* Does that say anything about flavor? No. Because by definition vodka is supposed to be tasteless. So why is it that places are starting to sell flavored you? Because they don't get it. They don't understand that the bartender should be the one adding flavor. Not some fruity drink deciding for you because you had a hankering for peaches. This is a cash grab for people who try and have cool parties at their small downtown apartment. Instead of someone knowledgeable making you for them, they suddenly think they can "make a hell of a drink". Stupid. Stupid companies catering to stupid people. You, Vodka, I feel bad for. You have a reputation to keep up. But then they add in all this literally fruity crap and you're no longer as interesting. I'm sorry you've ended up at this point. It's okay. Someday people will go back to you in your purist form.

209. Energy Drinks

The liquid pixie stix. For those of us with very little energy and need a quick pick-me-up. But you know what you're for. You're aware that this is your particular thing. A liquid punch to the heart to get it beating harder and faster. Some last hours, others last for less. But in either case you are just so strong that the collapse afterwards is a damn power headache. But some people have figured out how to get around that collapse. They just grab another one of you and chug that down. Suddenly two hours awake and alert are followed by another two hours. Doctors have admitted to using them, so have bike messengers. Not sure why I chose those two professions specifically except of course I do! It's because even though you provide them with "energy" that doesn't mean they don't actually need sleep. I'm pretty sure nobody wants to be operated on by a surgeon who has been up for twenty hours and is about to perform a three hours surgery. As for the bike messengers? They have enough trouble. They don't need to be actively drowsy. Kind of hard to avoid car doors when eyes no longer feel connected to the rest of the body. One last thing. I want to just point out that you are yet another foodstuff that caters to dudebros. The Mountain Dew crews. You and I both know what I mean. So stop it. Stop it now!

210. Escargot

You sound disgusting. Just another snot-looking creature holed-up in a shell that shouldn't be bothered. But guess what? I had you. At a French restaurant. I had the experience of trying something genuinely new that wasn't an offshoot of some other food. An example would be sandwiches. You've had one, you'll probably like another. But you, escargot, you were totally different and I really didn't want you. But it was restaurant week and I thought sure, why the hell not? And I am disgusted to say that you were fantastic. Lots of garlic butter and wine and your texture. It was amazing and I recommend it to everyone and anyone. But there aren't really a lot of places that serve you, let alone places that know what they're doing. But this is my moment to put the recommendation out there. People should eat you. Do it people!

211. Veggie Spaghetti

The betrayal. The sheer balls on you. You think you can take away my pasta and replace it with vegetables that sort of look like it? I'm not colorblind or taste blind. I can see what you are. I can taste what you're trying to do and it's not working! Jesus. I mean, okay, you exist. Fine, fair play and there must be people who like you otherwise why would they keep selling you? But I want regular spaghetti. Is that something I'm not allowed to have anymore? Are there just no other ways to make it healthier? I feel like I'm asking too many questions about you. But that's all I have. It's all I have left in my poor body. For decades people have been trying to get us to eat healthier with substitutions. Ever notice that? I mean, you are a substitution, plain and simple but have you noticed it elsewhere? I have. We've already talked about veggie burgers and how awful they are. But with you... I mean, a little starch isn't going to kill me. I don't need someone twirling cucumbers and squash and telling me that with a little butter and salt I'll never know the difference. I noticed. I noticed every time. I've asked waiters what you are doing on my plate and they talk about sustainability for some reason. Is pasta not sustainable? I'm pretty sure that there are about a billion Italian restaurants and none of them have shared their grandmother's veggie spaghetti recipe she learned from her mother and so on. I'd like for you to go away. Fast. Just get gone.

212. Pepper

Let's make this a quick one. You are no good without salt. Salt and Pepper is how you are introduced at every single meal regardless of food being served. "Here," they say, "is salt and pepper should you require them." You are never offered alone. And don't bring up cracked pepper because that's not the type I mean. I mean table pepper. I mean the kind of thing that nobody uses without its counterpart. You've never had top billing and you never will. But thanks for showing up to the party because I can use you. Just not alone. You get it, right? Sorry.

213. Edible Flowers

Let me first admit to having to extensively researching you. Turns out that as lovely as you are there are possible problems that could arise from eating too much of you. Like heart damage. Now who wants that cake? Hopefully it's not for someone who just got out of the hospital with a bypass. Now granted some of you are in spices. I get that. But I'm talking about people just chomping down on you. It seems like there is contention as to how much is too much. So I'm just going to say I've acknowledged you but will not be recommending you.

214. Cold Cuts

When I want a sandwich I head straight for you. I like when you are on platters and folded to look almost floral. You are a bit of a cornerstone for me. Growing up, whenever there was some kind of family celebration we would get platters of you and a variety of sandwich breads and sides and make big ol' sandwiches we'd never finish alone. But we made them because we could. The problem for me now is that I don't have a gallbladder anymore so you tend to upset my stomach. But I've had huge sandwiches with a variety of you in it. Turkey, roast beef, even pastrami. Fantastic. You are a great midnight snack. Just one thin slice with some Dijon mustard. If I'm to be completely open I will say its normally smoked turkey. You are great for school lunches as well. No problem with white bread. It still tastes great and will often get stuck to the roof of the mouth. It's an odd feeling but not unpleasant.

215. All You Can Eat Buffet

American again! You answer the question of just how much is too much? People go to you to load up. Not because they are carbo-loading or anything like that. You're just so damn stupid. Well, so are they. But people pay money to eat you. The quality is almost always lacking. But for the ten dollars someone paid, the pile of crab legs that isn't even touching ice and has been out for hours is looking good. "I can't believe the prices! Can you believe how much we would have to pay if we went to [insert actual quality seafood restaurant]?" The answer is that they would have less but probably wouldn't have gastritis when they got home. Just because the owner thought it would be great to have a "carving table" on slow Wednesdays when you can have as much ham as you'd like doesn't mean you need to have it. Or that the quality of meat is anything but subpar. There are a lot of options out there and when people choose you, I wonder why they don't just check into a crappy hospital and eat the food there. At least they'd be able to help with the after effects.

216. Grapefruit

You became breakfast food for a lot of people. My dad would cut you in half, put each half in a bowl (perfect fit) and put sugar on top. We took spoons, ate the sugar by itself, then tried plowing into you. Eyes were to be protected at all costs. But trying to scoop out your insides was a messy affair. So tart. I could feel it in the back of my mouth as salivary glands worked overtime. But now I can't have you. See, I'm on medication and they told me you were to be avoided. Anywhere from a cup of your juice to the halves we got as kids could really mess me up. I will tell you though, I have fond memories but nowadays you are not missed. Let another generation try you out because I'd rather not die.

217. Chili

So many cook-offs! You, my friend, are beloved by millions and yet there are so many different ways to make you. Many times it means different ingredients but overall, regardless of who wins the contests, you are quite the crowd favorite. I even had the chance to attend a vegetarian you cook-off. And it was great! You are just so tasty that people can add to this, a pinch of something else, and there you go. Do you know that looking you up on Google returned 274,000,000 results? That's astounding. Some people like a slow cooked version while others want a quick instant pot recipe. In all cases there is one thing judges seem to look for. Taste. That may sound simple but it is the variety of herbs and spices that are mixed in. You make things really come together so that a single spoonful should heat the mouth and tickle the sinuses. Granted, there are people who just want the hottest version of you, hands down. I'm more of a slow eater. I like to savor you. And if your stuff is too hot I'll probably be off looking for some milk to counteract the burn. Still, many ways to create means many great creations.

218. Seafood Steam Pots

Summer in New England is all about fresh seafood. One way to enjoy them is through you. A nice big pot on the stove filled with crab legs, some split lobster tails, corn, potatoes and shrimp seems to be a great way to get started. And people shouldn't forget your clam juice broth. Let you simmer for a while and we have a great feast. Everyone gets what they want and it has such a heartiness to it. For added spice, why not throw some Old Bay seasoning and garlic butter in there? Depending on the number of people you are feeding I think people could make one hell of a meal. It must feel great to have such a following and to know that you are fresh. I often feel sorry for people in landlocked states with no direct access to never-frozen seafood. But I suppose that's why those people come to New England and pay through the nose for

things like lobster rolls. And you are no different. Fresh ingredients are a cornerstone to you, you New England treat.

219. Ring Pops

I think the last thing in the world I would want would be to see someone propose with you instead of with a real ring. Wait, my friend Josh did that and it was actually kind of nice. The real ring wasn't ready but he'd planned out the whole proposal. Okay, I take those first few sentences back. Let's try again. You are an interesting bit of edible garment. The strangest part for me is that you are worn like a normal diamond ring. Fine. But what happens when people want to suck on ya? They need to turn their hand in a weird direction and take a few token slurps. After that, in between slurps I mean, you are left just hanging around. You know how dirty hands can get just during a normal day's activities? Very. The answer is very. And yet here you are. I think it's because kids don't give a damn about what their candy looks like as long as it still tastes halfway decent. So as long as they can lick around stray hairs and dust bunnies attached to their tasty snack then there's no problem. Granted, these days people using these the most are at Burning Man and on something that makes them believe they're vegan rhinos, but who am I to judge?

220. Fruit Sala from a glass jar at Nana's

I had a decent childhood but there were food restrictions. Sometimes this didn't even mean that I was denied a certain type of food but rather forced to have something else. I remember going to my Nana's house for family occasions and she would somehow always you, a large glass jar filled with pieces of melon, grapefruit, and grapes just packed into some kind of brothy juice. I recall eating those pieces of fruit, always hoping for a grape but never really getting grapes. The grapefruit slices were just the wrong texture for what people should expect from fruit. I've tried finding this item online but have no idea where she could have purchased it from. I'd like to think that everyone enjoyed it but I think it was just something my Nana had. She was also the one who would order pizza from some random place and tell them she wanted a sheet pizza with red sauce but no cheese. That was a thing. That was why my childhood was decent and not great.

221. Foie Gras

Sigh. Okay, let's get this over with. You are the product of force fed ducks and geese. How horrible, blah blah, shouldn't do it...blah blah. Okay enough of that. You are delicious. You are a delicacy for the same reason a burger isn't. You are very much French, as they seem to be down for anything that involves richer foods. Even though you are outlawed in quite a few places the French have made it a point to say that you are some kind of protected cultural thing. What I want to know is how people got to the point of making you. Who woke up one day and thought that a liver (at the time known only as "the brown thing. No, the other brown thing.") was something that could A. Be made bigger and B. would taste so good. I'm sure it's all lost to the mists of time. People eat you because you taste wonderful. If you didn't taste wonderful people would not continue to eat you. At all. People don't like eating things that taste bad. This is a fact. Do naysayers want to look it up? They should try feeding their toddler cauliflower. Didn't like it did they? That's what I'm saying.

222. Figs

Hi. I need to say that I've been a fan of yours for a good amount of years, especially in Newton form. You have a nice sweet taste and a very interestingly gummy texture. It is strange that I've had you mostly in processed form when eating you fresh probably tastes a hell of a lot better. Do you see yourself relegated to the processed venue or do you wish more people would eat you fresh? I think, and I apologize for being odd, but if I were you I'd want people to have me either fresh or dried. But none of this crushed, handled crud. Why do people act like the only way to eat food these days is to hope a corporation gets to something you haven't yet tried and make it stronger with additives and additions. The next time you try an ad campaign, drop me a line because I'll make sure you are compared to something favorable. Not this whole "tastes like a prune" BS. Take my card. I've got you.

223. Samosas

I've previously discussed my love for Crab Rangoon and the first time I ever had you I had flashovers to that wonder of food. But you, you're different in your own ways. I prefer you fried rather than baked. And unlike our friend Rangoon you have so many different fillings! So good. So yummy. I think you should be more popular and maybe even a more mainstream hors d'oeuvres served in a variety of all your different flavors/fillings. Now, I don't like to be backed in a corner, even if I'm doing it myself, but I think I know my favorite filling. I know, I know, playing favorites isn't really that great but it's a good choice. Ready? Lamb. I know! Great choice. Now, never say I don't put my money where my mouth is. I am going to start an email campaign to make you the second most served hors d'oeuvre after pigs in a blanket. And I'm not underachieving! Nobody, nothing, never. Can't beat the pigs. Sorry. Best I can do.

224. Blood Orange Sorbet

There are all kinds of sorbets out there. I keep hitting the categories rather than the specifics. But when that happens one must pull themselves by their bootstraps and make a choice. So I have chosen you. The tartness you bring to the game is on point. I'd never had orange ice cream before but, as I've been told, sorbet is different. I love when I can actually taste the flavor that is being advertised. You do not disappoint. Have you ever thought about the fact that you could have been a container of boring vanilla bean? This is the tough existential crisis facing a variety of foods. But man oh man you really knocked it out of the park now. Some people don't like sorbet. To them I say "kiss my blood orange sorbet!" and they listen, and they try and kiss you, but I yell again, "I was being rhetorical. Don't lick my sorbet, jerk." And they back away. The other thing is financial. The companies that sell you are often smaller, craft-style businesses. So you are a bit expensive. However, that taste of yours makes eyes roll back in pleasure and the need to wolf you down. But a smart person can put in enough resistance to put the spoon down and count to sixty before picking it back up. Otherwise it's all in, dig with the spoon and maybe even without the spoon. Face first is sometimes the best way. People get dirty but that tartness will really getcha.

225. Crab Cakes

You and me, CC, we're going to do this quick and by the book. Ready? A decent crab cake, as you know, has an abundance of fresh crab, breadcrumbs, and remoulade sauce. Mix them all together, scoop the concoction with a large ice cream scooper, and there you are. Super simple. And people can eat you as is or there is another option. When someone makes or buys you, they have the opportunity to skoosh it into a patty and fry it in a pan. It makes you a bit crispy, softer on the inside. People want that kind of taste out of you. The recipe sounds

pretty simple but there are endless possibilities. Add some spices, add some veggies. It's all great and it ups your game CC. I'll see if I can get people to embrace your fascinating diversity and what it is that you, a nearly blank slate, can be.

226. Egg Drop Soup

There are a variety of you out there. Most of them come from Chinese food restaurants where you get a lovely egg broth combined with stringy pieces of egg yolks. Very filling. But we aren't talking about that kind. No, this time we are going to talk about what my family has been doing to you for generations. When Passover comes around we have two dinners two nights in a row. It is both a ceremony and meal to be done with family and friends. At one point you are supposed to eat egg. Well in my family that means you. Cold you. The broth is water, the egg is hardboiled and sliced, and you can add salt if you want. That's it. Cold eggs in water. And you know what? Every year I wolf it down. I would never think of making it at any other time of the year. And yet here we are, eating as a family and nobody says a word. Quiet slurping as some people love it, others aren't sure, and still others are ready to throw it away but don't want to be rude. I'm a slurper. I really am. That's tradition for ya!

227. Bananas Foster

Ooooooh, we have an interactive element to this one! You are so cool. Like, the greatest concept for a dessert ever. I mean, for one thing you have ice cream and bananas. That concept is b-a-n-a-n-a-s! But wait, what about the sugar? And the piece de resistance, you get lit on fire! Fire food! That's a lot of exclamation points. But seriously has anyone ever sent you back for being too good? In restaurant culture I bet they speak in low tones about how nobody has ever sent you back to the kitchen. It would be tantamount to treason during the civil war. They'd hang you for less. If people can wrap their teeth around some of you then they better not let go. You are the type of dessert that once people finish it, the check has already come to the table. But someone looks at their little group and says, "I know this sounds crazy but I think we need to get another one and share it!" Now, that's all well and good but in this situation, people would definitely say yes! "Waitress, you can tear up this bill as well will be needed another bananas foster and four clean spoons!" Just so cool. And once the alcohol has burnt down, you get that rich rum/liqueur smell and flavor. Never overpowering, but a definite presence. Have I mentioned that I grew up in a no-dessert house? You were one of the first that I had after I moved out. To think I'd missed out on you that entire time? Brings a tear to my eye.

228. Bulk Candy

This time we are embracing the category rather than the individual products. Most grocery stores now have a bulk candy aisle. People grab a bag and start filling it with everything they can. It doesn't matter if the items don't go together. Put that chocolate covered Oreo next to all the champagne gummy bears. Add some sour suckers on top of chocolate covered pretzels. My, this place has a lot of things covered in chocolate. But why is anyone doing this? A haphazard collection of candy and snacks? Easy. These people will be heading to a film at the local movie palace and the candy there costs way too much. So duck the system by bringing their own bags of candy hidden in all sorts of places. They need to watch out because sometimes people will hide things down their pants and if you have someone who sweats a lot, those chocolate covered items are going to melt. In intimate places. Maybe next time we stick to the gummy bears.

229. Breakfast Pizza

I know we've already spoken with Pizza. But you are a whole different animal. Anyone who has never had you, BP, should know what you are. I can pretty much put it this way: Hello people, this is my good friend BP. He is basically a sheet pizza. However, he has no red sauce. Instead he is covered in egg, a variety of shredded cheeses, and things like mushrooms or ham and bacon. Cook him up and there you go, essentially an omelet with a nice crunchy crust. Got it? So I do want to say, BP, when I first saw you I thought you were a waste. Why not just have the omelet? Why does everything need to be combined? Turns out I was a complete fool and idiot. The matchup of crust and eggs. Perfection. I could probably live off you but I want to make sure that these things aren't something I have all the time. Also, I don't want an edge piece. I want a middle piece with lots of egg, cheese, and whatever else we've decided to put on. Be eating you real soon, BP. Real soon.

230. Stuffing

Today we shall address the only real stuffing that should ever be discussed: Thanksgiving stuffing! Oh, you are the best kind. It might be because you are a direct reminder of my second favorite holiday or it could be that I ate so much of you last year that I can still taste you now. You are so good. With fresh herbs, spongy bread pieces, and of course butter. I think I may have dumbed that down a bit to just the parts I think of when I dream but its okay. On a list of "if these items were missing it would destroy thanksgiving" you are right below turkey. Except for vegetarians. If they were missing it wouldn't destroy anything. But here's my problem, I think that you (I'm going to get slammed for this) might be better as leftovers. Please don't hit me! In fact, I believe that most thanksgiving foods are better later after they've cooled and then been placed in the microwave. But you must be moist. If you are too dry then not only are you not great on Thanksgiving, you will be like a cracker the next day. That's why so many people make extra gravy. Not for the meal, but for the next day. In fact, I'm going to follow this up with one of the best leftovers meal the world over.

231. Thanksgiving Leftover Sandwich or Roll Up

Some of your components have already been discussed and drooled over in previous entries. However, never have they been brought together as a whole. You are the pinnacle of sandwiches and Roll Ups. I just want to start by pointing out that there are quite a few delis that now sell you year round. I think that's cheating. People need the homemade taste that only comes from slow cooking, proper baking, and hints of a meal set before a lot of families. I suppose your whole point is to give us the previous day back only in sandwich form. Personally I like a roll up better, but to each their own. When I bite into you I feel every flavor both individually and in tandem. The turkey brings the majority of instant flavor. Tender, moist meat surrounding stuffing with its herbs and bread, add to that the cranberry sauce for a kick of tartness and end it with the entire thing covered in homemade gravy. That, my friend, is why you are the best sandwich. For people who have never eaten you I can only say that they are foolish and missing out. They say that they don't like the idea of all the ingredients all at once. What kind of god fearing American doesn't want to cram all foods into their face all at once all the time? Sometimes people baffle me.

232. Ribs

"You need to be a real animal to eat ribs". I might trademark that statement for a new restaurant idea. But the thing about you is that people really need to be okay with their place on the food

chain to eat you. You are basically a horror movie image where someone is eviscerated and you just see their innards being slightly held in by their ribs which, as they do in such movies, are sticking out, red with blood and dark with meat. Kind of disturbing if people can't let it go and can't stop picturing it. Now me? The first time I had you was at a genuine steak restaurant. They brought out the menus and I made some kind of statement that I'd never had you before. The table nearly killed me for what they deemed heresy. Was I a vegetarian? Or worse, a vegan?! No, I explained that I just never had them before. This was an establishment known for the way they prepared you. So I ordered, under pressure, a rack of you. There were high fives around the table and smacks on the back. But when they brought out the food I think you took up one-third of the table. I felt like Fred Flinstone in the opening credits to that show where the car flips because the ribs are so big. Apparently I should have ordered a half-rack. Again, these are measurements and words that had no place in my head at the time. But then I took a bite (even as the table started passing me napkins), realizing that I had to be all-in on this food extravaganza. And you did not disappoint. I ate almost your entire rack. After that I let the rest of the table indulge. I was knee deep in meat sweats and trying to breath. It felt like your meat had taken up all the space in my torso and my lungs were begging for just a bit more to keep me alive. I don't think I have to tell you which room of the house I sat in that night. Woof.

233. Chicken Quesadilla

You're pretty easy. I bet all the girls love you. They just want two tortillas with some shredded cheese, diced chicken, and one hell of a lot of toppings squished and melted together. My sister and I, when we didn't have jobs and were living at home, came upon the idea for making you out of nowhere. Neither of us was really raised with Mexican food since we'd kept kosher our whole lives. But we had the right pan and all the ingredients and damned if you didn't turn out just the way we wanted you. The only problem was preparation. See, there's a lot of ingredients that can be used or not used depending on people's tastes. But the thing is that once you decide on your ingredients you need to prepare them. Now at any restaurant they will already have all your ingredients set and ready so it takes about five minutes to make one of you. But for the rest of us doing it at home, we are chopping in real time. So each quesadilla takes a dang half hour before its ready. So what is a person to do? Can't really just give you to the first person and then start on the second. Therefore, instead of sitting at a table, We wind up splitting the first one while still standing over the second done and then we ate the second one, split again, standing over the now used cutting board. I think we made you three times before we realized that it was definitely worth the few minutes and fewer dollars to just get you at a proper restaurant. Besides, they do it so much better. I'm the kind of guy that people probably assume I say "kay-sah-dee-la" which I don't! But I look like that guy. Ah well. Maybe I'll order you that way next time to watch people's reactions. That'll be fun.

234. Moon (half and half) Cookies

Ah yes, you. How is it that we've waited so long to talk about your lasting effects on the eyes, hearts, and minds of children? Here's the thing about bakeries: They know their customers. And one segment that other people tend to overlook are children. Little children. The kind of children whose eyes are at exactly the proper height to stare into the case at the fresh, colorful cookies. There is a theory that states that anyone who buys cookies for children while in a bakery is putting those children on a dark path filled with cavities and orthodonture bills the likes of which they've never seen. I don't subscribe to that, regardless of cavities. But I will say this, the cookie that all parents purchase for their children at the bakery is you. The Moon Cookie. Half chocolate, half vanilla, all around amazing. But wait! There's also the matter of flavors to

discuss. Sure there are two and they are often found on a more cake-like rather than straight cookie. But they are the ultimate sharing cookie because nobody wants both sides at the same time. It's too much pressure. Now, folks will say why not a bite from one side then a bite from another and continue in that fashion? Because it's wrong. It's the wrong thing to do. People either want (in the moment) chocolate or vanilla. Nobody eats both sides. And if they do end up eating both sides of you it definitely isn't at the same time. It's more of a "I was in the mood for chocolate, got my fill, now I'll save the vanilla for later tonight." True. Nobody in their right mind eats both sides at the same time. That also makes you a great cookie for sharing. No two people ever want the same side at the same time (fact!) so a simple split up the middle and everyone is happy. Unless I'm wrong. Which, as can be seen by my facts, I never am.

235. Tofu

God help us all, it's come to this. You weird little sponge, I have no idea what to make of you. Actually, I could probably make anything of you. However, there is the fact that whatever I am making would just be a copy of an existing dish. Add to that the fact that you taste like the back of the tongue of a guy with halitosis. Really, what good is being so malleable when all you are is a poseur. You are the poseur of all foods. And to believe that people actually tout you as life-changing and that you've made it so they don't even crave meats anymore... they're joking, right? I mean, these people can't be in their right minds. Ever heard of Tofurkey? Real product made of you that certain people will say is a great alternative to normal turkey. There is no way to talk about you without the hair standing up on my arms and goosebumps appearing. You are a scary, gross, little bean curd concoction that gives people the mumps. Seriously. I read that. Okay fine, I didn't but please don't ignore me! You need to stop telling people about your firmness. That's just not something people should do! "Oh look at me, I'm really firm, use me in soups." Who even introduces themselves like that? I think you should have some dignity and admit that you are not <seriously trying to hold down lunch> ice cream. Yeah, there's recipes everywhere for it. Eh-vuh-ree-wair! I'm sorry but I can't keep this up. I need a snack. A real snack. Don't try to follow me because I'll know.

236. Collard Greens

We are once again entering into a discussion based around something I did not grow up with at all. Like, at all. The only reason I knew about you in the first place was movies starring mostly black casts. It was a big thing. Someone's grandma was always cooking a meal and saying things like "how on earth could you say no to a second helping of my collard greens?" I laughed because I like to laugh at TV stereotypes. But back to you. I would like to point out that even though many cultures have some form of you, we are going to stick to the US, particularly the southern part (of the US, not of you). One thing I've learned from having had you a few times now is that people aren't just eating you as is. Not like lettuce for salad or as a garnish. No, you are a bit of a combination plate, mixed with meats. Smoked meats. And we know I love myself some smoked meats. Heck, your "Greens" part is the afterthought. With every recipe I've read (quite a few at this point) and all the people I've asked, (a few. Don't worry about it.) the meats and seasonings go in first and you follow later. But the fact that you taste so good that I want to do anything but share you can make for awkward meals with people. Especially if everyone assumes we are eating "family style". No thanks. I made them, I want to eat them. The rest of you can go eat dried kale chips. Don't forget butter. Butter, as in all things, is essential to the process.

237. Green Bean Casserole

You are a dish I only eat on holidays. I don't know why. I've got a few different ones that are like that. But I've never tried making you and I'm not sure if that's a good or bad thing. I could probably follow a recipe but you are one of those foods that someone in the family has the perfect recipe that only they can recreate year after year. And god forbid someone else tries to make that signature dish. In your case it is my aunt. She's does an amazing job. The onions are always crisp the beans are always tasty, not to mention the variety of tastes from (one of my favorite foods) seasoned mushroom soup. I just found out that you were created by Campbell's. I don't know how I feel about that. I'm not really a fan of the fact that a family favorite started out in a lab for a major food producer. Is that weird? Is it weirder that I'm writing this in real-time? No matter. When I eat you I don't eat you as a side. I eat you as an accompaniment to the main dish. What I mean is that, let's say the main course is turkey. I will, for my first round, put turkey on half the plate and you on the other half. Forget all the other sides that might be on the table. They can wait until round two. But I know if I don't get enough of you that the rest of my family will go for you first. I can't have that happen. You shall be mine! Also, I might look up how Campbell's makes you to see if I can do better than my aunt. Shhh. She can't know.

238. Grape Juice

For a long time you were associated in my mind with religious ceremonies. Growing up, that was what little kids were given while the adults drank wine. I thought nothing of it at the time. So you were usually given to me in a small cup, a prayer was said, and you were tossed back like a shot during spring break. But then I got older. And one day I was food shopping for myself, was happily bumbling down the drinks aisle and there you were. A big plastic bottle of you. Suddenly my brain seized up. How were you just...available at the grocery store? How could I just buy you and go home and have a glass of you. It's not like you were orange juice or apple juice. I remember picking you up as if you were an Oscar I'd just won and I couldn't believe my luck. But I looked around. I was suddenly very aware of my surroundings. Aware and suspicious. What if there was a Rabbi hiding behind the Capri Sun display who was going to jump out, grab the bottle, and go running away? Turns out the only rules I have to follow with you are the same ones that apply to most fruit juice: Don't swig all at once, don't but more than one bottle at a time, and make sure to drink responsibly. So, I bought you. I brought you home with my groceries and when they were all put away I opened the cabinet above the sink and poured myself a glass. You tasted like the Sabbath. But after a few glasses over the course of the week you continued to taste like Sabbath. I don't buy you anymore. My childhood caught up with me.

239. Papadum

We welcome you to another episode of thing's I learned about later in life. You know, there are certain things we all just take for granted when it comes to food. Well, "we" being people who have access to it. One of those things is the fact that we have all sorts of food but nowhere to put it. And I don't mean canned goods. I mean that an entire grocery aisle, crackers, had to be made so people would know they have choices when it comes to food conveyance. You, my little Papadum are a way tastier version than a typical cracker. First of all, you are often larger. Second, you are often made by hand and roasted. Second, you can be eaten as a snack. I know crackers can too but I don't want to lose my point. You are also great for a variety of dishes and chopped up a bit and mixed with a little of this and a little of that. I wouldn't say you are the most fantastic taste explosion but when I have Indian food you are always right there to help me get more of that glorious food down the ol' gullet.

240. Chicken Alfredo

It gives me great pleasure to be talking to you. I think when I am considering foods to eat in restaurants you are often on the menu. Especially if it's a chain restaurant that wants me to think it's at least vaguely Italian. First off, can we talk cream? Can we talk mother*#\$ing cream!? God, you are so creamy that I just want to do things... You know what? We can discuss that later. But damn are you creamy. And the fettuccini is cooked just enough and the chicken is moist and buttery. Here's my problem: I sometimes buy you frozen and just heat you up in the oven. I know! What is wrong with me? But I don't even care sometimes. It's your three main ingredients that get me. I mean, creamy chicken? Smooth, silky pasta? And that mother*#\$ing cream!? You are a meal wrapped in another meal. When a lot of people think of Italian foods they see red sauce and a sprinkle of cheese on top. Not this guy. I see it as a giant tasting menu of all the foods I love and have always loved. But one of these days you beautiful bastard, I'm going to make you, realize I did it wrong, and then go back to the frozen version. Who cares? Oh, did we end up discussing the cream...?

241. Kimchi

Jesus. Okay, I'll admit I've never had you before but I just looked you up online and I am appalled at what people are eating these days. Here's a phrase I'd rather not hear again, "fermented vegetables". That is just awful. And yes, I understand that there are several varieties of this dish but that didn't stop me from reading the list and subsequently realizing that there is no variant that I would enjoy. See how I made it all about me, Kimchi? And look, fair play to you, people enjoy you as a staple in their diets or when they go to restaurants. I just think that something I'm not a fan of is the phrase "watery" which is the word that seems to be used by quite a few people to describe you. I know you're not soup, but even with soup you don't call it watery. Now it appears, after more research, that there are possibly hundreds of variations on you but I'm sticking to my guns. I'm going to really get a foothold and stand up for what I believe in. Although I'm not really sure what I am believing in when it comes to you. Possibly the fact that I won't like you? Without ever trying you? Fine, everyone can have their fermented, watery vegetables. I'm just going to sit back and grimace.

242. Mini Pizza bagels

Yes! I knew you'd be here sooner or later. But let's get one thing straight. I hate you for two reasons. So, let's get two things straight. Numero one: you are not a normal sized pizza bagel and that is what I actually want. Number dos: because of how small you are you fit right in my mouth and burn my upper palette straight to hell. It really pisses me off. Three ingredients and two of them are molten. I'm sure you're a great afternoon snack for the kids but why give them seven of something when they could have one big version? Half of them can't even count! (Cough public schools cough) I think I'm putting you in my no category. Go burn someone else you tiny bonfires.

243. Pineapple

Look at you trying to be so daunting. Like your outside is so scary. Sorry but you are basically wearing a weird crown. And everyone laughs at a crown (on fruit. Not royalty. At least not to their faces). You seem to work pretty well with other fruits in fruit salads, although your taste is biting and sometimes overpowers any mix. I also find you to be quite good on chicken kabobs. Some savory and sweet all together makes it work. In the end I think you are a overtly defensive little fruit who doesn't understand that you're going to be eaten one way or another.

244. Beets

Really? You're going to just sit there and expect me to say nice things to you? How about this? We chalk it up to a mix up and you can just go away. I'll wait...

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Sticking around, huh? Ok. Fine. But you've been warned. Let's talk about how you were a food my great grandparents ate because it was cheap and they had more kids than money. So people were forced to eat you. And we all know that when you are forced to eat something it just tastes worse. And what kind of a person would I be if I started telling people how great you are when my family suffered through you? "But you can make things with beets!" Yeah. You can make piles of beets and burn it down. I assume you're flammable. No matter. Vegans eat you because you are soulless. I eat steak because my relatives would have liked to years ago. No beets. And if my kids start liking it, everyone's getting time outs!

245. Maple syrup

Nothing says fall in New England like you. People all over the world have syrup on things like pancakes but it's not the same. When people tap trees to get to you it is authentic. You are thick, pure goodness. But who found you first? Did someone think they had tree sap on their hands and try to lick it off? Then realized what you were? That a tree could produce you is fascinating. You know what I put you on? A piece of salmon. Oooh that is some great tasting fish. You add so much flavor to it. Whenever I see people adding blueberry or strawberry "syrup" on their waffles it sickens me. The whole syrup game is about (or should be about) authenticity. There is nothing like you. You make me want to put you on everything. Maybe dip some chips in you while I'm at it! So many options, so many choices.

246. Pancakes

I love you but you do terrible things to my stomach. Not sure why. Maybe I've got troubles with buttermilk. These things happen. Sometimes I'll have you for dinner and your taste makes me feel like I'm supposed to be eating fast so I can get to work on time. Jokes on me. There are places that will give a person as many of you as they want. But most people go for volume. I think that's a mistake. There's no time limit so why rush? Just eat a few, sit back and breathe. If people need to use the restroom to make room, so be it. There aren't restrictions. But you are so fluffed and soft that people just need to eat fast. Plus if there is too much fake syrup they get mushy too quickly. But still, so tasty.

247. Sandwich cookies

Cookie-cream-cookie. I don't care what kind I just want to make sure you hear me when I say "stop". What I need you to stop is all this crazy overstuffing of cream. I need you to stop trying to make all kinds of weird flavors like Aardvark Chocolate (sounds nice) that are around only for a limited time. Do people collect you or are you flooding the market just to see what sticks? All I want is for you to go back to normal flavors in regular amounts. I don't need twice the cream. I'd rather have more cookies altogether. But what you really should know is I'm a cream-cookie-cookie guy. I twist you open, lick off all the cream, then eat the cookies. Mostly because I need to. I feel wasteful if I throw the cookie parts away. Plus I've been known to binge movies while eating an entire box of you. And I'm staying neutral because it's not always the same brands.

Then I get stomach aches and I curse you and your cream as if my overeating was your fault. Which it is. I maintain that as fact. Now come here so I can bite you!

248. Gefilte Fish

I've been eating you since I was old enough to eat. Never every day but definitely on holidays. You were a true staple of my religious upbringing. But I see why people hate you. You are minced whitefish that's been squished together and kept in a glass jar filled with some kind of gloopy afterbirth. But if you get sliced into pieces and eaten with horseradish? So good. Now some may say that the horseradish method works because it overpowers your natural taste. I say that the taste is only half the problem for most people. Texture is the other. There is nothing even pretending that you are anything but minced fish. I don't think you are a food I'd recommend to others. Because I like my friends and want to keep them around. But I'll still eat you. Mostly out of habit, but you can't be picky when it comes to reasons.

249. Grape leaves

Ok, fine. We'll talk about you. You get stuffed with rice and herbs and it doesn't help. Honestly, I've had you a few times and I'm always trying to keep an open mind. But you are just not good. Not at all. Kind of wet with a few token ingredients that I suppose are there to balance out you. Sad really. I have a theory that someone didn't like wasting what they saw as perfectly good food and began wrapping decent food in you. You are a glorified envelope. And you taste like an envelope too. You are supposed to be this staple of Greek cuisine. That doesn't say much about Greek food. A beautiful culture but this, you, are the not a decent example. Greeks should be putting something else out there. You had a chance and failed. Deal with it.

250. Fluff

A childhood staple in my house. You were gooey, sticky, and all kinds of wonderful. Eating you was like melting marshmallow and adding more sugar. A sweet concoction. Not everyone knows about you. I find that supremely sad. They even make you in vodka form, though I'm not sure what that tastes like. There's even a yearly festival dedicated to you. People come from all over to try you in different recipes. My main interaction with you was as a child when my mother would make peanut butter and you sandwiches. Talk about tasty. But you are also the type of food that, hours after eating you, people will point to the corner of my mouth and say "you, uh, you've got something stuck to your...no, lower. Right there. Got it". Doesn't matter though. Because that just means I get one last taste. I will say that there is a recipe I've made at home. It's a grilled banana and you sandwich. To describe the taste I'd need to create new words that don't exist yet. Like... glamtastic or tastypasty. Not sure. I'll work on those.

251. Almonds

You're all right but I don't trust you. In any given nut mix I think you might not be the best of the best. However there are quite a few people that like you exactly as you are and wouldn't change a thing. I want to know how they feel about the growing process. As in, do they know about your water usage? Yeah, I did my research and learned something nefarious. Growing you requires a boatload of water. And since you are mainly grown in California, where they are prone to droughts, you aren't really in the best position to argue the point. "But," you say, "people love me. People love how I taste." Yeah, they know you but do they know that you also get shipped overseas? That you are depleting resources around you to the point that some

people won't eat you anymore? Now listen, I wasn't thrilled with you before I did my research and I'm even less thrilled with you now. You may even tell me that the facts are garbled and that activists are protesting using false numbers. But to that I say, "shut up. This is my entry." I think you are just the kind of thing that would keep using people's water regardless of facts, mostly because you need the publicity since you're not even that good to begin with. I feel like I'm repeating myself but I need to make this known! I just don't know anyone who would miss you if you happened to disappear off the face of the earth forever and ever. Peace!

252. Peach Cobbler

You are so damn tasty I want to eat your entire family. Plus, and this is my favorite thing, you are super easy to make! The big difference between you and other sweet baked goods is that you taste good when cold but even better when hot. Especially with some ice cream. Vanilla bean of course (do they make peach ice cream?). But here's the deal, you are only as good as when you were picked. What I mean is that fresh peaches truly makes you great. People will wait an entire year just for peach season before making you. I think the big thing here is that you are great for parties, as a dessert after a good meal, or even while sitting alone on a couch in a basement in the dark watching anime. I've only ever had you as dessert after a good meal so please stop asking what kind of TV is in my basement. I just think that a recipe that calls for only, pretty much, five or six ingredients and tastes as good as you should be placed on a watch list. Sooner or later you're going to kill someone by being so good. And on that day they will speak of me and how the government should have listened. For shame.

253. Non-Fish Sushi

Okay, so here's the thing. I've talked about you before and how much I enjoy you and how much I recommend you. But now people are telling me that they won't "do sushi" because of all the "raw fish". I find this laughable. Ha. Ha. Ha. Those were derisive laughs. Because here's the thing, there are plenty of non-fish options out there for the eagle-eyed vegetarians to choose from. Ever heard of a sweet potato tempura roll? Oh, they haven't. What about an avocado roll? Never thought to check? I have to say that people just don't get you. They just think a place that sells you must obviously just have piles of dead octopus in back next to the soft drink machine. They think people just walk in the door, yell "I'm here for sushi!" and a guy just throws octopus arms at them and then hands them a bill. But you and I know better. They only throw the suckers. Delicacy.

254. Omelets

You are a folded wonder with the ability to be diverse in quite a few ways. When people make or order you they have the options of going plain, with cheese, with selected veggies, selected meats, or everything at once. I know that I actually prefer to get you at late night diners rather than early morning. I'm not sure why, exactly but I just know that I do. Do you think more people like you a certain way? I know for me I often get what is stated to be a Denver version of you. That includes diced ham, green peppers and onions. I just love the combination. It tastes so fresh. Then again, I'm not a huge fan of meat in you. I feel like they sometimes make you too meaty. They call you a Meat Lovers and just cram you full of everything. The one thing they don't mean to cram in is the heartburn. The dreaded meat sweats followed by a prolonged visit to the porcelain throne.

255. Hard Boiled Eggs

Whenever I am in the mood for something to eat that mirrors what my head would look like without hair, I turn to you. Apparently you are a very strong shape. If someone tries to squeeze you top to bottom it's nearly impossible. But if they try and squeeze you on the side, kappow! But that all eggs. I want to talk about you specifically. You see, growing up we had a small shelf in our fridge door where we kept you. My father drew an X on you so he wouldn't bring a regular egg to work by accident. Another thing my dad used to do was to peel you, cut you in half, and put a pat of butter in the middle like a sandwich. He'd then eat you. My mom put an end to that when she thought he was getting fat. None of us tried mimicking that behavior.

256. Haggis

First of all, I just learned that you are illegal to import into the US because you have too much sheep's lung in you. That's a jarring first impression if I do say so myself. But you are a constant punchline for people. They say things like "well the chicken might not be great but at least it isn't haggis!" Then everyone laughs even though they don't know what you even taste like. See, I think that you have the same problem that sushi had. A few people have tried you but not enough to make you mainstream. But, if people start making you more often and trying out recipes maybe everyone will come around and there will be Scottish restaurants serving "authentic cuisine". Sounds a little far-fetched but hey, it could happen. Now... how do I handle this part? I mean, a big part of you is offal. That's animal organs. It's the part most people throw away. It's not attractive like the so-called normal parts of the animal. Here in the US we are never really eating it because a lot of places don't allow it. Steaks and turkeys and chickens come to us with no offal. But let's say, hypothetically that people can get past the offal. Well, then there's the suet. That's fat. Hard fat from around organs. It's also used in bird feeders. Mix that with the offal and shove it in a makeshift bag made of the animal's stomach. See? You don't sound so crazy. Not so horrible. But this might have all sounded a bit rude. I don't mean to be that way but good lord, I'm thinking that defending you isn't really what I should be doing. I think I'll stop. Maybe I will get to eat you someday but right now I'm stickin' to chickin.

257. Breadsticks

Nothing starts a mediocre meal off in an American chain restaurant like you. My favorites are the ones you get free. But I have noticed that these days they only give you to people after they've placed their order. I think it's a trust thing. I think that people have come into these restaurants, eaten a lot of you while pretending to peruse the menu. Then, once they are full they leave. They hadn't stolen anything. You were free. Where's the lawsuit? Sometimes you're warm as if you were made in-house although we all know the truth. Plus you have a buttered glaze. Good stuff. I don't know if restaurants around the world do the whole bread-first thing but if they don't? Sad. It would make the world sad.

258. Blooming onion

There are some restaurants that carry you. Basically you are a normal onion that is specially cut to look like a blooming flower. You are then deep fried and served with a slightly tangy dipping sauce. The amount of caloric grossness you deliver is off the charts. I'd love to see how many points weight watchers tells us how many points just one bloom is. It's probably enough for three weeks. I have never seen anyone finish an entire you, even a group. I'd rather not talk about money but the markup on you has got to be crazy. Convincing six people to essentially pay for a single onion. To share. Brilliant.

259. Edamame (soybeans)

You are a great, easy, healthier-than-most appetizer quality. That's why people love you. Steamed beans in the pod and lightly salted. I could munch on you all day. But only if you are fresh. On day two you just have that too-old sloppy limp taste. You are one reason I often enjoy Japanese cuisine. Simple and easy. Two words that describe both you and me in college. Badum bum! Little joke for you, edamame. The other thing about you is that you are universal. Little kids and the elderly enjoy you because teeth are not needed. The middle aged like you because they are trying to watch their weight. And teens like you because they feel you are authentic Asian cuisine. Teens aren't that bright. Have you seen how they've almost singlehandedly jacked up the price of sushi? Ugh. A conversation for another time.

260. Fried Plantains

Small bananas. Small bananas cut into pieces and fried. If you aren't ripe enough you make my tongue feel furry. I hate that dry feeling. But when you are fresh it's like having dessert with my meal. I have attempted to make you at home but with terrible results. I'm not even sure why. But what I do know is that if not for Mexican restaurants I don't think I'd ever have heard or cared about you. But now I treat you like...well...a treat. You are something I have every so often and that means I don't get desensitized to your yellow goodness.

261. Rice Krispie treats

Bakers and confectioners are brilliant. When did they realize you? When did someone point out that their kids loved when they mixed marshmallow fluff with Rice Krispie cereal? It's a genuine homegrown recipe that makes you feel authentic. Plus you are something everyone can make in their own at home without special ingredients. People use you on baking shows. They take a lot of you and mold and cut and when they're done you look like a dragon or a beach ball or whatever else they think of. Versatile is probably the best word to describe you. And in the end, no matter what you look like kids will always enjoy you. Good on ya!

262. Potatoes

Not the most immediate of foods. What I mean is that most people want to cook or boil or do something else to you to make you "edible". But it's not necessary. Not exactly. I mean, you are edible straight out of the ground to someone who doesn't care all that much about taste. I don't mean to be crass but if people really wanted to taste dirt they could just eat dirt. Cut you out altogether as go between and shove their faces into their lawns. However if we are talking about prepping you there are quite a few ways to go. This is why many people see you as a staple food in many countries. I think you are mostly associated with the Irish and the You Blight. You were the staple food for so many that when the blight came through it caused death amongst the poorest in Ireland. Terrible years. People look back and ask "why didn't they just eat something else?" Well geniuses, there was nothing else! People subsisted on you in a variety of ways and when you disappeared, so did they. What a downer. Let me think of something fun about you. Hold on. Hold on. Okay: you were the first vegetable to be grown in space. There you go. Fun!

263. Knishes

One of my favorite foods. For those who don't know what you are I'll give the short answer. You

are a filling of meat or potato covered in dough and baked. There are other kinds of you but I only really like the two options I just gave. They are a traditional Jewish food but everyone can have them! Not sure if I had to just give permission but there you go. Many Jewish delis carry you, also Jewish butcher shops. All people need to do is bake you for a short amount of time and then eat you. I like you with ketchup. I dunno. I might be in the minority on this one.

264. Okra

I've never eaten you. At least I don't think I have. But I've been talking to people who have and the general consensus is that you are tasty. The internet has also told me that you can be used as a coffee substitute. So... that's cool. Also you are supposed to be a great crop for the poorer nations of the world. That seems nice. When I eventually do have you it will probably be a great experience. I look forward to it.

265. Caprese Salad

The freshest of summer salads. You are three ingredients: basil, mozzarella, and tomato. All three can be beyond fresh. They are three layers of swirling tastes that when put together with a slight drizzle of olive oil, there doesn't even need to be a meal. Many use you as a substitute for regular salad and/or appetizer. I have yet to meet a single person who dislikes you. Your name on a menu ensures an instant order. Plus you are never posh. You, in fact, are quite the leveler between the various strata in our society. The farmer and the king each enjoy you though only one may know your preparation. That was a dig at kings, by the way. Thank you for adding such full freshness to my life.

266. Lemon Meringue

I'll admit you are a bit harder to make than other recipes I've been looking at. That being said, I have enjoyed you on a few occasions. I've had the store-bought brands as well as the homemade and I can tell you that the store kind is really not that great. In fact, people who buy that kind instead of making their own version of you really need to reconsider their life choices. I think the hardest part of making you is the meringue. The amount of time spent whipping egg whites properly is some kind of giant riddle. I don't think I could do it. Well, maybe not on my first try but still, I don't hold out much hope for myself. But wait, there's another piece to this that people could be outsourcing to their favorite grocery store. Your crust. The great debate rages: Store bought or homemade? I'm going to cave a little on this one actually. I think for myself, if something had to be bought it would be the crust. Crust doesn't really vary that much. At least not if it's a typical kind. I know people who are very proud of their homemade crusts. Good for them. How does that make you feel? I suppose all recipes are a form of Frankensteinian science. All the different parts being sewn together to create this final product. And to anyone who has ever eaten you, fresh, knows that there are quite a few pieces that need to taste good together. I might try to make you real soon. We shall see...

267. Ramen

So many different varieties. What is it with food being so diverse? I kid. I'm thrilled to talk about a dish that is so easy anyone can modify it. You are, essentially, noodles. Regular old noodles. The trick is what gets added to you. People have so many different recipes that to list them here would take up a few too many characters. I can say that you are originally Japanese but have seen extreme growth around the globe with the advent of not only Japanese

restaurants but the invention of the instant variety that all college students eat. Granted, the instant types are usually flavored with a bit of diced, frozen vegetables. But your true form is noodles in broth. That broth of yours can be meat, fish, or even veggie. It just depends on what someone's particular taste buds want. Add some sliced meat, hard boiled eggs, and even a few dashes of soy sauce. You may not be instant but once you are placed in front of someone, they will be instantly happy to have ordered you.

268. Bruschetta

This one is going to be quick because you are quick. Or at least you are quick to be gobbled up by the hungry masses that grab you off hors d'oeuvres trays when they come out of the kitchen at someone's bar mitzvah. You are pretty standard fare with some bread, usually toasted and toppings on said bread. But it's about adding things like meat and cheese and definitely tomato. I say definitely because over the multitude of times I've had you there was always bread and tomato. Everything else was just to see what kinds of flavors could be stacked on you. I really don't think I need to explain you anymore. Everyone reading this has probably tried you at some point or another. So, cheers?

269. Injera

Hi there! Welcome to the party. A friend recommended you to me and I must say, you look great. You are, apparently, the national dish of Somalia and Ethiopia. That is impressive. I've never heard of bread being that remarkable that it is the national dish. You should be proud of that moniker. Essentially you are a type of flatbread that, if I'm right about this, is a little spongy. We have talked about breads like you before, wherein you play all the roles at the dinner party. I mean that you are used to soak up stew, used as a bit of an edible plate for eating a variety of different foods. I read a very interesting article that pretty much said when the table "is no longer covered in you, the meal is over". Thank you internet for that fun fact. I'm also going to need to shout out to my Jewish folks because the Falasha Jews that came from the area brought you to Israel and spread all over that region. Tasty.

270. Shrimp Cocktail

Steamed, cleaned, and fresh. You are a favorite around these parts. And by these parts I mean my mouth. I wasn't always into you (see my talk with lobster) but you surprised me. Although you can be a bit expensive I do love any food that allows me to dip. And you definitely offer an abundance of dippage™. This might sound strange but you are the kind of food that can sometimes be described best by what you aren't, rather than what you are. For example, you aren't fishy. I think we've all been to restaurants or parties where you taste aged, dry, and wet all at the same time. I think it's when you have been previously frozen that we get that particular taste combination. It's not good and it makes you pretty gross, regardless of dippage. But when you are good, you are excellent and I think you provide a taste sensation that I can't believe I spent years avoiding. Now all I need to do is get invited to a cocktail party tonight so I can calm down this craving.

271. Tartar Sauce

As has been previously mentioned, you are often paired with fried fish, fish sticks, etc. I can't think of what else you'd be good with. I'm pretty sure you were developed squarely for seafood. But you are a very easy recipe to make at home. Mayo, diced dill pickle, and a few other easy

ingredients. It seems a bit strange that we don't use you for anything else. Everyone I've spoken with puts you squarely with seafood. So once again you are defined by what you are not. You are not used with other foods. One thing I like about you is the fact that you often have lemon juice which kicks in at the back of the mouth. A bit sour when sour is needed. I can't wait until I have fish and chips.

272. Spicy Mustard

Regular mustard can suck it. How y'like them apples? When it comes to hotdogs and burgers and, hell, anything that needs mustard, I go to you first. You have a lovely burn that a normal mustard would avoid. You are made from better stock, better seeds, better ingredients that are handled with less care than all these hoity-toity regular mustards. You have hair on your chest, a chest you beat with your fists at every chance because you are better! Have you seen the numbers? Have you seen just how you're doing in the world right now? Did you know that a whopping seventy-five percent of patrons eating large soft pretzels choose to dip them in you? Yeah, you've got that kind of clout. The kind of clout I can't even begin to address because I'll walk away feeling like I messed up by not giving you the praise you deserve. Now what do you say? Want to go out into the world and make it yours? Or do you want to just sit on the shelf hoping someone picks you up? Oh way, eighty percent of people seeing you on a shelf will pick you up! So where's the problem? I can hear you asking me this. But I'll say only that there is no problem because every single time someone sees you, one hundred percent will buy you!*

*please note that due to the author's love of mustard all numbers are definitely skewed.

273. Cocktail Sauce

You don't burn, per se. But you do have a bit of spice to you. Really just a hint. They often market you as "zesty" which is code for "if you don't enjoy this we'll pretend it's too strong" when in fact, you are quite tasty. I've even see companies that advertise a blander version but upon closer inspection I've found that their main ingredient is ketchup. That's it. So we may as well just buy some ketchup and put a little horseradish in it and forget all about you. Well, forget about that particular heat level. In my opinion, you are so much better with a kick to you. Especially with something like a grilled scallop or some cooked shrimp. You add to the flavor of whatever's getting dipped in you. While not a real condiment, you are often necessary. Who wants a piece of shrimp by itself? Boring, that's what I think. Very boring.

274. Iced Tea (sweetened)

You are so good. I don't care if you are bad for my teeth or my various tracts. On a hot summer day our host will ask, "would anyone like some sweetened iced tea?" and I respond with "yes. I would. Thank you." Off she goes and comes back with a tray. A carafe filled to the brim with your light brown goodness sits among large glasses. She pours each glass to the brim and passes you out. We sit in the sun, sipping your cold, sweetened goodness and all is right with the world. Happiness and a sense of calm drapes itself comfortably over us.

275. Iced Tea (unsweetened)

You are so bad. I don't care if you are better for my teeth or my various tracts. On a hot summer day our host will ask, "would anyone like some unsweetened iced tea?" and I respond with "No. I wouldn't. Thanks for nothing." Off she goes anyway and comes back with a tray. A carafe filled to the brim with your light brown emptiness sits among large glasses. She pours

each glass to the brim and passes you out. We sit in the sun, sipping your cold, unsweetened wateriness and all is wrong with the world. Anger and a sense of frustration drapes itself uncomfortably over us.

276. Salsa

Important changes are afoot. It's true. Any idea what kinds of changes we're talking about? Huge upheavals. You are menacing the condiment industry and we all love it! You are showing heart, you are showing extravagant taste. Heck, you're even trying all new exotic ways to present yourself (can you say "mango salsa?"). When I have you I'm usually a mild kind of guy. I know, it's silly. But even when mild you still provide a bite that a desperate nacho truly needs. I've had you on a hotdog a few times. I know! Crazy! But people are eating you for breakfast in omelets, obviously with the chips, and even you Verde! There's nothing wrong with any of that, I can tell you. As the newer king in town I think you deserve all the praise you can get. The last time someone broke free this hard was hot sauce. Remember when hot sauce was the thing to put on everything? Well now that's you. And I think it's great. Be amazed by how amazing you are. Take that and make it your own. You tasty son of a bitch.

277. Apple Cider

Me, I like a good apple. But you, you are a whole new level of apple. There's picking and squeezing and squashing just to get to a basic flavor profile. The things we do to apples in order to make you are mostly illegal by the Geneva conventions. But you're made from a fruit, on a tree. Not that many rights. And nothing says fall in New England like a crisp day, sitting on a front porch watching the world move and seeing leaves fall effortlessly around you. Well, nothing says it like that sentence and a mug full of you. Hot you. With a cinnamon stick or two. Those are the moments we live for. Because you know how to make us feel nostalgic. Personally, drinking you makes me think back to being nineteen at midnight enjoying you while the wind howled outside the small café. Good memories of long gone days.

278. Walnuts

Hard to get to, and you look like dried brains. You taste like dried brains as well. I've never bought into you and your role among the nut community. Pass me a peanut any day over you. People love posting recipes with you in cookies, sometimes candying you. It's an odd thing to be possibly the one person that finds something awful while everyone else is trying to encourage people to use you more. Not to mention the fact that so many people are allergic to you that you've been banned from schools! Yeah. That's a big deal and is really driving down your importance among a generation that has grown up without you and sees no reason to start putting you in recipes. So I'll make a deal with you. You go away. Just leave and wave and say nothing. I'll make sure nobody disturbs your retirement. How's that sound? In ten years nobody is going to want you anyway because it's an entire generation that's frightened they'd kill their best friends if even a hint of you was in a recipe. Leave. Leave us all alone and stop trying to be cool about it. Gross, you must be the most stuck up nut I've ever had the displeasure of speaking with.

279. Tide Pods

This one is controversial. I get that. But I feel a need to connect with youth culture. So you are essentially a packet of chemicals that melts and mixes to clean clothes. Got it. Origin story covered. But then some kids decide that you'd be great for stupid reaction videos. Then they eat

you and their guts get all messed up because they essentially are poison. Great. Then all the hullabaloo of angry parents and angry teachers and your company coming out with a statement. Companies, they sure love statements. But everyone says eating you is wrong and nobody does it again. Do they? Well who the hell knows. And if they did, are you to blame? Maybe it's that enticing orange and blue color scheme. Yummy. But fear not, kids grow up and then their kids find something else to eat. Fingers crossed it's organic!

280. Toothpaste

Flossing is stupid. Brushing is okay. And brushing is even more okay with you! The only time I allow mint in my mouth. Sure you clean my teeth but I'm sure over the course of my brushing career I've tasted and even swallowed you a few times. And here's the thing: you aren't awful. I wouldn't just sit back and eat a tube of you, but I get it. You are cleaning which means you are leaving me with the taste of a newly clean mouth. I may as well have a small pine tree hanging off my uvula. I do believe that clean counts as a taste so I'm keeping you here. But for the record I'd like to point out that when you are that weird glittery kids' kind? Not a fan. Plus, you are too gel-ish. I don't like that. I like baking soda and a hint of mint. None of this charcoal kind. My dentist often thanks you.

281. Shower water

Sometimes I drink you from the shower whilst showering. I know it's not supposed to happen that way because I don't know what's in the actual shower head but I am also unsure what kinds of bacteria live in the outside hose but we all drink from that in the summer. No judging. But I will say you are not really that tasty. First off, I take hot showers. And nobody has ever had refreshing hot water. Second, I'm washing my body so I'm probably inadvertently drinking some shampoo. I'm not saying I'm trying to, I'm just saying it probably happens. If there was an apocalypse and my sad ass lived, I'd be filling buckets at every faucet and shower head I can find. Need that water. But if I need to choose? I choose cold sink every time.

282. Free store cookies

Bakeries almost always have you for kids. A little sample to keep them quiet whilst Mom and Dad look for Kaiser rolls. Now, I'm old. But I always ask if there are any free cookies because I really want one. And I'm not saying I make up excuses. I'm saying that I directly ask for you. For my mouth. To eat. Immediately. But I try and look shy about it. I feel this will get you to me faster. I can act. Especially for food. Hell I'll do Shakespeare in the park, alone, to get one of you. Granted you are probably day old and they think I've got learning issues but hey. A you is a you. And I'm always hungry for free you's.

283. Powdered Milk

Just add water, they said. That'll taste just like regular milk, they said. It's better for preserving the milk, they said. It's not bad for you, they said. In fact, they've said a lot of things I'm not so sure about. I get that people want to cook with it and it helps and blah blah. I don't really cook so to me you better be powdered for those that are lactose intolerant. Well, okay, here it says that you can make a lot of things from you. But how long of a list could it actually... oh. Oh that's a really good point. See, now this is what I get for not researching something enough before ranting about it. I guess you have practical uses. I mean, you're good for a whole mess of recipes and general do-it-yourself things like chocolate and yogurt. Okay fine. I'll issue an

apology. Ahem, Dear Powdered Milk, I am very sorry to have started this entry with no actual research or taste-testing. In the future I will give foods a better chance before finding myself painted into a corner. Thank you for your time.

284. Various objects

This is going to be a weird one. But I wanted to shout out to that small group of people who eat objects. Things like an entire bicycle or a train chassis. I'm not sure when or how they start this hobby but I can say that if I eat sushi my tummy hurts. So to see someone tuck into a spare tire like it's a birthday cake is fascinating. We never hear about these people dying either! It's never "Fred Jones died today after swallowing a claw hammer". It's akin to hearing that a 105!year old woman says she owes her longevity to rum and chewing tobacco. Who are these people?! I think I'll stick to being lactose intolerant and not find out if I'm also glass shard intolerant.

285. Old person candy

Ribbon candy. Sesame seed suckers. Peppermints. You Are all the Arsenal of the elderly. That's the problem with grandparents. Kids go to their house to visit and get excited for candy only to find you. Candy that nobody wants. Holiday candies are part of that as well. For some reason their generation loves to torture their families with inedible, bad tasting you. I forgot one: the strawberry candy that comes individually wrapped in red and green plastic wrapping that's supposed to look like a strawberry. You can't be found anywhere else. Is there an old person candy manufacturing plant nobody talks about? There has to be. And it's probably drafty and full of antiquated machines that run off an old mill. One last question. Why do they keep you piled in open dishes? There is no greater nastiness than bad candy covered in old people dust. Tragic really.

286. Crepes

The first time I had one of you it was at a very small restaurant. Very very small. The entire building couldn't have been more than the size of a nice master bedroom in a middle-class house. It was early in the morning, one or two AM. It was then that I saw a girl making what looked like a very thin pancake on a hot, round surface. She was adding ingredients as I looked at the menu. Not only were there sweet versions of you, but savory as well. I tried one of each. The first had cheese, tomato, and spinach. It was divine and the spinach was cooked perfectly. After that I decided to go for a Nutella, strawberry, and banana. I nearly died. When they closed I was pretty much licking the outside of the glass to be let back in. The fact that really anything can be added to you to make a variety of different tastes had me returning time and again to have more of your sweet and savory goodness. Oh my goodness.

287. Butter cookies

I knew more about your tins than I did about you for a good many years. Your tins are used the world over for seamstress items by women who, apparently, finished their cookies. But once I actually got to see a full tin I found you were quite interesting. Each tin had about thirty of you but with different shapes. Same cookies, different shapes. For some reason I like when you're round. When you're square it seems a bit strange. Though I don't know why since many cookies and crackers are square as well. And they don't creep me out. I recall my mother telling me, "one!" Before tipping the tin towards me. Then she went back to eating them with the rest of the adults. Now that I'm a bit older I can say that one probably is enough. When I eat you I can feel

the heart murmur getting louder. So a few and I tap out. But a great idea for a party where you want people to stick around after the meal. One tin makes people question friendship, “you can have the last square one,” “no no. You.” “Okay. Thanks”. End of friendship.

288. Edible marijuana

Let’s face facts: I’ve never had you. I’ve never even been offered one. I assume you taste terrible but that the taste isn’t what brought people to that party. Everyone loves to say the effects are staggering. Well good for them. I just can’t help but think of all the people growing marijuana just to have some twenty-something realize he can bake with it. Professionals smoke it but casual college freshmen eat it. But you’re getting more mainstream so I expect to see you at Target in the next few years right next to yogurt flavored enemas. I haven’t had one of those yet either. But I hope they aren’t room temperature.

289. Sliders

Aw, lil’ baby burgers! So cute! Wait, how much do you cost? Just about the same as a regular sized burger? Why am I paying so much for you? Oh, it’s a trendy restaurant with craft everything. How dare people take what used to be whatever was left after making patties and turn it into a viable business that includes tiny buns. I really think your only saving grace is that you are adorable. This is America and we love our burgers. A big, sloppy, drippy, greasy disaster that for some reason also makes us want fries. Curly fries if you don’t mind. But you are an anomaly. A food that is smaller and gaining popularity. We can’t keep anything at a normal size in this country. We are always making things bigger. See “the world’s largest _____” in every state. But not you guys. You guys went in reverse and got “honey I shrunk the kids”-ed. And much like that famed film, people are not encouraged by your size. They are worried for you. Can you keep this act up? Because I feel like at some point a person is going to look down on an overpriced quartet of you on a plate and realize you are simply a regular burger that’s been quartered. On that day we shall bid thee farewell.

290. Sliced Bread

“Best thing since sliced bread!” They exclaim. But were you that big of a deal? People had you, well you uncut, but they had knives too. So I’m assuming they made you and had been making you for a long time. Was it because you were evenly cut? Because if that was the reason then people should be ashamed they couldn’t cut in parallel lines. I mean, you’re helpful. You save me some time. But I honestly would not mind having to cut you myself. See nowadays knives are better, sharper, and made specifically to cut you up all nice and cozy. The one thing you leave us with is ends. Nobody want ends. So leave them out of your bags. It’s not hard to do. Just “g’bye” and out to the recycling they go. If you are the bellwether of innovation I can’t wait to see what supplants you.

291. Mussels

I suppose you are similar to clams. Certainly you have a similar hidey-hole type situation with your shell but the fact that you are grown on ropes is a little different. Clams, if you didn’t know, live under the sand. But not you. You have the penthouse rope suite. In some ways that gives you a cleaner taste but overall? Not sure if you are tasty enough to sustain an entire industry. I know that sounds rude but your shell is twice the size of your body (lots of empty space) and you can be a bit chewy. It all depends on how you’re prepared. If people are just eating you

raw I think that's pretty nasty. But if you are steamed with some wine, maybe some garlic and some butter? You get better. I just don't think you're worth the hassle. I've said it before but really? If you disappeared tomorrow nobody would be shocked and crying in the streets. They'd move on pretty damn quick. Alright, fine. Brass tacks? I don't like you and I'm just making up excuses to avoid saying it directly.

292. Deviled eggs

You guys are just too much. I have to say that when other people make you I just devour you as if I have an egg deficiency. But making you myself? Ugh. You need SO much work. There's the boiling, and I watch the pot so it takes forever. Then there's the cutting in half and who has good knives these days? And finally there is the remixing of things like mayonnaise and mustard with the hard-boiled yolk top that with a bit of paprika and I'm too tired to even try eating you. So yeah. Can you maybe send out some kind of message to my friends telling them to make you more often? That'd be great.

293. Jelly Beans

Next stop sugar rush central! All aboard! Why is it that you are so associated with Easter? It's like a special event for very specific candies. Have you ever stopped to think about that? The rest of us are able to eat you on a fairly normal basis as long as we have a dentist on retainer. The thing is, some companies don't make regular flavors of you anymore. Sad really. Some places make so many flavors that you have to guess when reaching into a bag because you might get a nasty coconut one or, horror of horrors, a licorice one. No thank you. I tap out if there's licorice. I think you are best at your most casual and identifiable. Things like cherry, orange, and grape. Standbys. Also not too squishy. You should have some firmness to you. I don't want to feel like I'm eating candy that's been sitting in a hot car all day. So what have we learned from this little talk? Simplify. Keep it simple.

294. French Toast

You classic sonofabitch! I remember my father making you for us on Sunday mornings when we were younger. He was very theatrical about it. He would produce bread, that was pretty standard. But then he'd whip up a few eggs in a bowl and dip the bread in! Who does that? Apparently the French. But that's hearsay. Then he'd fry you up on the stove. When he was done with that he'd present them to us at the table with syrup. So tasty. A real staple of my diet growing up. My father was always more of a weekend breakfast guy. He liked you but he liked loading a bagel up even more. And while we ate you he was taking the time to construct his own breakfast. We didn't care. We loved you. A special treat only our Dad could make.

295. Portobello mushroom

Big ol' mushy-room. Have you ever thought of becoming the only replacement for a burger? There are people who eat veggie burgers and that really needs to stop. But having you grilled up is a lot better. Flavor profile-wise I think you just need to have some sauce on you, maybe even some teriyaki sauce, and you'd be a good swap out. Now let me just say that you would not be a primary foodstuff. At least not in the burger area. We all love our burgers and will continue to eat them. The problem is that your supporters don't know when to cool it. They speak of you as the savior of the vegetarians and then the world! Not so. The world wants its burgers. You are for those un-American weirdos that think meat is bad. Anyone else is just fooling themselves.

296. Chocolate

Nothing tastier than you. Candies are lucky to contain you. Milk is only made better by you. Heck, American soldiers in WWII made friends with Europeans by sharing bars of you. That has got to give you at least a little ego boost. You helped end a war! And a big one at that. But you know what? And this is sad so sit down for a second. It turns out we've been eating too much of you. It's true. There is now a shortage of the cocoa beans necessary to make you. Sure there are knockoffs but, c'mon, you're Chocolate! We will have to see just how far we can go with you. Planting more trees or switching to the fake stuff... Not really sure where that will leave you. Or where it will leave us. I guess we just never thought that our favorite flavor would somehow end up on an endangered species list. With all the science we have around you'd think someone would have planned ahead. I always imagined it was like those people who resort to building giant farms of marijuana in old salt mines so as not to be detected. There has to be some eccentric billionaire Willie Wonka wannabe with the same setup just with more chocolate and less edibles. It's astounding this savior has not yet made himself known. It would grant a hero's welcome, I can tell you that. So stay tough and remember that we're all pulling for you.

297. Salmon

There are a lot of fish in the sea. Strike that. There are now less fish in the sea than there used to be. With all the endangered species out there you seem to be doing a little better than most. But that "little better" is thanks to industrial fish farms and a lot of people don't want to hear anything else after the word "farm". But a decent farm produces you and that keeps the species from being over-fished. Hell, when you are wild, it is becoming harder to find you or you at a decent price. It all comes back to the wallets. Do you imagine that people think with their taste buds first? Sure, I've see that happen but the wallet comes first. The question is "can I afford this salmon?" followed by, "do I really want to eat this salmon?" Because people need to know they are getting healthy food that isn't going to put enough mercury in them to turn them into thermometers. But you taste very nice and you pair well with other flavors so we'll keep fishing you until there's nothing wild left. Then people will start turning to farms not because they are our last resort but because they will be the only resort left.

298. Strawberries

Seeds on the outside? You, my friend, are the reverse pomegranate. All your important stuff is out there for everyone to see and eat. That's the thing. We can eat your seeds and yet we don't have to deal with pits, seeds, or anything like that. The only thing that needs to happen is to remove what I'll call your green hat. Then it's all you all the time. I think when it comes to fruit, you are at the top of your game. Everyone loves you. They put you in ice cream, ON ice cream, in summer-themed salads, and even in my favorite kind of milk. That has to feel good. There are very few fruits that have had the longevity that you've had. Not much else to say except now I'm craving you and will probably go to the store and buy a bushel to snack on.

299. Spaghetti

The most widely used pasta in the continental United States. Okay, that might be a fake fact because I decided not to look up the information. But you are definitely popular. I think I'm going to make things up about you for a few minutes. You were actually introduced to the Americas by Losia Deville in 1873 when he arrived in New York City with nothing but gumption

and a real need to carry some kind of food at his restaurant. When he figured out that New Yorkers weren't ready for his invention he made other things instead. And thus was the recipe lost for over twenty years. At that point Arthur Phillips then found the old recipe behind a copy of the declaration of independence. He started following the recipe while working at the Jungle Club and advertised it as "genuinely Italian". The problem was that, at the time, the Italians weren't the most liked people in the city. But now, these days we immediately think of Arthur Phillips and the restaurant he opened with this new and Italian recipe: The Garden of Olives. The rest is history.

300. Mango

You can be squishy. I don't actually enjoy you on your own. You need to be mixed in with other flavors or else you take over. I'm not thrilled by all of that. I like that you've tried to work your "tropical" flavor into all kinds of recipes. Don't get me wrong, I think that's great and forward thinking. But how long does that last? One day you are the queen of "exotic" fruits and the next day you're being dried out and eaten by athletes trying to get energy boosts. Basically, you need the support of other foods to carry you. That's a crutch, and pretty soon the other fruits are going to realize that they have all the power and you'll just fade away. Good luck with that, weirdo.

301. Cupcakes

When a regular cake is too big, you are the next step. Or maybe for some people you are the first step. All I know is that you've made one hell of a sweeping comeback. There are shows about you, toys that look like you, and a ton of home bakers that produce flavors I've never even heard of. But how does one eat you? Not a problem. If you are properly made it is simply a matter of realizing that your frosting is the most important part and that your lower bread half is actually just there as a table. A table to serve frosting. So we eat the frosting and then throw the rest away! I'm not crazy. I'm speaking the truth that everyone is trying to suppress! It's the truth people don't want to hear. And I'm a truth teller. I pray people listen.

302. Animal Eyes

I feel uncomfortable talking about you. Most people will ignore you when deciding what to eat from an animal's body. Steaks are fine, even stomachs can be used for different things. But you? You are only eaten because some people believe that you have special powers. Ooooh, fantasy. So much fun. I mean, not for me, but I'm sure someone enjoys you. Or maybe they don't. That's the problem with you. Just because someone eats you for good luck doesn't mean they enjoy themselves. All I know is that I've seen a lot of eyes go uneaten and I am just fine with that. Let's all agree that anything past neck should be left alone. Good. Thank you.

303. Goat Cheese

Just a bit different from other cheeses. More tart than most and sometimes you feel a tiny bit dry, depending on type. But I've done my research and you are a bit healthier than cheese from cow's milk. You are great at being spread over crackers. A good salty cracker with some of you on it? Great. Want me to blow your mind? Another name for you is Chèvre. So put that in your ram's horn and smoke it. One of my favorite flavors I've had was having you mixed with blueberries. That was a taste I'll never forget. Every so often I see you in stores with

blueberries and all I can think is how great that is. And if the price is right I'll buy some and eat you right up. No help from outsiders. Just you and me and a lazy afternoon.

304. Pecan Pie

When it comes to pecans, I'm take it or leave it. But when it comes to you as a complete recipe I am all in. You are thick. You are gooey. You are sugary. You are, in essence, a real slice of goodness. People love to say that you aren't the healthiest of pies but who cares? You are a pie! Who eats pies to help with a diet? Nobody, that's who. That's why you are so welcome at family gatherings and holidays. I think I've had you most often at Christmas. And after a big holiday meal I am hardly ever interested in dessert. But hey, after a little time, and a few buttons unbuttoned and a few bathrooms visited, why not? When made properly there is that gooey texture I was talking about. But if you are cooked for even a fraction of a moment too long you become this almost taffy-like concoction wrapped in a tough crust and a layer of pecans. Going forward you should be baked by everyone for the perfect amount of time. If we can agree to that then I will put myself down as official taste-tester. Thank you for the opportunity.

305. Honey Mustard

I love Mustard. I've spoken of this at great length. But there are many different kinds. You may not be my favorite (looking at you Spicy Mustard!) yet there you are at the top of my list. If I'm asked what to put on a hotdog I will often reply "Mustard" but when pressed I think I'd go for you. You have a sweetness that cuts the normal Mustard taste. Not sure who invented you but I've always enjoyed sweet foods and you are on that odd line where you aren't candy-sweet but you add something to the meal that really gets things going. I've even used you as a marinade for chicken. A good soak in you for a few hours and a fresh brushing on top as we enter the grill. Want the truth? I think people overlook you. I know! It shocks me to think that there could be a day where you are discontinued as a product and I'll have to deal with bare hotdogs. I suppose I can always take generic mustard and add some honey. But who wants that hassle? I'll probably just stop eating hotdogs.

306. Poutine

Thanks Canada. Thanks for putting something on my plate that looks like someone took all the leftovers from a restaurant kitchen, went to throw it out, and were stopped by a hungry homeless man. You have homeless people up there? Must be cold. Anyway, I like my fries not screwed with. As for my cheese curds? I don't even know how to address that. But not only are you French fries with a bunch of cheese curds, you're also topped with gravy. GRAY-VEE! I'm not sure if I can accept your nomination to this list. People are always talking about how great you are but, to be honest, they're mostly Canadian. So what am I supposed to do with such dubious claims? Okay, let's chat about how this is going to work out: I will keep saying you are weird and gross and you will suddenly end up on a menu near me, I'll order you to prove my point about the fact that you are a mess. Then I'll take a bite and grimace. But that grimace will show itself before I've actually tasted you. And immediately my face will lighten and I'll say something like "well it wasn't as bad this time. In fact, it's delightful." So yeah, for now you can go right to hell. But next week there may be an update.

307. Po' boy

First impressions? I'm going to be honest and say that you kind of look like a regular sub sandwich. Now I know that's not true. But that was my first impression. You are probably my favorite thing to come out of Louisiana, mostly because you seem to be filled, traditionally, with seafood. Sure you could be meat related but I'm going to concentrate on the seafood element here. Some fried shrimp or catfish on a roll with a spicy sauce is divine. I'm surprised there isn't a bigger representation of you around where I live. Seafood is a big thing here but a lot of people don't really think of you in any local terms. I get that. But man, you are delicious on a roll and then directly into my mouth. So my first impression was wrong but I will say that with the right sauce and the right meat/seafood you don't really need to be all dressed up, although I know people like me usually like at least some gravy and a pickle or two. I can't wait to journey to Louisiana and try you in true authentic fashion. Ever notice that the further you get from a place where a certain food is from, the worse it gets? So here's hoping I can at least get a little closer.

308. Cavatappi

You little wiggly worm! Man, you are just the greatest. A little thick and all twisty. You're like the penis of a well hung Argentine Bluebird. The point is that you are just way too much fun to not be eaten all the time. You may be the curliest of the pastas but you are hardly straight-laced. You hold in an exceptional amount of flavor, often from sauces and are great with melted cheese because it clings to your wondrous corkscrew shape. If I were to describe you in one word, I wouldn't be able to which is why this is a paragraph. But in multiple words I'd say that you go great with veggies, maybe some chicken, and a bunch of cheese. Also, to be honest, I just had you about ten minutes ago mixed with condensed mushroom soup. Sort of a casserole. It was nice. Pretty standard meal for me, actually.

309. Coffee (Decaffeinated)

You are the mellow morning drink. After you there is just tea and orange juice. Drinking you gives the illusion that one has pepped themselves up. Not really true though, is it? You are trying to masquerade as something people have enjoyed and relied on for centuries. I think of you as someone who cuts in line by pretending to know someone already in line. Nobody likes you but we all grumble and think "well he knows him so I guess that's not technically line cutting". Just not worth the hassle. "Coffee makes my stomach hurt" is not something someone would say about you. "Coffee gives me that burst I need in the morning" is another. People who drink you are looking, searching, for at least the taste of a normal caffeinated coffee. Sometimes it works. Usually with the flavored coffee. But with regular? There's no need for you. You are a Band-Aid on an enormous cut that you are playing off as a scratch. Go home. Nobody wants you here.

310. Red wine

I still dislike wine but at least you have the guts to be strong. You can actually be pretty damn powerful depending on the type you are. But here's the thing. People who love wine for some unknown reason really like you. They definitely like you more than white wine and they can't think of anything worse than a rosé. Stupid on-the-fence rosé. Another problem is that I have very little knowledge of you as an overall category. I was told by a friend to bring pinot noir to a party and when I asked the guy in the store where I could find pinot noir he asked "which one?" and I had no idea what he was talking about. That was when he pointed me to a full wall of

pinot noir. A wall. Big old wall is what it was and it had twenty or so different brands under the pinot noir label. Learned something new that day!

311. Aloe Vera

far as I'm concerned you were made solely to put on sunburns. But here you are, showing up in all kinds of places. People actually drink you. For fun. I just can't tell you how much that turns my stomach. Have you ever thought of just sticking to one job? I know you've made claims about how beneficial you can be but... I don't know. Maybe this is a stay-in-your-lane situation. Like, you tried a few different things but they didn't work out. It's okay. That happens to all of us. But to think that you could be all these other things? You're not corn. You're not something with so many things you're good at. Maybe the problem is that people have pushed you into bad decisions. I can't speak for the health food nuts out there but they are definitely out there. Take my advice, no need to apologize, and go back to helping people with burns.

312. Spices

It occurs to me that there are quite a few foods I've mentioned that can't really get by without you. People don't seem to understand what proper seasoning can do for a meal. Chicken wings would be weak. Steaks would be bland. Even fish need help every so often. But there are still people out there with no concept. I blame this on great grandmothers and grandmothers. They grew up in a time when if you could have ketchup soup on the table for dinner you were doing pretty well for yourself. These were people who scraped by, usually with a bunch of kids to feed. The problem is that they became accustomed to boiling meat, drinking ketchup, and cleaning themselves once a week in cold bathtubs. It was no way to live. And yet they pass along these "family recipes" as if anyone wants them. Trust me, you don't want them. Thank your elders for them and when they aren't looking, put some Worcestershire sauce on the steak. Their stomachs will thank you.

313. Penne

Straight as an arrow with sharpened angles at both ends. That's a good way to get people interested. Little kids like you because they can pretend you are some kind of short straw while adults like you because they know they need to eat to survive. You are rather versatile and go well with meats and meat sauces. Sprinkle a little oregano on there and you are a lovely entrée. In fact, not to retread but kids really seem to enjoy you and since kids are basically empty jars that parents like to fill with their own stories I'd like to suggest something. When a child asks what's for dinner, instead of a parent saying "Penne, you little dork" they can say, "Well Timmy, see it turns out that bones sometimes grow faster than we'd like them to. So tonight I trimmed my finger bones (you can see the ridges from the tools) and threw some blood sauce on them. They taste just like spaghetti!" Then the parents can laugh and laugh and laugh. No trauma means no life lessons learned.

314. Cherry flavored OTC medications

Stop it. Stop pretending you are a certain flavor when that is not what you are. None of you actually taste like cherries and, to be honest, I've never had a cherry and thought, "wow, that tastes just like my medication!" Why is it that you think you can go around spouting this nonsense over and over again? It's been decades of "kids love my great taste." Bull. There are no children that love the taste of things like cough medicine. Well no, strike that. Growing up my younger sister loved cough syrup. Flavored or not. She's doing fine. No really, she's fine.

But back to you. When I was very young and got my tonsils out they knocked me out for the surgery. The way they did it? They took the breathing mask and lined it with cherry chapstick. That made it smell like cherries. Well no, it made it smell like cherry chapstick. And that's my entire point. If you can't replicate the exactness of a flavor, don't bother. Just leave it alone. Now if you'll excuse me I have a cold.

315. Cuban sandwich

A long time ago I pointed out that I didn't enjoy hot ham. Cold cut was the only way for me. But you were the exception. See, there is something about a pressed sandwich that really gets me going for lunch. But just the inclusion of ham, cheese, mustard and pickles that is then stuffed in a panini press and sliced in half so that I can see all the gooey meltiness? Dear lord in heaven that is a beautiful sandwich. But I need to be in the mood for you. To me you are a great lunch sandwich that for some reason I want to eat outside. Example: If I was to go for a hike up a mountain, I would happily bring you. I'd cook you and then wrap you so you try and stay hot but either way when I get to the top of that mountain I am eating the hell out of you. Possibly with a beverage. And for those people who say that you are great without being grilled? Let them die by fire. Slowly. They'll know meltiness then, I can tell you that.

316. Health shakes

Do you find it at all funny that people who drink you make that very specific curdled-milk face whilst they drink? It's as if you are making them work to be healthy but not work out. Just drink and you'll be stronger! Just drink and you'll have the stamina of a god! Hell, drink and we will make any claim that will keep you around, including telling you that chia seeds are a real power food and not just something you smear on a terra cotta celebrity head statue. I know others feel different but I hate when something I'm drinking has seeds. I don't want to chew on what is supposed to be primarily liquid. Sure a smoothie has pulp in it, possibly from oranges or strawberries but that's different. What do you mean, how? I'm telling you that there is a difference between some pulpy orange that is a bit thick and small seeds that immediately go for the gaps in one's teeth and stay there until a coworker finally points them out after a big presentation. Also, protein powder? Almond milk? Stop. Just take those ingredients and mosey on over to someplace else because those are just two other examples of things that I don't want in my body. Shakes but no shakes. Loser.

317. Cottage Cheese

I was talking about you with Yogurt recently and realized I needed to speak with you directly. What happened? There was a time when you were identified simply by curd size. Small curd or large curd. End of decision. But then you were 2% milk. Then fat free. Then... well then you went off the rails. Suddenly I was supposed to have you with fruit in you. Pineapple stands as a truly stark moment because not only did it sound bad but it tasted worse. Then there was blueberry and strawberry. Why are you adding things to yourself? Are people so busy that they can't make their own gross concoctions at home without your help? I understand the need to build your brand but this is too much. You haven't jumped a shark you've pole vaulted over a whale. How about we make a deal. You go back to basics and I'll buy more of you. Even though I am lactose intolerant. Oh wait, you sometimes come lactose free? Oh... well I'll have that then, please.

318. Croutons

Bread, cut into cubes and allowed to go stale. Whose idea were you because it's brilliant. I have enjoyed many salads and many of those salads did not have you. It's a texture thing though. Once the dressing is poured (only losers drizzle) you are the only ingredient unaffected. So to have a good crunch is necessary. And you provide that. Now sometimes I'm given the option of different flavors. But it's just a few spices thrown together to say you are a "Parmesan" flavor. So let's just say if you are offered I wouldn't say no. But if you're not there I'm not causing a scene.

319. Alphabet Soup

A staple of my childhood. Learning while eating? Great idea. I remember my parents prompting me to spell simple words like "cat" and "verisimilitude". But there were always too many H's. Not sure why that was but it always seemed to be an issue. The other thing is that you tasted great. I think you were just tomato soup but with a few potatoes thrown in and the letters. No big deal. Gave it a hearty feel. I'm not sure when I had you for the last time but now I'm craving you. Maybe they have a math one now and I can relearn calculus.

320. Ice cream truck baseball mitt

There seem to be certain frozen confections that can only be found in ice cream trucks in summertime. And you are one of them. When I was young and the ice cream truck came around the corner I'd run inside for some money. With what was mostly change I would ask for you. And when I did you looked nothing like the picture on the side of the truck. In fact no treats ever looked like the pictures. But you had an extra treat. No matter the shape you were in or how much you melted you always had that treat. A gumball. A (small) marble sized, often pink, gumball. It was also not the freshest of snacks but who cared? It meant my treat would last extra-long. Turns out I'm not a big fan of gum. That being said I was very much a fan of you.

321. Ice cream truck rocket pops

Ah yes the famous rocket pop. All American with your red white and blue. You looked like a missile except you had vertical grooves to give you an extra rockety feel. The question was always how long one could play and pretend you were a toy before you really started melting. The final mission was always to land the dripping pop in the hangar of ones mouth. And no, there was no innuendo back then. We were hungry and needed sugar. There was nothing to even suggest something dirty. Especially when it made your tongue red white and blue. Well, mostly blue. Now you are in stores with different color combinations, representing things like superheroes. Blasphemy! Stop giving in to a consumptive society. You were beautiful and patriotic. Forget what the corporations say. Stay red! Stay white! And definitely stay blue.

322. Cinnamon rolls

You have been around quite a few years. But in that time there has been a real increase in the amount of frosting drizzled upon you. At some places a person can even get a side cup of frosting for dipping. You are not healthy. But you are unhealthy to begin with so this isn't a surprise. There really is something to be said for sugary items first thing in the morning. Or in that nebulous time we spend in airports where time has stopped and the time is always forty-five minutes before a flight. When someone gets peckish at an airport they usually don't want a salad. That being said you are a hot, melty mess. But I respect that. In a time when diets rule

the world you are anti-diet. You are splurge material. You are asked no questions and ask for nothing in return. Thank you.

323. Pumpkin spice

I'm fine with you. Really I am. I'm not a fan myself but if others like you, so be it. But yeah, they're putting you everywhere. I think it started with candles. It took a bit longer for you to become a common seasonal scent and taste. But once you hit, you hit hard. But why so evocative? Do you feel any regret or that you are spending too much time in the limelight? I'm not trying to judge you, just to see how you feel about fame. I think the main image people have of you is a blonde sophomore girl at a college in autumn wearing Ugg boots and an infinity scarf with a disposable cup of you flavored coffee. That's the image you're projecting. I'd like to be able to occasionally order you but everyone makes fun of me. So fine. I'll stick to you flavored donuts.

324. Guacamole

I suppose avocado is good for a few things. But of all those things you are the best. You are the king of dips. Healthy, creamy, and with a thick texture that will have people double-dipping until they're caught. Let's break it down real simple: avocado, tomato, cilantro, lemon juice, and a bit of salt and pepper to taste. Easy. SO EASY! Only one problem. You get old very quick. And I don't mean you are aging. I mean you need to be eaten within a certain window of time because you start browning if left overnight in the fridge. But I think you provide a healthy alternative to all those people dipping into ranch dressing. It's such a waste of time. So before anyone comes out and tells you that you've become tired and overdone you tell them I told you to tell them that they need to go back to their gross salad dressing dips. Hell, they'll be the ones gaining the weight and not knowing what it's from. <wink>

325. Fried Chicken

At your most basic you are a piece of chicken covered in breading and deep fried. People will dip you and they will over-flavor you. But just having you plain is great. This whole trend of trying to make things so overpowering with staggering flavors has its time and place but it is not with you. Quite a bit of fried chicken is made by drive-thru restaurants. But you know what? You are never a healthy option. What you are is a great option. Whether you are being eaten during a football game or are in a bucket on the passenger seat on a long-distance road trip you don't disappoint. Eat you right down to the bone. Purists will watch others eat you and get angry that they aren't eating "all" of you. Basically everything but bones. I've known people who will take the remnants of other people's meals and "finish" eating the chicken where the original eater stopped. It must feel nice that so many people enjoy you on a regular basis. Well anyway, you've got my respect.

326. Sloppy Joe

The staple menu item in all American public schools for the past... well... decades. Is it because you are extremely healthy? Could it be that you just look tasty? Or could it be that there has always been a need for schools to keep costs down and that even ground beef has an expiration date? All good questions. To me, you are the kind of food that, much like fried chicken, is best done simply. None of these TV chefs telling us that we can't eat you until we make you "gourmet". Those guys don't know anything. Keep. It. Simple. I've said it a million times and not just because I'm a terrible cook and can only follow basic recipes. But you are a

really easy one. Let's just look at the very few ingredients: ground beef (check), ketchup (check), a bit of worcestershire sauce and maybe diced onions if you want to get close to the edge. Add a plain, warm roll and we're done. That's it. Finito. Endo Story-o. Perfect.

327. Paella

A name that my father can't pronounce. I think the first time it came out "payla, right? Payla?" It was adorable. But, being totally serious, The hardest part about making you is having the proper pan. Well, that and the fact that even the easiest recipes I've found have no less than twelve to fifteen different ingredients. That doesn't require a chef, it requires a project manager. Everything ranging from sausage to paprika, to a variety of rice. It also appears that by all accounts there is no such thing as a one-serving dish of you. It's five plus people or nothing. Restaurants require a reservation made well in advance to get things ready. And I get it, you are not an everyday meal. You are a special occasion dish with many steps towards a hopefully wonderful conclusion. I think I'm going to add one of your pans to my wedding registry. You know, just in case.

328. Corn Dog

One of many county fair items on this lovely list. Essentially a hotdog wrapped in a lot of corn meal. Then they deep fry the hell out of you. Oh, and you're on a stick. Did I not mention that? You're like a hot popsicle. Good for walking around fairgrounds near the animal paddocks. Nothing says America like one of you being held by a girl with a blue ribbon next to a girthy sow. Just saying that made me less smart. But you have a bit of an issue. See, there aren't county fairs all year round so the industry has decided to make a frozen version of you. "just microwave!" the box exclaims. So we do. And it's gross. You taste terrible like that. Basically, if you aren't fresh then there is no reason to have you except to have a child choke on the stick and feel like a bad parent. Therefore I am relegating you to the summer months and very hot and humid days where, for some reason, people will have you in one hand and the largest soft drinks imaginable in their other.

329. Jell-O

So many flavors and... wait a second, new coming in, oh shoot. I just looked up Gelatin and you know what it says? Verbatim? "...derived from collagen obtained from various animal body parts". I'm suddenly less inclined to eat you. But you have been a staple in many people's lives. I've had you when I was young and had my tonsils taken out. I've had my grandmother's recipe that includes raisins and nuts, and I've had Jell-O shots in college that were made with alcohol. If that isn't a slice of life I don't know what is. The thing is that you're an easy food for people who are having trouble keeping down food or who won't eat. That's why hospitals always have you on hand in a variety of fun and tropical colors. However I'm not quite sure the different colors actually have different tastes. I assume any taste is going to be added later but the color part is simply food coloring. Either way, in the US you rank pretty high on people's nostalgia meters. I think that's rather admirable.

330. Creamed spinach

You beautiful side. Not a main dish. That would probably kill people if they ate you as a main course. Thank goodness nobody has tried. I've had you mostly at holiday parties. Total honesty time, I've never made you myself. But I do know people who have and they have been consulted. They have almost unanimously said they use frozen spinach. No real reason why

but it is “easier to work with” apparently. Also, cream. Heavy cream. The kind that turns food into stomach bricks but tastes oh so good in the mouth area of the face. You know what else? Nutmeg. Everyone from my consultants to Paula Deen recommend it. That’s when I shrug and just go with it. She may be a crazy woman but she knows her heavy recipes. And believe me, you are the heaviest I’ve ever had the joy of tasting.

331. Ice

I know you aren’t technically a food but bear with me. People would be shocked to learn their soft drink at the local Denny’s had none of you in it. When folks get together to drink beer they would be appalled to know there wasn’t any of you around to cool the cans and bottles. You are an essential part of eating in the 21st century. We want our foods chilled, our drinks to not taste of warm urine, and we want it now. Hell, tons of people have refrigerators that automatically makes you without ever pushing a button. And there are ways of keeping things cold but who wants shrimp sitting in a cooling gel when they can have shaved you? I think you need to realize just how important you are to all of us. Heck, even dogs like to chew a piece of you in the summer. You’ve got this down cold. Ha!

332. Whitefish Spread

I like whitefish. It’s tasty and sometimes i catch a pin-bone in my throat. You are a strange mix of creamy and textury. Of course that texture is fish. And i believe that’s where you are losing people. Consider smoked salmon spread. There is a product with none of the texture issues. Is it ground up better? No. It’s basically cream cheese with smoked salmon chunks. Delightful. But you are definitely fish. You know how sometimes people over exaggerate? That’s what they do with you. They take an eensy bite and flip out. Like the world is ending because they tasted fish. These are the same people who love sushi. Bunch of hypocrites. Don’t let those people get you down. You are special and you are loved.

333. Precut Fruit Platters

So it’s your opinion that people are too lazy to cut their own fruit? That seems rather suspect to me. The fact is that regardless of how I think, people are still buying you. And you know why? For parties. To be more specific, for dessert at parties. Screw those people and screw you. If I’m having a party or attending one and I’m the one bringing dessert, you won’t be on my radar. Cupcakes. Cake. Pie. I’m sure you’ll agree that you are simply for the lazy. Now if there was a platter with whole strawberries and chocolate to dip, I’d be on board. But no. Instead I get cantaloupe (gross), and some kind of dipping yogurt creation that should not exist. And pineapple. Who the hell wants day-old pineapple slices mixed with squishy blueberries? You are far from top quality. You are remnant pieces of errant fruit, the kind of pieces that are normally cut away from the rind. And yet the lazy among us buy you every day of every week. Let me just say one thing and then I’ll leave you alone. Fruit is not expensive and when served correctly can sculpt a person’s palette with unrelenting sweetness. But that kind of fruit and those magic tastes are miles away from you.

334. Turducken

Poultry is quite interesting. Americans eat a lot of chicken. They eat a healthy amount of turkey, normally around the holidays. And some will order duck la ronge when they eat at that new fancy French place down the street. But you are telling me that I don’t need to pick and choose. You are telling me that I can have all the damn poultry I want as long as I’m willing to

stuff them into each other? How does one say no to such a proposal? Humans have been stuffing birds for a long time and yet it seems that you are a fairly new concept to quite a lot of people, myself included. From what I've read people even stuff the various birds with other stuffing before stuffing them into the other birds! Read it again, it made sense. I've also been told that if someone is on the fence about liking duck, they may want to seek alternate foodstuffs as the duck juices tend to make their way throughout you. I'll be honest, I think you are a great idea and one I hope to try soon. When I do, I make no promises about which way I'll lean. But I will say that if the damn turkey is dry, you lose me on the first bite.

335. Tater Tots

In public school you are basically currency. Every kid that ever bought lunch has, at the very least, tried you. And you are good. So very very good that when it is time to go home, dinner never really holds the senses the same way you do. Crispy, a little salty, and made of grated potato. The crispy part is the deep fry. And who doesn't like deep fry? I will say that you are actually rather conventional so when you are served at restaurants they usually try and dress you up, add some sauce, maybe some cheese. And those things definitely add to the experience. But you know what else does? Sitting at home on the couch with a bowl of you and a bowl with ketchup. Just dippin'. Just dip and bit and chew and swallow. Then prepare for round two. They'll never get rid of you in schools so as students grow up and are finally doing their own grocery shopping, you kick them right in the nostalgias. Customers for life.

336. Tamales

Definitely one that flew under my radar. When someone recommended you to me I realized that not only have I had you on multiple occasions but I really did enjoy you. The fact that you can be made with all types of flavors makes you one of the top foods on this entire list. Heck, even the corn husk you're cooked in can be used as a handy plate! The thing is, you are a pretty easy recipe. A husk wrapped around dough and filled with everything from spicy meats all the way to any number of fruits. I'm actually reminded of crepes when I think of you. Very diverse and able to be both savory or sweet depending on who is making you. Granted you are as varied as the many countries you come from but I think you might just be worth a try in every one of those countries. Each would be more different than the last. I'd make you myself if I had any confidence in my ability to work with corn husks. Oh, here it says I could also use a banana leaf. Not many around these parts. I guess I'm sticking to restaurants for now.

337. Risotto

Sure rice is okay but what if we made it gloopy? Yeah, gloopy. The kind of thing that smells good, maybe even looks good, but the texture is all wrong. I can't stand you. And yes I'm aware that you aren't really meant to be eaten plain but still... without a decent base how is anyone able to enjoy you? Rice and broth. That's the main theme from various recipes I've been going through. Some people add things like chicken or some kind of mushroom but how does that help? Why not just mix the chicken and the mushrooms for a flavor all their own? I think it's crazy. Regular rice isn't good enough for people so they decided on you? I can't even think about you right now without my stomach turning. Go somewhere else. I'm unable to process you mentally or physically.

338. Pistachios

Green or red you are almost too much of a hassle. And I haven't seen red ones in a long time. So, green it is. Many people will say that the reason they like you is that you give them

something to do with their hands while watching tv or a movie. We are all so distracted these days that we end up feeding into it. Lucky for you that you require quite basic attention. But you are tasty. No question. In fact when you are made into ice cream I very much enjoy myself. Strange though. I've never had an ice cream sundae with you as ice cream. Not sure why actually. Hm. So I guess we can chalk you up to being a nut that has stayed relevant for more than a few decades. And longevity is important. Just don't go back to red. It stains everything

339. Blood

I feel bad. There is a whole group of people out there who crave just one thing and I haven't even eluded to them. Vampires. I mean, if there's an oppressed minority out there it has to be them. And what is the only thing they want? The one thing that sustains them? You. You are what drives them emotionally and physically. Now, for the rest of us, losing you can be a bit of an ordeal depending on the injury but not vampires. They probably flavor everything with you just so they can get a little texture. I wonder if clotting agents could make you into more of a smoothie-type beverage. All I know is that I've tasted you before, like when I've cut my finger and I immediately put the finger in my mouth for some reason. You taste kind of like copper. Like a battery. Which I guess you are in terms of giving power to the armies of the undead and creatures of the night. Heck, you are how vampires turn people into vampires! Imagine an entire culture just built around one beverage. That's like people saying the only thing they need in life is an Arnold Palmer. But what they mean is that they want to actually go find Mr. Palmer and drink his life essence. What a strange world we live in.

340. Borscht

The thing about you is that I have trouble with cold soups. Now I know you can be hot or cold but just the idea of a cold soup based around beet root doesn't excite me in the least. The only thing I can get behind is the dollop of sour cream that is normally added. But sour soup? Cold (for my purposes) sour soup? Those that know me probably imagine that I have a great affinity for beet root. These people do not actually know me. I've always been a soup fan, heck I'm even a stew fan. But you make it hard. You are what I like to call "old country food" Not old. Country. But old country. As in eastern Europe. You are from back in the days when people didn't quite get the concept of flavor and were more keen on living than enjoying. So they did what they had to do. I probably would have done the same thing in their shoes. Or lack of shoes. I imagine back then there was a lot of foot binding or some such thing. Hell, just the fact that people want to claim that they are where you were first invented seems like a joke. These people have obviously never had a decent bowl of hot, brothy, American stew. I'll just say that if they do actually try that and want to go back to you, I will be not only shocked and amazed, I will also be mildly disgusted.

341. Empanada

Look at you, you cute little meat pocket! Let me tell you that you are just adorable. You look like a little boomerang that gained some weight in the middle. But its what's in the middle that I really like. Sure you get deep fried or baked but again, the inside. Now I know that you are a worldwide phenomenon and that all sorts of people and cultures claim you as their own but I really don't care that much. I care about taste. And I'm going to focus on the way I've had you here in the states. Essentially you are... let me see... you are a small-but-not-crazy-small non-pizza calzone. See, I say that and then I wonder if that is actually an apt description. No matter. We continue on. The stuffing I like most is meat. I know others will go for something more exotic but a very basic version of you with beef can be quite satisfying. If people have

never had you before I'll just say that the only place to find you these days is... everywhere! You are not a hidden gem of food. You are loud and out there. I hope people try different kinds of you but then agree with me about the meat thing. Fingers crossed.

342. Sushi Burrito

A new phenomenon as far as I can tell. I've only seen you in a few places but that's here in the US and I can't speak for all the non USers out there. Essentially, if I am getting this right, and I am because I've eaten you, you are simply makimono the size of a burrito. Still wrapped in seaweed and served with copious amounts of rice. All for around the same price as one or two gourmet makimono rolls at any nice Japanese restaurant. So what are you, exactly? As I said, lots of rice. But the one of you I had was a Philadelphia roll that had cream cheese, salmon, and cucumber. Essentially it was just a huge version of the small kind. I'll also say that you were definitely a novelty but I don't know how often I'd have you if I had regular access to you. You may be one of those weird fads that ends up with too many small stores trying to be the cool kid only to have six months go by and all of them end up closing. So I'm going to figuratively shake your hand now knowing that there won't be many of you this time next year.

343. Hog Maw

I cannot believe I found another food like haggis. Do you two know each other? Have you met anywhere before? Because damned if you aren't pretty close. For people who don't know about you I'll just say that you are the outside of a pig's stomach. People, crazy people if you ask me, will have you stuffed with pork (much like haggis) and potatoes (can't remember if that was in haggis). But it changes depending on who is making you but just the fact that people are eating you makes me think less of this world. I get that you can be stuffed or mixed with basically anything but at some point we as human being on this earth have got to draw some lines! I don't mean to get emotional but I looked up some info on you and all the things I already knew were compounded by horrible other things. When will people realize that no matter what they squish together to be "cuisine" is still just stomach muscles, sometimes deep fried, but who cares about the frying part? Oh, there are people who like that stuff and I'm the one with the problem? Sounds about right.

344. Dog

You are going to be controversial but that's just because we've all decided that we shouldn't eat our best friends. I know for a fact that my fiancé will get mad about me talking about you like this but the fact is that all over the world you are consumed. In fact, in the US, under certain circumstances, we are allowed to prepare you (in certain places) as long as we are not selling you. I'm going to end this one right here because everyone is horrified enough already.

345. Cat

People are so spiteful. I'd never eat you. That's cruel and very unusual. Even when you've spent a half hour attacking my bare feet for no reason except that they were there. There's no meat on you. It would be like eating furry stringy jerky. Ugh, the prep must be awful. I think I feel worse for the dogs but you'd probably find some way to come back and ghost me. Don't ghost me and I'll make sure nobody eats you.

346. Seven-layer dip

I think you taste great but I am having trouble remembering all the layers. I am therefore using the internet to help. So we'll count off the layers: refried beans, sour cream, lettuce, Mexican cheese, guacamole, tomato, sliced black olives. God that sounds good. There are so many parties I've gone to where people just dive right in with a chip or two. But that's stupid. You are layered which means any dipping is never going to go deep enough to get some of each layer. That's why at a good party they put out some small plates and a spoon so that party-goers can have their own mini version of the whole dip. It's not wrong to do that. Otherwise everyone who shows up late only gets the lettuce and one or two beans. But you also need to make sure you have salty chips. A good chip can definitely add to the experience. Every party should have you.

347. Seltzer

There's no reason for you to even exist anymore. People used to go to parties and have some of you mixed with some stuff (I'm not going to research). So basically they were being tantalized by bubbles. Effing bubbles. Nowadays everyone loves to drink you because you aren't bad for their health. But who cares about that? If someone is choosing a drink that tastes tasteless and with a bottle said has a "hint of strawberry" then they are fools. You want fruit? Get juice. Still healthy and if they choose the right kind they can watch their sugar intake. It's not hard to measure that stuff out. But you. The last time you were relevant was when the Three Stooges used you to spray each other in the face. Hilarious and no real food went to waste. Just your worthless existence. Go home.

348. Soft Drinks

Now we're talking. When I think of you I think of how accurate all the commercials are. You tell me that people who are putting in a long day on a roof project would say no to a cold bottle of you. What else could be better? Fine, beer probably, but forget that for now. When you are made with real sugar and come in a glass bottle you are at your best. You seem to be either brown or clear. For some reason we don't mind drinking something that looks like a clogged toilet or that looks like pee when we've been drinking plenty of water. The only problem is the high fructose corn syrup. That stuff'll rot people's teeth out if they use too much. Check this: there was a court case where a woman said she found a dead mouse in a can of you. But you fired back with experts who said that there was so many chemicals in you that it would have actually dissolved the mouse if it actually got trapped in there. They won the case. Woohoo. Here's to your new "find a mouse, win a million" unwinnable contest.

349. Pot Roast

Mmmmmm. So tasty. Plus, you are incredibly easy to make. Just a big ol' piece of meat, some carrots, a bit of broth and some diced potatoes, and tada! Well, actually I forgot to mention the hours you need to spend in a crock pot. But after the hours spent you taste delicious. We used to have you as a family dinner because my mom could feed everyone comfortably while also having leftovers. You were so tender it was unbelievable. In my family there wasn't a lot of seasoning happening. It was weird. Well, looking back it was weird but at the time we just put a bunch of ketchup on you and were fine. Lots of cold nights after school and work would be made warm and comfortable by having you. Thank you for that.

350. Churros

Another food I didn't experience as a child. You just weren't a thing I could find anywhere. But then I went to a fair. You were there. You were there in abundance. It seemed like everyone was eating you. The thing is, I was used to people eating fried dough at events like that and this time it was you. So I did what any hungry person does. I tried something new. And you were lovely. The one I had was covered in chocolate at one end. The actual texture was very simple, actually a lot like the fried dough I was originally looking for. But now that I've tried you I have no desire to head on back to the dough train. I've since learned that you are often covered in chocolate like I had but also that people will often use you for dipping. I assume into things like coffee or other chocolates. I wish I'd found you sooner.

351. Baby food

What do companies have against babies? They make you out to be so good for kids but you come in gross flavors. No wonder kids get upset when told to eat you. Who cares if mommy or daddy pretends the spoon is an airplane? We've seen that trick a thousand times and we can see the picture on the jar. It's a beet and a mango. What? Why? Why not just banana? Or heck, stick that mango in there but leave it alone. If someone would just tell us what monkey is throwing it's crap at a combination wall. But kids eat you and old people sneak you into their diets without telling their children who would think they'd lost their minds. Just do me the favor of coming up with combinations that work. Thank you.

352. Baby corn

So when did you decide to arrive on the scene? You are adorable. Like a tiny stick that tried to cosplay as corn. I know you are used in a bunch of Asian recipes but that doesn't fully answer my question. Well it does touch on the cosplay part I guess. See, I love you in a good stir fry. You don't even taste like anything. You just soak up the taste of whatever sauce you're put in. And I think you must be best friends with pea pods as you seem to hang out at the same recipes. I guess what I'm saying is that I find you to be a good utility vegetable. No complaints from me here. Continue on you never ending baby journey.

353. People

We do taste pretty good. The only reason we don't eat each other is purely etiquette. You ever try biting someone? It's hard to do because people often fight back and if you give up halfway through they go off and tell people what you did. And don't tell me we need to kill people first because then it's murder! What kind of messed up society we're in. It's frowned on us killing each other but if you just take an arm or a leg you are worse than a murderer. Now you're a psycho. Ooooh that guy has problems. You know what to say to those people that actually works? At least I didn't kill a dog. That's all you have to do. They value pets more than each other. I'm telling you. Awful people. First world people.

354. Dried Fruit

We live in an age of magic masquerading as science. One such "science" is you. The other day I had a salad and on it were dried cranberries and apricots. It was a delightful taste in a mildly rubbery but almost squishable carapace. You all seem to fall under the umbrella of foods I don't eat by themselves but need to be mixed with other foods. A great example would be peanuts and raisins. I'm not a fan of raisins on their own but when paired up with the right compliment I'm calling all in on that one. I wonder if you think it's strange that you exist as a

food item. Because you are essentially fruit jerky. To a point. I mean, you are definitely not as tasty as the original fruit but you still bring a lot to the table. I've just never really had a dried fruit salad where all the items are just a medley of your various items. I think it would be too much for people. You'd be great at unclogging lower intestines. That's a fact. I mean, a good prune does wonders that a normal plum really doesn't do. I should probably research why that is* but I'd rather let someone else do that. (*nobody researched this)

355. Rye Chips

You are a downfall food. I see you and you are my own personal downward spiral. So. Damn. Good. But why? Is it the salt? Is it? So much salt on dried out rye. Right now my mouth is watering. For years I could only find you in certain trail mixes but then one day I found a bag that was only you. I couldn't believe it. I bought the bag and ate the whole thing in one sitting. I felt horrible and my tongue was like sandpaper but you are the best thing to happen to chips and chip-like substances in forever. I can actually taste you now. Food memory is strong memory. So if I see you in a store again I won't be able to help myself. I'm just scared of people finding you at a younger age than I was, buying you when nobody is looking and sneaking you home only to eat you after lights out with the loud crunch causing parents to check in. What will they think? Seeing their sons and daughters with crumbs and dried out tongues? I fear for the youth of today.

356. Redneck Sushi

Bear with me because I only had you the other day. I'm still processing what kind of abomination you are. Oh wait, you're not! You're crazy. But in a really weirdly good way. I'm confused by these tastes and how someone even came up with you in the first place. Let's just go over your construction. First, one must find a pickle. Not too big and relatively evenly sized. A kosher pickle usually does the trick. Then they take sliced ham and spread cream cheese over it. After that just lay the pickle across the piece of ham and roll it up with the pickle on the inside. A few slices and a few toothpicks and you are born. A non-traditional hors d'oeuvre. I didn't think I'd like you. I'm still not sure if I did! All I know is that half the people at the party thought you seemed so revolting they wouldn't even try. But I did. I'm still not sure if I'm longing to have you again or if you are some weird residual taste that never really existed in the first place. I do know I have zero intention of making you myself. But if you were to appear at another get-together I'd definitely take another bite.

357. Toffee

I have a few fillings. This means that you are a no go for me. At least not anymore. But why? Because you'll rip them straight out of my teeth. You are sticky and hard enough that you require biting. That then leaves you in my mouth with my chewing teeth really gnashing through you as hard as possible. I like your taste. It works. I also used to like you when you had raisins in you. It just changed your flavor oh so slightly. But yeah, I wish I could still have you. I can't even have caramel apples for the same reason. A dollar's worth of you leads to hundreds of dollars spent at the oral surgeon's office. Ah well, c'est la vie.

358. Pork rind

You know how some people love pork? Just love it. Can't get enough of it. Well the big secret is that some of them don't like you. And you want to know why? Because you are skin fried in the fat of the same damn animal! Jeez. You have got to be the most inconsiderate food on this list. Not only have we already decimated a pig but now we've decided that even its skin is fair

game? I thought pigskin was what they made footballs out of. But now you're telling me I could take a football, pop it, fry it, and I'd be eating you? Ugh that is just- Oh, hold on. No, I've just been told that it wouldn't work with a football because a football has no real taste as it has been chemically treated and they don't actually use skin anymore in any NFL games. Or college. Or high school. Any younger and I can't get a straight answer. Okay fine, so you are used as a snack. As long as I don't need to eat you then fine. Everyone else can feel free to dig in. Gross.

359. Peanut Butter cups

In my freshman year of college I had a mini fridge under my bed. It contained two items. The first was dollar store ginger ale and the other was a bag of you. I was very happy with this arrangement. Late nights of studying meant a bunch of you next to me while I typed in the glow of my old pre-flat-screen computer screen. I do like you chilled. Frozen is a big of a chore because you seem to melt unevenly. But chilled? Perfect. The creamy peanut butter wrapped in chocolate and that ridged chocolate was just what a hard-studying student really needed. I would recommend them to anyone looking for their chocolate fix but also like a bit of peanut butter. Sounds fair, right? Sure does. Great, now I'm thinking about buying a bag of you and keeping you in my regular house fridge. That can't be a smart move. Sigh. I remember back when I had a metabolism. Ah well. Just for sometime-snacks then.

360. Zucchini Bread

Only one fall. That's the amount of time I ate you and then stopped. "But why!?" You ask with too many punctuation marks. It was because like everyone else, my father thought zucchini would be a great thing to grow in his garden. But it's the most unruly vegetable because it's like the rabbit of the garden. It just reproduces more and more. People are left with way too many. So my mother decided she was going to make you. It actually came out pretty well. We ate through a nice loaf but then there was more. And more. And more. If I ate you now I think I'd have awful flashbacks to that time now out of mind. I wish I still liked you but now I'm just left with these terrible memories. But yeah, other people should try you. Just not try to grow your main ingredient. It is a curse and a blight for the amateur gardener.

361. Candy Necklace

You are a great concept. Really. Food you can wear around your neck on a string is very cool. Of course we do need to think about who is using you. If it's a little kid just munching away while playing I think we're okay. But when it's some weird twentysomething on ecstasy at a rave I start to feel uncomfortable. Also, now that I think of it, maybe we shouldn't be putting choking hazards on a handy strangulation device and giving it to unsupervised kids. You know what? Great concept but terrible execution because you might lead to actual execution of a child. Jeez, you creep. I'll just give my kids gross circus peanuts so they learn to hate candy in the first place.

362. Bubble Tea

You taste great. I want to get that out there first. You are just thick enough and sweet to the point that I enjoy you but don't feel overwhelmed. However, we need to talk about your tapioca balls. Because of them your straws are usually a bit wider than I'm used to which throws off my drinking game. Plus the balls taste funny. Just a handful of funny tasting balls. And they are unexpected. I mean, I see them underneath but then suddenly they're in my mouth. I don't know how I feel about that. Just balls in my mouth that are supposed to taste a certain way that

compliments you but end up being a distraction. You can't just swallow the balls, you need to do a little mouth work first or else you'll choke. I suppose that without them you'd look funny but you can't let the balls take over. Remember that and you'll go places.

363. Fugu

An adorable fish, that's for darn sure. You are a puffer fish that gets really fat and not scary at all. You are also the most poisonous fish out there. There are very specific ways to prepare you because if even one thing goes wrong you'll be down a rabbit hole that leads directly to jail. Chefs have to be trained for a hell of a lot of years just to be certified to even begin cutting into this fish. When they do though, it makes the room sing. Often it is prepared as sashimi in translucent and very thin slices. But listen, if people want to take time to buy the fish and bring it home they will soon realize that most of the dinner party has died from the poison. Basically be careful when being handled because these humans'll get you. And if they do get you, make sure to puff up and stab them with your quills. That'll stop them.

364. Alligator

Even though you are thoroughly southern I would like to point out that you are also a rather frightening food. How many millennia has your species been on this earth before we humans came in and decided you were alive so we may as well eat you? After learning more about you it has become abundantly clear that you are a staple meat for many people south of the Mason-Dixon. Here's the thing though: people who are not southern (everyone else) sees you as gross. Seriously. They see an apex predator and think "wow. Covered in scales and likes to bite. Great, bring it in." ← sarcasm. But still, someone said "I think we should eat that thing." While simultaneously wondering where all their friends had suddenly disappeared to. So yeah, you taste good, your eggs taste good. It's a whole package thing with you. Changing hearts and minds one at a time until you become a staple food for everyone and get put on endangered lists because someone thinks your tail brings good magic. Welcome to living with humanity. We gonna eatcha!

365. Chicken Feet

Lots of countries like you and have their own ways of preparing you. But first, can we say that you are really not that appetizing to look at? You've been running on those things, in the dirt and dust and your own poop since the day we met. But there are people who love you. I mean, you are basically skin and tendon which by itself seems worse enough. But many cultures eat you in some form or another that we can't just dismiss you like circus peanuts. I think the most normal way to have you is to flavor broth before adding other soupy ingredients. What I don't understand is how you are more than just a little popular. I heard of a guy that bought tons of you and had a block party. So you've got some great game. I think that's really cool, finding your niche. Keep up the PR. It's working (on everyone but me).

COMPLETED

1. Chicken Pot Pie (store bought) (Family size)
2. Deli Ham
3. Pomegranate
4. Veal
5. Tuna Sandwich (From Subway)
6. Last Bagel in The Break Room
7. Spearmint Gum
8. Dollar Store Ginger Ale
9. Pulp Orange Juice

10. Ice Cream Sandwich
11. Mac and Cheese
12. Quiche
13. Clams
14. Rock Candy
15. Cheeseburger
16. Pigs in A Blanket
17. Beef Teriyaki On a Skewer
18. Pears
19. Face cake
20. Huge round flat lollipops
21. Coleslaw
22. Chocolate milk
23. Strawberry milk
24. Beans
25. Mushrooms
26. Yogurt
27. Soft serve
28. Ice cream
29. White wine
30. Beer
31. Loaded Nachos
32. Water
33. Salad
34. Lobster
35. Cilantro
36. Sushi
37. Pizza
38. Calzones
39. Steak
40. Frozen peas
41. Chinese Food from Down the Street
42. Veggie Burgers
43. Fish sticks
44. Chicken
45. Bananas
46. Hot Tea
47. Eggs
48. Salt
49. Beef Jerky, in fact, all Jerkies
50. Popcorn (movie theater)
51. Bleu Cheese Dressing
52. Ketchup
53. Oatmeal Raisin Cookies
54. Multigrain Bread
55. Coffee (Caffeinated)
56. Fish
57. Burritos
58. Hot dogs
59. Powdered potato flakes
60. Buffalo wings
61. Crab Rangoon
62. Corn on the Cobb
63. Caviar
64. Oysters
65. Soy Sauce
66. Rice
67. Generic Store Brand Cereals
68. Cheese
69. White Chocolate
70. Angel hair pasta and meatball
71. Five Pound Gummy Bear
72. Milk
73. Crab
74. Ice
75. Avocado
76. Kabobs
77. Olives
78. Pie
79. French Fries
80. Pickles
81. Coconut Water
82. Bagels
83. Watermelon
84. Tacos
85. Asparagus
86. Matzah
87. Meatloaf
88. Mozzarella sticks
89. Peanut butter and jelly
90. Soup
91. Grilled cheese sandwich
92. Fried Calamari
93. Pretzels
94. Craft cider
95. Edible underwear
96. Waffles
97. Pancakes
98. Clam chowdah (Clam Chowder)
99. Fondue
100. S'mores
101. honey
102. Hard alcohol
103. Grapes
104. Raisins
105. Tom Kha Gai
106. Plain Toast
107. Mochi
108. Applesauce
109. Muffins
110. Dirt
111. Spiders

112. Lobster roll
113. Cherries
114. Klondike bar
115. Salt and vinegar chips
116. Toaster pastries
117. Thanksgiving turkey
118. Bacon
119. Brownies
120. Munchkins
121. Hummus
122. Pad Thai
123. Reuben Sandwich
124. Baba Ganoush
125. Donuts
126. Peanuts
127. Cannoli
128. Ice cream cones
129. Mint
130. Eggplant
131. Lasagna
132. Macarons
133. Black licorice
134. Onion rings
135. Chicken nuggets
136. CCD (chocolate chip cookie dough)
137. Hot peppers
138. Garlic
139. Sandwich cookies
140. Croissants
141. Kiwi
142. Mango fried rice
143. English muffins
144. Trifle
145. A hunk of cheese
146. Protein bar
147. Zucchini
148. Cheesecake
149. Blueberries
150. Fish and chips
151. Pierogis
152. Hard salami
153. Meatballs
154. Plums
155. Mayonnaise
156. Cotton candy
157. Fried dough
158. Popsicles
159. Seaweed salad
160. Maple syrup
161. Tomatoes
162. Scoop chips
163. Sour candy
164. Eel
165. Scrambled eggs
166. Baguettes
167. Cereal (cold)
168. Milk
169. Banana chips
170. Cabbage
171. Candy corn
172. Carrots
173. Worms
174. Rabbit
175. Trail Mix (GORP) (Good Old Raisins and Peanuts)
176. Potato salad
177. Limes
178. Granola
179. Chicken Salad
180. Orange Chicken
181. Gnocchi
182. Crackers
183. Fried Rice
184. Macaroni Salad
185. Root Beer Float
186. Fortune Cookies
187. Duck
188. Lamb
189. Corn Bread
190. Tater Tots
191. String Cheese
192. Pesto
193. Garbage plate
194. Cake pops
195. Carrot Cake
196. Gelt
197. Milkshake
198. Raspberries
199. Shepherd's Pie
200. Jelly Roll
201. Oatmeal
202. Green Apples
203. Fried Ice cream
204. Angel Food Cake
205. Pixie Stix
206. Cranberry Sauce
207. Blue Raspberry Iced Drink
208. Flavored Vodka
209. Energy Drinks
210. Escargot
211. Veggie Spaghetti
212. Pepper

- 213. Edible Flowers
- 214. Cold Cuts
- 215. All You Can Eat Buffet
- 216. Grapefruit
- 217. Chili
- 218. Seafood Steam Pots
- 219. Ring Pops
- 220. Fruit Sala from a glass jar at Nana's
- 221. Foie Gras
- 222. Figs
- 223. Samosas
- 224. Blood Orange Sorbet
- 225. Crab Cakes
- 226. Egg Drop Soup
- 227. Bananas Foster
- 228. Bulk Candy
- 229. Breakfast Pizza
- 230. Stuffing
- 231. Thanksgiving Leftover Sandwich or Roll Up
- 232. Ribs
- 233. Chicken Quesadilla
- 234. Moon (half and half) Cookies
- 235. Tofu
- 236. Collard Greens
- 237. Green Bean Casserole
- 238. Grape Juice
- 239. Papadum
- 240. Chicken Alfredo
- 241. Kimchi
- 242. Mini Pizza bagels
- 243. Pineapple
- 244. Beets
- 245. Maple syrup
- 246. Pancakes
- 247. Sandwich cookies
- 248. Gefilte Fish
- 249. Grape leaves
- 250. Fluff
- 251. Almonds
- 252. Peach Cobbler
- 253. Non-Fish Sushi
- 254. Omelets
- 255. Hard Boiled Eggs
- 256. Haggis
- 257. Breadsticks
- 258. Blooming onion
- 259. Edamame (soybeans)
- 260. Fried Plantains
- 261. Rice Krispie treats
- 262. Potatoes
- 263. Knishes
- 264. Okra
- 265. Caprese Salad
- 266. Lemon Meringue
- 267. Ramen
- 268. Bruschetta
- 269. Injera
- 270. Shrimp Cocktail
- 271. Tartar Sauce
- 272. Spicy Mustard
- 273. Cocktail Sauce
- 274. Iced Tea (sweetened)
- 275. Iced Tea (unsweetened)
- 276. Salsa
- 277. Apple Cider
- 278. Walnuts
- 279. Tide Pods
- 280. Toothpaste
- 281. Shower water
- 282. Free store cookies
- 283. Powdered Milk
- 284. Various objects
- 285. Old person candy
- 286. Crepes
- 287. Butter cookies
- 288. Edible marijuana
- 289. Sliders
- 290. Sliced Bread
- 291. Mussels
- 292. Deviled eggs
- 293. Jelly Beans
- 294. French Toast
- 295. Portobello mushroom
- 296. Chocolate
- 297. Salmon
- 298. Strawberries
- 299. Spaghetti
- 300. Mango
- 301. Cupcakes
- 302. Animal Eyes
- 303. Goat Cheese
- 304. Pecan Pie
- 305. Honey Mustard
- 306. Poutine
- 307. Po' boy

- 308. Cavatappi
- 309. Coffee (Decaffeinated)
- 310. Red wine
- 311. Aloe Vera
- 312. Spices
- 313. Penne
- 314. Cherry flavored OTC medications
- 315. Cuban sandwich
- 316. Health shakes
- 317. Cottage Cheese
- 318. Croutons
- 319. Alphabet Soup
- 320. Ice cream truck baseball mitt
- 321. Ice cream truck rocket pops
- 322. Cinnamon rolls
- 323. Pumpkin spice
- 324. Guacamole
- 325. Fried Chicken
- 326. Sloppy Joe
- 327. Paella
- 328. Corn Dog
- 329. Jell-O
- 330. Creamed spinach
- 331. Ice
- 332. Whitefish Spread
- 333. Precut Fruit Platters
- 334. Turducken
- 335. Tater Tots
- 336. Tamales
- 337. Risotto
- 338. Pistachios
- 339. Blood
- 340. Borscht
- 341. Empanada
- 342. Sushi Burrito
- 343. Hog Maw
- 344. Dog
- 345. Cat
- 346. Seven-layer dip
- 347. Seltzer
- 348. Soft Drinks
- 349. Pot Roast
- 350. Churros
- 351. Baby food
- 352. Baby corn
- 353. People
- 354. Dried Fruit
- 355. Rye Chips
- 356. Redneck Sushi
- 357. Toffee
- 358. Pork rind
- 359. Peanut Butter cups
- 360. Zucchini Bread
- 361. Candy Necklace
- 362. Bubble Tea
- 363. Fugu
- 364. Alligator
- 365. Chicken Feet