



Off Menu – Ep 191 – Paul Feig

Ed Gamble

Welcome to the Off Menu podcast taking the vermouth of good chat, the gin of fantastic humour, the ice of the internet, mixing them together then pouring into the beautiful podcast martini glass, and serving with a twist of fun.

James Acaster

I absolutely love it. Ed Gamble. My name's James Acaster. This is the dream restaurant. We invite a guest in every single week, we ask them their favourite ever starter, main course, desert, side dish and drink and as Ed's little clue there.

Ed Gamble

Little clue.

James Acaster

Might have tipped you off, this week's guest is Paul Feig.

Ed Gamble

Paul Feig an amazing film director, writer, cocktail man now.

James Acaster

Yes, during the lockdowns he was making cocktails online and he's turned it into a book called Cocktail Time. It's full of loads of recipes for cocktails, as well as stories from his life, a little bit of advice in there if you want. It's the ultimate guide to grown up fun and that's out now, you can get that. We've been flicking through it. It's fantastic.

Ed Gamble

I can't wait to make some stuff from that.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, there's so many great ideas in there. The way that he writes as well, the stories that he tells. It's a wonderful read. I'm genuinely looking forward to making some of these cocktails. Some of them which I've never had before but they look and sound delicious.

Ed Gamble

Well, maybe, some of them will come up in the chat with Paul Feig.

James Acaster

Yes, fingers crossed, but Ed listen, we both love Paul Feig, however, if he brings up an ingredient, a secret ingredient which we deem to be unacceptable, we will kick Paul Feig out of the dream restaurant.



Ed Gamble

We will, and today, that secret ingredient is bad meat in a Brazilian restaurant.

James Acaster

In a Brazilian restaurant.

Ed Gamble

We've tried to find out for ages the exact thing that makes them really ill on Bridesmaids.

James Acaster

We've been sat here for a long time googling, 'What gives them food poisoning in Bridesmaids?' Every single website, just says bad meat from a Brazilian restaurant. That's all it says.

Ed Gamble

So, that's what the secret ingredient is.

James Acaster

Very unlikely he's going to choose that.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Because the word bad is in it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, no one says, 'Oh, I'll have some bad meat from a Brazilian restaurant, please.'

James Acaster

Yes, but I mean, yes-,

Ed Gamble

Also, I think he knows his stuff, you know?

James Acaster

Yes, he seems to be a foodie. He's a least a drinkie.

Ed Gamble

He's a drinkie, but often drinkies are foodies.

James Acaster

Yes, drinkies are foodies, they go hand in hand.



Ed Gamble

I'm very excited for this one James. Paul Feig's done so much amazing stuff.

James Acaster

Yes, I mean, we're both fans of freaks and geeks. The aforementioned Bridesmaids, of course.

Ed Gamble

And the US office. You know.

James Acaster

Oh, come on, I'm going to try and get the US office in there.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Like a little reference.

Ed Gamble

You've got a drop a ref.

James Acaster

I'm going to try and sneak it under the radar, see if I can get it past him.

Ed Gamble

See what happens.

James Acaster

We'll see.

Ed Gamble

Also, there's some talk, Benito's let us know of him making us a martini, which is why I did the martini intro, because I've to gin on the brain.

James Acaster

I'm very excited about that if we get a martini made for us by someone who has a cocktail making book out.

Ed Gamble

Yes, and his own gin.

James Acaster

And his own gin, of course.



Ed Gamble

Artingstall's London dry gin.

James Acaster

Can't wait to try it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, me too.

James Acaster

We've got a good history of guests on the pod who have their own spirits and them turning out to be delicious.

Ed Gamble

So, very excited for that. Very excited for the chat. Very excited to meet Paul Feig. Let's do it, this is the Off Menu menu of Paul Feig.

Ed Gamble

Welcome Paul to the dream restaurant.

Paul Feig

Thank you so much. I'm so excited to be here.

James Acaster

Welcome Paul Feig to the dream restaurant. We've been expecting you for some time.

Paul Feig

Ah, finally genie, I finally meet you.

James Acaster

It's a great pleasure. I thought that was a big explosion I did there. I thought that was a good one.

Paul Feig

That was a good one. You didn't quite get on me-

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes.

Paul Feig

I was worried for a second.

Ed Gamble

I'm in the genie splash zone. So, I got quite a lot of that.



James Acaster

How often do you reckon I spit on you.

Ed Gamble

Well, normally, we sort of sit next to each other, adjacent. So, I don't get too much spit, but occasionally a little fleck.

Paul Feig

Right. The microphone takes a beating though.

Ed Gamble

Oh, an absolute hammering, yes.

James Acaster

And Benito who's, people can't see but he's holding the microphone in front of my face.

Paul Feig

I finally meet Benito, I'm very excited about this.

James Acaster

Is he how you imagined he would be?

Paul Feig

No, actually. Better, much better.

James Acaster

How did you imagine him?

Paul Feig

I don't know why I imagined some big hulking guy.

Ed Gamble

Because of the presence of the word, 'Great,' I guess.

Paul Feig

You know, that's what it is. In sort of like, yes, that classic Warner Bros cartoon genie. Come bursting out. So, I'm happy that I'm not, not afraid.

James Acaster

Yes.

Paul Feig

Just slightly intimidated.



James Acaster

We're very excited to talk about all things food. Also, your new book, Cocktail Time, which is out, which is like-, I mean, it's not just cocktail recipes although it has loads of brilliant cocktail recipes in it, but also, it's got stories and just, it says, 'The ultimate guide to grown up fun,' as well, which I think sums it up nicely.

Paul Feig

Yes, thanks. No, I like old times kind of cocktail party fun. You know, and that sort of, you see those pictures from the 50's and 60's of people in small apartments in New York in tuxedos and gowns drinking martinis. That always looked kind of cool to me. So, I'm trying to bring that back.

James Acaster

Oh nice, and it was lockdown project as well. So, in lockdown did you become that guy?

Paul Feig

Yes.

James Acaster

Were you wearing those tuxes in the house?

Paul Feig

Well, I had an Instagram live show I did every day for 100 days in a row where I made cocktails and raised money for first responders and all that. This kind of grew out of that. A lot of people said, 'Well, write down the recipes,' and then I just kept writing because it was lockdown and I had nothing else to do.

James Acaster

Oh, lovely.

Ed Gamble

Such a fantastic idea.

James Acaster

Yes.

Paul Feig

Thanks.

Ed Gamble

And I'm definitely going to use it as an excuse to just get through this and make cocktails at home, alone.

Paul Feig

Excellent.



Ed Gamble

Alone. Well, my wife doesn't really drink cocktails but I make martinis at home and then you sit down with a martini and it makes sense if you're like, wearing a tuxedo and you're making a night of it-

Paul Feig

Yes.

Ed Gamble

But when you're just sat on the sofa with a martini in a martini glass, just in your pyjamas, it's just like there's a special level of bleakness there.

Paul Feig

It can tip to sadness, slightly, but at the same time though, one of the things I always talk about and I talk about in the book, is like, at least you're drinking it out of a nice glass, make it into something because there's no excuse for drinking booze out of plastic. I think that's the line, I draw, because then you just want to get drunk.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Do you have a favourite cocktail glass at home that's like the really fun glass that you can have a nice drink out of?

Paul Feig

Yes, I've got a couple of martini glasses I like. One that's from like, The Connaught Hotel that's really fancy and all that. There's also more kind of old timey, kind of 50's tumblers that are fun to have like a scotch out of kind of thing. So, I sound like a huge drunk, right now.

James Acaster

No, this is-, but so, only one of the martini glasses is from that hotel?

Paul Feig

There's two. There are two.

James Acaster

If a guest came over and broke one of those glasses, how good do you think you could disguise your anger?

Paul Feig

I'm pretty good at that. My wife is terrible at it. She's like, if somebody spills something she's like, 'Oh my god, you've got to get this off the floor, we just had this cleaned.' It's like, 'Let it go, let it go, it's not that bad,' but I will secretly despise them and want to-



James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, especially if there's only two glasses from the Connaught. You'd just have to go to the bathroom and bite your knuckle until. 'Oh, it's fine.'

Paul Feig

Exactly. Then go buy two more and then I've got an odd number, unless I then have them over again and they break another one. So, then we get back to the evens.

Ed Gamble

That's a good martini at the Connaught. That's somewhere I have been because just before we started recording we were talking about Duke's.

Paul Feig

Oh yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

Which we've spoken about before on the podcast but we've still not had a chance to go, but the Connaught, love the Connaught.

Paul Feig

Yes, they do a lot of pageantry there.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Paul Feig

They pour it from up high, which is nice, although as a cocktail enthusiast and a martini lover I feel like that's just making it slightly less cold, if you do that.

Ed Gamble

Okay, so, you're a purist as well, because they do all the bitters as well. You can have all the different types of bitters.

Paul Feig

Yes.

Ed Gamble

But are you more of just a straight up martini guy?

Paul Feig



Yes, because to me it's all about the gin and the interaction with the vermouth and then, you know, I like a lemon twist on top because I like a bright martini versus, I think olives sort of drag it down sometimes.

James Acaster

Ah.

Ed Gamble

I mean, we should mention we are-, we are in the presence of the martini equipment here as well.

Paul Feig

It is here.

Ed Gamble

You brought it with you. So, I feel like we should have one.

Paul Feig

Would you like me to make you a martini?

Ed Gamble

I feel like-

James Acaster

Thank you.

Ed Gamble

It would be a shame not to.

Paul Feig

I just hope, Benito, this might be just a lot of noise and-,

Ed Gamble

This is great though, we can use it as like, get a wild track of that and use it as the stings in between the bits.

Paul Feig

Perfect, exactly. Now, normally, I would not use my hands to put the ice in here, but they are clean. So, just know, my friends Alessandro Palazzi, who's the head bartender at Duke's, when I would do my show on Instagram he would send me texts and say like, 'Stop using your hands. Use a spoon.'

Ed Gamble

I completely trust you Paul, I'd say in fact, and I mean this, you're our cleanest looking guest we've ever had.

Paul Feig



Really?

James Acaster

Yes, by some distance.

Paul Feig

Did I beat Stanley Tucci?

Ed Gamble

Oh actually, the Tucci looked pretty clean as well.

Paul Feig

Yes, Tucci is a good friend of mine.

James Acaster

Tucci is clean a whistle.

Ed Gamble

The Tucci is a clean looking man. Also, smelled wonderful.

James Acaster

Ah, smelled great.

Paul Feig

Yes, I've eaten at his house many times and the food is everything you think it would be-,

Ed Gamble

I'm sure.

Paul Feig

And ten times more.

Ed Gamble

I'm sure.

Paul Feig

His wife Felicity makes the gnocchi and it's unbelievable.

James Acaster

Oh wow.

Paul Feig

It's lighter than air, I mean, like, little pillows of delicious.



Ed Gamble

What have we got to do to get an invite to the Tuccis'?

James Acaster

I've got to go back to that Atlanta hotel.

Ed Gamble

James bumped into him at a hotel in Atlanta.

Paul Feig

Oh really?

James Acaster

After we'd done the podcast, and he remembered me.

Paul Feig

Well, how could he forget?

James Acaster

After being reminded. So, you know.

Ed Gamble

So, is that the vermouth that's just gone in there?

Paul Feig

Yes, that's the vermouth, it's a dry vermouth. I like Dolin personally. I have no investment in it whatsoever, but I've basically use just a few drops. So, you just want just enough, you know how like when you have a single malt scotch and you put in like a drop of water just to open it up, that's kind of what-, that's how I look at the vermouth in a martini.

Ed Gamble

Because some people use a spray, right? As well, have you seen that before, where they just little spray it over?

James Acaster

What?

Ed Gamble

Or just rinse the glass with it as well.

Paul Feig

Yes, that's what they do at Duke's.

Ed Gamble



I saw that on a show.

Paul Feig

You put it in-, yes, pours it in, then spins it, then throws it on the carpet. It's his signature move so, there you go, I don't encourage that for anybody else but-

James Acaster

You're wife immediately, 'No.'

Ed Gamble

'We just had that cleaned. Alessandro.'

Paul Feig

Now, just a ton of gin. This is my own gin too that I make.

Ed Gamble

What's the name of your gin?

Paul Feig

My gin is called Artingstall's Brilliant London Dry Gin.

Ed Gamble

Amazing and what a beautiful bottle.

Paul Feig

Thank you. We put a lot into designing this.

James Acaster

Very nice.

Paul Feig

Sorry, I'm literally just selling stuff on your show for the last ten minutes.

James Acaster

Listen, Dan Ackroyd did that and he's one of people's favourite episodes. So.

Paul Feig

I don't think Dan likes me very much. Dan and I have a little history.

James Acaster

Wow, well-,

Paul Feig

I love Dan, he's one of my favourites but he kind of turned on me after Ghostbusters.



James Acaster

Oh yes, yes. Well, hey, we'll let him know. We'll say, 'Do you know what? You and Paul Feig have a lot in common.'

Paul Feig

Exactly.

James Acaster

You should pick up the phone Dan.

Paul Feig

But I will do a much longer interview than he-,

Ed Gamble

And I don't think you, I'm not sure Artingstall's will be in every course that you suggest.

Paul Feig

Certainly not. It's Crystal Skull after this. So, I'm stirring endlessly because it needs to be very very cold.

James Acaster

This is very exciting.

Ed Gamble

I'm so excited.

James Acaster

I saw someone once making, because you know, as you say when people are making the cocktails and they do the really high pour, it can be quite theatrical and quite fun to watch, but not as fun as when I watched someone mess it up once. It was just absolutely-, they did the really high thing and it just went all over the floor, and, I was just like, 'Oh, no.' His hand's completely wet because he just got his whole entire hand that was holding the glass at the bottom.

Ed Gamble

Paul's wife pops up from behind the bar.

Paul Feig

And you took great joy in that?

James Acaster

Oh, I really loved it, I was really laughing from across the room.

Paul Feig

Excellent. I don't want to cut my finger off while I'm-,



Ed Gamble

Don't please, that would be awful.

James Acaster

We are peeling a lemon.

Paul Feig

Peeling a lemon. There we go and normally, I would do gigantic peels, but since I'm in the service of time, I'll try to make these just normal. There we go. Four martinis. One for each of us including the great Benito. The only thing wrong with this is I did not chill these glasses.

Ed Gamble

Okay. So, that's what you would normally do?

Paul Feig

Normally, I would have these ice cold.

Ed Gamble

There's a specific amount of martinis that I think is correct for an evening. How many martinis would you have on an evening?

Paul Feig

Well, here's the big question, it depends what size they are. There is a very evil thing going on in the world, especially in America and I think it's here, I've had it here too, which is like a martini should be 4oz, and they've started doing, like, 10oz martinis, which is like more than a third of a bottle of gin. So, if you get one of those-, and you know, you want it to be cold, so, in order to keep it cold, you kind of have to slam it down pretty fast and then you're whacked out, I mean you're gone.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Paul Feig

So, if it's a 10oz martini, you know, don't even finish it.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Paul Feig

But normally, like a good 4oz martini which is kind of what I'm pouring here, that's just you know, friendly and gets your evening off to a good start. Then you can have wine and all that. So, now, it's all about getting the lemon oil. Sorry, people at home, I'm squeezing a lemon, lemon twist over this and get the edges, oh god. Call my wife. I've just spilled. There you go, and you got to get it on to there.



James Acaster

I like this, squeezing the lemon peel, rubbing it round the rim, dropping it into the cool pool.

Paul Feig

There we go.

Ed Gamble

The cool pool?

James Acaster

The cool pool.

Paul Feig

There we go. That's a lovely martini.

Ed Gamble

You don't normally have to negotiate a microphone while you're-

Paul Feig

Yes, that's right. I blame the mic. There you go fellas.

James Acaster

Thank you so much, Paul.

Paul Feig

Cheers. You bet.

James Acaster

Thank you.

Ed Gamble

Cheers to you.

Paul Feig

Cheers to you.

James Acaster

Cheers.

Ed Gamble

Cheers Benito.

James Acaster

Cheers Benito.



Paul Feig

Cheers, cheers exactly and thank you for letting me do this on your show and having me on because I'm, a massive fan.

Ed Gamble

Well, that is absolutely delicious.

James Acaster

Well, that is phenomenal.

Paul Feig

You like that?

Ed Gamble

Love it.

Paul Feig

Excellent.

Ed Gamble

What a lovely gin.

James Acaster

Yes. What a lovely gin.

Paul Feig

Thank you. We've won a lot of awards and all. So, I'm very proud of it.

James Acaster

Yes, oh that's fantastic.

Ed Gamble

And now. And now-,

Paul Feig

Now with a cool drink in front of us, exactly.

Ed Gamble

Fly off the rails, now.

James Acaster

And another thing.



Paul Feig

James is coming across the table at me, there's going to be a big fight.

Paul Feig

Will we have enough to get a Shrek.

James Acaster

Oh, well, we'll see. We will see if Shrek comes out after he's had a martini. 'Ah, Donkey, I had so many martinis.'

Paul Feig

This is my Shrek challenge to you though, do it without saying, 'Ah Donkey' first.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, see, you know that's his warm up.

Paul Feig

Because that's the warm up, I know exactly.

James Acaster

Yes, I either say, 'Ah Donkey,' or 'My name is Shrek, this is Shrek.' Either one of them.

Ed Gamble

It's when you can tell that someone's a good impressionist when they say the name of the person they do the impression of before they do it.

Paul Feig

I shall not be doing it.

James Acaster

The guy from Bridesmaids made me a cocktail. It's really hard.

James Acaster

Well, let's get into still or sparkling water?

Paul Feig

Yes, sparkling. I love sparkling, I know it's a very controversial thing one here but first of all, I don't buy all this science that everybody has about how it makes your teeth rot and your bones get soft and all that. Maybe it's true, I don't know. I just, I love sparkling water but I like it extra crazy sparkling.

James Acaster



Right.

Paul Feig

Like, I have a soda stream and literally, we'll run out of canisters just making it. I've had it literally where we've put the cap on and I take off and the cap pops off.

Ed Gamble

Oh wow.

Paul Feig

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, you just like keep pumping the gas into it?

Paul Feig

Yes, oh yes. It's ridiculous.

James Acaster

Is that something that's gradually increased over time, where you were like a one pump and then it was two and now you're like-

Paul Feig

Yes, I just go wait-, or whatever that sound is it makes like that farting sound it does when it tells you you're ready but you have to let it go past that into like, torture for it.

Ed Gamble

I love that the soda stream guys are probably listening to this going, 'We can't recommend that. That's so dangerous.'

Paul Feig

Exactly.

James Acaster

He's pushing it past the fart.

Paul Feig

But it's like, I just don't like an anemic sparkling water. Especially, when you make-, like, I really like gin and sodas and I'll probably become a pariah in the UK for saying this but I actually would like to have people switch from gin and tonic to gin and soda, because tonic water is filled with sugar. I don't want to rain on anybody's parade but also it just covers up the taste of the gin, which, you know.

James Acaster

Yes, I would agree with that. Actually, like, tonic, if you have a tonic on it's own it's absolutely disgusting.



Ed Gamble

I don't think that's true. I'm going to be on the side of tonic here.

James Acaster

Are you a tonic boy?

Ed Gamble

I love tonic. I have diet Schweppes tonic, which is sugar free.

Paul Feig

Yes, oh okay.

Ed Gamble

So, there you go, no sugar in there, but I do agree that I would never have a gin and tonic with like a really nice gin that I'm very excited about drinking.

Paul Feig

Well, a delicate gin. It just kind of wipes it out.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I just don't want to like-, because it does shout of the gin a bit but no, I love tonic.

James Acaster

No, fair, I didn't know you were such a tonic head.

Ed Gamble

I'm a tonic head. I drink tonic by itself.

James Acaster

You had a gin and tonic the other day when we went out for a drink the three of us.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Me and Benito on the beers. Beer boys, beer twins, and arms around each other. Beer boys. Cheersing.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

And you were there with your little gin and tonic in the corner.



Ed Gamble

And that doesn't feel great when it's, 'Shall we go for a pint?' And you go into a British pub for a lovely pint and then you're the one sat in the corner drinking a gin and tonic.

James Acaster

Being very sensible.

Paul Feig

Left out. Left out of it, but like with a tonic water, you wouldn't want like a sort of half bubbly tonic water.

Ed Gamble

No, you want it to be-,

Paul Feig

Gutsy bubbles.

Ed Gamble

It needs to make itself apparent.

Paul Feig

Yes, exactly. So, that's why, you know, there's some of these sparkling waters, your Badoit's and all that which is just like a baby farted in it or something. There's just, there's nothing going on there other than just looks like maybe the glass was dirty, so, there's a little bit of kind of bubbles on the side.

Ed Gamble

Badoit was the name of the baby.

James Acaster

Badoit.

Ed Gamble

Little Badoit.

Paul Feig

And his tiny farts. Tiny little-,

Ed Gamble

I'm ready.

James Acaster

Guff one out and goes back in. I mean is your sparkling water of choice then, for this, a gin and sparkling water? A gin and soda water?



Paul Feig

Well, no, because I'm going to have a drink before I have my meal-

James Acaster

Lovely.

Paul Feig

and that would be a martini, so I'm not surprising anybody with that, but no, I like good old fashioned like, New York seltzer water. That's like super aggressive, you know, just makes your tongue kind of come alive. So, but it's hard to find that here.

James Acaster

No flavour? None of the flavoured ones?

Paul Feig

No flavour, no, I don't-, well, I do enjoy a La Croix, if you will?

James Acaster

Sure.

Paul Feig

Yes, which is, I know controversial for some people.

Ed Gamble

Always gets a shout out from American guests though, La Croix.

James Acaster

It does and it always is followed by the phrase, 'I know it's controversial,' and we have to sit here and act like we know what that means.

Paul Feig

It's because-, do you have La Croix here?

James Acaster

No. When we went to LA and New York to record some episodes of this, and we got into La Croix, I think because someone maybe mentioned it early episodes, then Benito went out and bought a load, and we just had them in the Airbnb.

Paul Feig

Oh.

James Acaster

So we were necking them pretty solidly when we were over there, but I still didn't see the controversy, I thought this is pretty nice.



Paul Feig

I think it's just looked at as being kind of douchey.

James Acaster

Oh, fair enough.

Paul Feig

Yes, so there's that but somebody I know actually says it tastes like a drawing of an apple.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's just the merest hint of fruit isn't it?

Paul Feig

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It's like Badoit ate a raspberry and then farted into the water.

James Acaster

Little Badoit, baby Badoit. Popadoms or bread? Popadoms or bread, Paul Feig? Popadoms or bread.

Paul Feig

I'm ready. I'm ready for this. Well, here is-, so, I would like to change it up a little bit if I could?

Ed Gamble

Please.

Paul Feig

I would very much like chips and salsa. When I say chips and salsa, not British chips obviously, but like tortilla chips in a Mexican restaurant.

James Acaster

Yes.

Paul Feig

That's my favourite way to start a meal.

James Acaster

I love it. Desiree Birch definitely chose this. I don't know if anyone else has.

Ed Gamble

No, I don't-, I think it's been a long time since someone went with this and I think it's such a good choice.



James Acaster

I love it when people hack this part of the meal and don't just go with the two options and actually get something that would normally sit here. It feels like a proper celebration of the course.

Paul Feig

There you go. I didn't want to be controversial or anything. Once again, I'm trying to stay away from controversy.

Ed Gamble

Desperate to not be cancelled on this podcast.

Paul Feig

Definitely. The one I was looking forward to the most is the one that took me down.

Ed Gamble

It's such a good choice because I love bread, I'd had bread before a meal anytime but it can fill you up so much, whereas when it's chips and salsa, it really gets you excited and ready for the meal. It's like that little tingle.

Paul Feig

Well, it blasts your tastebuds a little.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Paul Feig

In a great way but here's, I mean, I love Mexican food and you'll find that out as I go through my menu but depending on what Mexican restaurant you go to, there's a gazillion different types of salsa and some are really, terrible and some are fantastic but there's so many just kind of like limp ones and I don't understand them. There's some that are crazy. One place in Pasadena, California where I-, they literally just take those chill flakes and they put oil in it and that's it and it's like, it's kind of madness. Your tongue's on fire but not in a fun way.

James Acaster

None of the flavour.

Paul Feig

It just hurts.

Ed Gamble

It's the challenge, yes. Do you have a particular salsa that you love that you would want with this course?



Paul Feig

Yes, there's a place called Gardens of Taxco in Los Angeles and they were this great restaurant that has been there forever and their big thing was they had no written menus. The guy would come over and would recite this menu to you but it had jokes in it and like, one of the jokes was like, 'It taste like the chicken was born in the sauce,' and so, he would like you know stretch out born.

Ed Gamble

Did you go there enough that you knew the script? Could you like mouth along to what he was saying?

Paul Feig

Well, it's that thing, you know when there's something you love and you just know it so well. So, you take people there and it's always like, 'Hey, here comes those two jokes,' and we just like wait for those two jokes, which after a while is just kind of pathetic. The jokes aren't that funny really but-

James Acaster

It's like when I went to Disney World, and I went to go on the Jungle Cruise and you know that the backside of water joke is coming and I was really excited about that but I'd never heard it before in person id just seen it on a bunch of stuff, and when they said back side of water, I started an applause on my own. One person joined in and we made eye contact and it was like, 'Yes, we know.'

Paul Feig

Super fans.

James Acaster

We know that's a great running joke, so I get how you feel at this restaurant. I'd be quite excited.

Ed Gamble

Saying it tastes like the chicken was born in the sauce is a weird joke.

Paul Feig

Yes, I know, and kind of unsettling too. That was always like, we deconstructed it.

Ed Gamble

I didn't even think about it for a second, and I was like, 'What does he mean?'

Paul Feig

I don't want to eat anything that tastes like it was born in the thing I'm going to eat.

James Acaster

Weird home birth going on with a paddling pool full of the sauce.

Ed Gamble

Just put your chicken in it.



James Acaster

There you go. Now, we're going to eat it immediately, and take it out to Paul Feig who's going to eat it.

Paul Feig

That's right, I'll do it.

Ed Gamble

I guess does it mean it's just been marinated for a long time, maybe?

Paul Feig

Yes, I guess, it just feels like it's so part of the sauce that like how could it be-,

Ed Gamble

Right, that it was born in the sauce.

Paul Feig

And the other joke was, 'It's spicy, not hot, spicy.'

James Acaster

It's the delivery would make the-, you could see the audience if he was a stand up, everyone would join in with that.

Paul Feig

And you could tell all the regulars would bring somebody new and they're all like watching him with anticipation watching the person, like, 'Are they going to laugh?' Oh my god, my mum, I took my mum there once like in the last year of her life, and you know, she was always kind of put upon by my grandmother who was very overbearing and so she was always very meek and when my grandmother died, my mum kind of found herself but overly found herself. Like, you know, she'd be telling a story and somebody would interject with a joke and she's like, 'Excuse me, I'm talking.' It was like, 'Mum, you can't now just take over. You're trying to right the wrongs of your whole life.' So, I take her there, you know, I'm so excited and the guy's doing the menu and right in the middle of it she goes, 'Is he ever going to stop talking?' I was like, 'Oh my god, my favourite place.'

Ed Gamble

He's not done the spicy joke yet.

James Acaster

Never go back. So, the chips, do they make the chips in house, or are they bought, because like that's really exciting when we go to like, Mexican restaurants especially around-, I haven't been to Mexico, want to, but especially around LA where I've been there and there's like the Mexican restaurants around there and the chips are incredible.

Paul Feig



Yes, you never quite know. You know, there's some places that make them but I've been to places where they make them with four tortillas and those are kind of funky because they get kind of like, you know, bubbly and then they keep the grease on them and stuff. So, that's not as much fun. I like just a good corn chip, and if it's made in house that's great, I tend to not ask. I don't want to know.

James Acaster

And why salsa over-, for me, I'm a guac guy.

Paul Feig

Oh yes.

James Acaster

I'm a guacaholic.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you're a guac head.

James Acaster

I'm a guac head.

Paul Feig

There you go. You're guacy.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, and with salsa, sour cream, guac, where are you ranking them?

Paul Feig

I love guac. So, not sour cream, not a sour cream guy but what I like to do is get a big, you know, especially when they make it table side, that's the best when they make the fresh guacamole, but then you dip the guacamole and put it into the salsa and try not to get the guacamole into the salsa because that's always disgusting when people do that, so then you've got the double thing and that's the best.

James Acaster

Right.

Paul Feig

That is the greatest.

James Acaster

Are you getting them on the corners then? Is that how you're dipping them?

Paul Feig

No, I do the flat, you know it's the triangle, so you use the point and then you use the big scoop at the back because I like a lot of salsa. I will run through bowls and bowls of salsa.



James Acaster

Great, and how spicy are we talking on the salsa?

Paul Feig

Pretty spicy.

James Acaster

Yes.

Paul Feig

I want it pretty hot, but it's like, have you ever gotten burned in an Indian restaurant? Most places I go to they'll go like, 'Careful sir, it's really hot.' Okay, and it's not hot at all.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Paul Feig

But you say that in an Indian restaurant and you get fucked, really badly. I remember once I go like, 'I want it hot,' and he goes like, 'Hot?' I said, 'Yes, really hot.' Okay, and the first bite and you're like, 'Oh my god, what am I going to do? I'm going to die.'

Ed Gamble

Because he's gone back to the kitchen and gone, 'Let's fuck this white guy over.'

Paul Feig

Oh, totally. He's standing there cross armed in the door like, 'Here he comes,' and I'm just eating like, 'Hi.'

Ed Gamble

I went to the taco place in LA and they refused to give me one of the tacos because it was too spicy.

Paul Feig

Really?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I might have been to the same place. Was I with you?

Ed Gamble

We went, but I've been twice and they both times refused to give it to me.



Paul Feig

What, just because of the look of you?

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think so.

Paul Feig

Really?

Ed Gamble

They have one that's like, you can get five different levels of spice and I think I asked for a three and they were like, 'No, no, no,' and I went, 'No, I really like spicy food,' they were like, 'No, you can't have that one.'

Paul Feig

You have to work your way up to it from a two.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think so. Yes, I think I'm going to have to keep going back there and start with a one and build my way up.

Paul Feig

Did you have a two though? So, was that super spicy?

Ed Gamble

I think I ended up just picking something different because I panicked but it's a fantastic place.

James Acaster

Oh delicious but like, I think the only place where I've-, because in Indian restaurants normally I don't say to them, like, I want it hot but they'll sometimes say, 'What you've just order is a bit hot,' but I'll go for it and I'm usually fine. The only place where that's not worked out for me was also in LA at Jitlada.

Paul Feig

Oh.

James Acaster

And they said like, 'Honestly,' because I was quite excited about going there, I'd never been before. So, I googled online the best dishes there and they said, these three, I was like, I'm just ordering those three, I'm doing it, and they went, 'What you have just ordered, like, don't have that.' I was like, 'I'm fine, honestly,' and I thought I was going to die.

Ed Gamble

Thai spice is way more ferocious than Indian spice.



Paul Feig

Do you think, really?

Ed Gamble

Yes, personally, I don't know if it's because we're more used to like Indian food-

James Acaster

Maybe, yes.

Paul Feig

I guess, yes.

Ed Gamble

Maybe but like, some of that Thai stuff is like absolutely fire.

Paul Feig

Well, it's just absolute pain.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Paul Feig

You can't feel your tongue, and then it's just like there's a knife in your mouth.

James Acaster

Well, that's what was so amazing about it there, was that it was still delicious, like, the flavour was still amazing, while it was absolutely kicking the shit out of me. So, I kept on putting it in my mouth.

Paul Feig

That's a good balance though. Sometimes it's just an assault and it doesn't taste like anything other than death.

James Acaster

Yes, sure, then you're never going back but, I mean, I really want to go back there now. Now, I've just started talking about it.

James Acaster

Your dream starter.

Paul Feig

Yes, well, it's tough. I mean, as any foodie will say, it's a tough question because there's so many things we like. I mean, the ones that I love, I even wrote them down just because I didn't want to forget. I like frogs legs are really great, it's probably impolitic to say something like that but-



James Acaster

It's not, that's interesting. We haven't anyone choose frog's legs yet.

Ed Gamble

I don't think we have, no.

Paul Feig

But like, from a place called Chez L'Ami Louis in Paris, and they make them Provencal style, and they're actually fairly graphic too, because like, normally, you get them like, in New York there's a place called La Grenouille that I go to and it's just like the legs and it looks like a little mini chicken leg but this is literally like they're cut off at the waist.

Ed Gamble

Oh wow.

James Acaster

Little trousers.

Paul Feig

And you go like, 'Oh, okay,' so, you know, you really are connecting with the animal at that moment.

Ed Gamble

Wow, French people really don't give a shit do they? That's great. They just lop it off and put it in.

Paul Feig

In your face, down you go.

James Acaster

You've got to get the dick in there as well. An extra bit.

Ed Gamble

Excuse me, my frog doesn't have a dick.

Paul Feig

That's the best part, it's always the most disgusting part is the best part, everybody always tells you.

Ed Gamble

Where all the flavour is.

Paul Feig

Exactly, and escargot I love.

James Acaster

Yes, okay.



Paul Feig

If I'm going with like a French thing, but it's funny when you're trying to put together your dream menu, at the dream restaurant, you want to high or low, and it's very tempting to want to go high you know, just to be-, it's like when somebody asks you what your favourite movie is, it's a film that you always have to like try to pull out some heady kind of reference whereas I just want to go like Napoleon Dynamite, you know, or Monty Python: Holy Grail. So, I feel that, and I'm fighting the pressure of that here but keeping in the Mexican world, at The Polo Lounge, in LA, they have this tortilla soup, which is unbelievable.

James Acaster

Wow.

Paul Feig

So, that could be it, and then the Polo Bar in New York, they have a corned beef sandwich as a starter. I think that they call it salt beef, right? Is salt beef the same as corned beef?

James Acaster

No, so, yes, salt beef, I think we'd call it salt beef here because corned beef here is different, because it's like-, when I first had corned beef in the US, I was like, 'Oh, this is not the same,' because it's more shredded kind of like-, whereas here it's like-,

Ed Gamble

Corned beef is something you get in a tin, it's like a wartime thing-,

Paul Feig

Oh, like spam?

Ed Gamble

It's like spam, it's like spam adjacent. There's like jelly and like-, I mean, look, I love corned beef.

James Acaster

Oh man. Corned beef sandwiches when I was a kid.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

For lunch, I would hit the jack pot if that was my lunch-, in my lunchbox I was so delighted that I had a corned beef sandwich. It was what I was crossing my fingers for.

Ed Gamble

(TC 00:30:00) But very, very different to US corned beef, I think.

Paul Feig



Do you put mustard on it?

James Acaster

You can do. As a kid I didn't, as a kid I was just, I think I was just margarine and corned beef, I was absolutely having the time of my life, but now I would want some salad and some mustard. I'd want it to be more.

Paul Feig

Oh okay, I've got you. Yes, because, like, the American corned beef and pastrami, it's all brisket based anyway, which is so good but pastrami is my favourite, anyway because it's even leaner but yes, they make a sandwich there, it's kind of like, toast, not even toasted it's like not fried but you know pan, kind of seared and then they cut it up in these little pieces and have this beautiful deli mustard that's hot.

James Acaster

Nice.

Paul Feig

So, that's good. So, I could get that but then, I don't know, shrimp cocktail. Let's talk about shrimp cocktails just because they're so different here and in the states.

Ed Gamble

The reputation of them here is very 70s, like, it was a 70s dinner party thing, but also, our prawns are so tiny here if you'd buy them from anywhere or than an amazing fishmongers or you live on the coast. So, I just think it's difficult to find a good one.

James Acaster

They're out there. You don't know what you're-, I mean, we've had a lot of people, a lot of British people, on the podcast, choose a prawn cocktail as their dream and when they're asked about it they always specify massive prawns that are like hanging on the side of the glass. So, that's what they want but more often than not, if you go and get it in a restaurant, you get the little tiddlers. There's hardly any in there.

Paul Feig

And then a piece of lettuce thrown in the bottom, yes.

James Acaster

Yes, and it's just like very boring lettuce.

Ed Gamble

But in the states, is it shrimp and then a cocktail sauce.

Paul Feig



Yes, it's a cocktail sauce, that's the difference is here, and my wife always orders a shrimp cocktail in England and I'm always like, 'You're not going to be happy,' because she always thinks it's going to be cocktail sauce and it's not, it's that, what is it? Marie-

Ed Gamble

Marie Rose, yes.

Paul Feig

Yes, which is more pink, it's almost kind of like a-, what is it like a thousand island kind of?

Ed Gamble

Yes, similar.

James Acaster

It's just ketchup and mayonnaise, I think.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Paul Feig

See, because American cocktail sauce is basically ketchup and horse radish. So, it's really you know, strong and then there's some places, there's a place in St Elmo's Fire actually, in Indianapolis that was famous for this cocktail sauce, that they put so much horseradish in that you couldn't, like, if you breath out of your nose as you ate it you would die. You had to learn how to do it.

James Acaster

Yes please.

Ed Gamble

I love that as a fact. If you breath of your nose you will die. It's happened before, but we're still open somehow.

Paul Feig

If you ever had hot wasabi or whatever, you're fine breathing in but if you breath out of your nose you're like, 'Ah,' your head explodes.

James Acaster

It's what I miss man about Tao Tao Ju, man. That's what I miss. That wasabi sauce with the prawns, it used to burn right through all of my sinuses and it was great. Now, they've softened it.

Ed Gamble

Using it as medicine.

James Acaster



Yes, yes, but I know exactly what you mean and it's a good feeling. I like it.

Paul Feig

Yes, there you go. Exactly.

Ed Gamble

Are you leaning towards any one in particular?

Paul Feig

Yes, I'm actually leaning towards, out of the blue, and this was a dark horse because I just discovered it two months ago. I had my 60th birthday.

James Acaster

Happy birthday.

Paul Feig

Thank you so much, and I literally-, today was the first day I used my 60 and over free subway card, and it was so depressing. It's literally the old man card, and it just says enter. It doesn't even say anything on it, it's just like, 'Come in. You're closer to death. Get on the train.'

Ed Gamble

Come in welcome.

James Acaster

I suppose it doesn't say exit. I mean, that's the real one you should worry about.

Ed Gamble

Or a picture of the grim reaper.

Paul Feig

No, so, we were in Capri, Italy, and on the last day went to this restaurant that we had never been to before called La Capannina, and they had an eggplant parm that was unbelievable, because I enjoy eggplant parm, but this was like they had cut the eggplant into these ribbons, like, these I mean, micro ribbons. So, the whole thing was so light and just came in this little like ramekin kind of thing and it was specular. So, that's my starter.

Ed Gamble

That's such a great choice.

James Acaster

Yes, I'm a big fan of, I mean, we say aubergine here-,

Paul Feig

Exactly, sorry.



James Acaster

But I like eggplant as a word as well. I like that it's two different things.

Paul Feig

Yes, they could not be more different though.

James Acaster

Yes.

Paul Feig

How those words got so far apart.

James Acaster

It's not like aluminium, aluminium.

Paul Feig

Yes, that's right. I was at a party last night and somebody asked me about metals and I said aluminium just because I didn't to get shamed for pronouncing it the American way.

James Acaster

Well done. How did it go?

Paul Feig

It went well, and actually, they didn't take a beat to kind of question me, and I was like, 'Ah, I did it I passed. I live here now.'

James Acaster

Shouting across the room to your wife, 'Honey, I tricked them. I did it.'

Paul Feig

Her name's Laurie though and that's a truck. So, you never know.

James Acaster

Then we get confused, everyone ducks for cover if you shout Laurie in the room. Well, this sounds great. Also, I think on this pod, the more that people-, if people mention something that doesn't get mentioned a lot, or that can get overlooked, I think this version of it must be really, really good.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

So, it makes me want to try it because I'm like, if somebodies chosen that, it must be because that particular version was like, just so much better.



Paul Feig

It was transformative, because you know, look, I'm a big foodie and I spend most of my life travelling around the world and you know, I probably spent most of the money I've earned on meals, because I love fancy meals and all that stuff but this was just mind bending, because I've had eggplant or aubergine parm before, and sometimes it's just like they'll just cut one in half and put the stuff on top of it. That's kind of good but it's kind of like a steak, but this was just-

Ed Gamble

You need the layers right. You need it to be layered up.

Paul Feig

Yes. It was almost like the eggplant version of you know a lasagne.

James Acaster

Right, so, in between each layer they're putting like cheese and tomato.

Paul Feig

Kind of, yes, mostly tomatoes, some cheese in there and some olives and stuff but it was all done so light and it just was kind of fluffed up almost if you will.

James Acaster

Sounds great. Love it. In a ramekin as well, so it's like-, starter size, aubergine parm-,

Paul Feig

Yes, like the cast iron kind of ramekin that it comes in but it wasn't hot, you know, I mean you could touch it.

Ed Gamble

If there's some chips left over from when they were brought, are you going to be dipping your chip in there as well.

Paul Feig

Oh definitely, oh definitely. I'm going to scoop out some of that.

Ed Gamble

Good to hear it.

Paul Feig

And I'll get some bread too. You know, if there's some focaccia around or something.

Ed Gamble

I'm sure we've got some kicking about. We can bring some out.



Paul Feig

But Stanley was right, you know, when Stanley Tucci was talking about how the bread in Italy is not particularly great. It is kind of true, I think they save it all up for the pasta and all that. So, but it's good for scraping stuff up with.

James Acaster

What was this restaurant called again?

Paul Feig

It's called La Capannina.

James Acaster

Are there some other highlights from that place that you want to shout out before we move on?

Paul Feig

I mean, everything was really good, that one just blew everything out of my brain so much that I couldn't-,

James Acaster

Tough isn't it, if the starter is so good.

Paul Feig

Yes.

James Acaster

And then the rest of the meal, you're like, 'Ah, I can't quite-, ' although that's how you know it's good because Ed does judging on Great British Menu, the TV show and I've been lucky enough because of that to go to the banquet a couple of times because I've got a hook up, and you've got to judge it by the end and say what course was the best. You always think, 'Well, that's unfair because I'm just going to write desert because it was the last thing I had.'

Ed Gamble

No, that's what you do, because you're you.

James Acaster

Well, sure. Two years in a row I've voted for the desert, but that first year, that starter was so good that like, it was between those two and I remember thinking that starter must have been amazing, that I'm still thinking about it at the end of the menu.

Paul Feig

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



Paul Feig

I find that to be the case with a lot of Italian cooking for some reason, because like your main is more like a fish or something. So, it's kind of hard to make that exciting once you've got this really cool, either a pasta starter or your parm or whatever. You know, that kind of thing. Oh, there's another place in Capri that I love called Le Grotelle, which is you walk all the way over the island and it's up like in a sea cave, it's gorgeous.

Ed Gamble

Wow.

Paul Feig

But they have mama's stuffed pepper, and she makes this stuff but anyway, it was mama cooks in the back. It's family run and it's so spectacular that kind of everything else-, they bring out this fresh fish and it's nice but it just, you can't beat that first starter.

Ed Gamble

Mama absolutely wiping the floor with everyone. Not in a bad way.

Paul Feig

Oh yes.

Ed Gamble

Just going, 'Wait till you have my stuffed pepper.'

Paul Feig

And screaming yelling fights in the back. We heard some known down fights back there. I don't know what they're saying but it's really ugly.

James Acaster

A good stuffed pepper, man. Ah, well that's incredible.

Paul Feig

Yes, with that kind of mystery stuffing. You know, you don't know what's in there but it's all good, and you don't mind-

Ed Gamble

You don't want to know? Just don't want to know.

James Acaster

You never need to know.

Ed Gamble

Don't tell me what's in that.



James Acaster

Put some breadcrumbs and cheese on top, disguise it.

Paul Feig

There you go. I just know how some of those fights end. That's who's in the stuffing.

James Acaster

Dream main course.

Paul Feig

I know, dream main course. Again, it's hard.

James Acaster

Also, I'm loving the honourable munchions. The amount of honourable munchions for the starter I really appreciate.

Paul Feig

Well, I always find when I listen to your show I love it so much, but I'm always kind of curious. Like, some people will kind of say things that they're debating on, and I find that really fun.

Ed Gamble

Yes, for sure.

Paul Feig

Because I just love hearing about food, so it's always the best. But, I mean, for me-, well, I mean, okay, again I'm going to start- I love steak. You know, I like just a good kind of, like, a fillet mignon or something, or at the Polo Bar in New York they have the Polo Burger, which is just this amazing hamburger. It's big and thick, and it comes with french fries and all that stuff so, you know, that kind of stuff. That's sort of my most fun meal to have, or, like, spaghetti alle vongole when you're in Italy.

James Acaster

Oh yes.

Ed Gamble

Love it.

Paul Feig

Oh, the great clams. Oh, it's just so good.

James Acaster

Harry Hill.

Ed Gamble

Harry Hill picked that?



Paul Feig

Oh, that's right, I remember. Yes, Harry Hill.

Ed Gamble

Your memory for this show is incredible.

James Acaster

Well, that's because I didn't know what it was when he said it, and then I got a dressing down, so I sort of remember it.

Paul Feig

I was glad I could save you on this one. I like how labour intensive it is, because it shows up and it's, like-, I don't know. You enjoy those, right?

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, for sure, yes.

Paul Feig

You have to get all the shells out first right?

James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Paul Feig

Okay. Sometimes I'm always tempted, like, well maybe I kind of eat around the shells but then-,

Ed Gamble

I find it a bit annoying, but then once you've done it it is worth it.

Paul Feig

Yes, you feel like you've earned the meal.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, for sure, yes. You've done a little workout before the meal, yes.

James Acaster

Sometimes do you not think, 'Couldn't they have done this in the kitchen?'

Paul Feig

That's right.

James Acaster



Couldn't they have de-shelled all these clams in the kitchen, because they know I'm not going to eat them. Is it to show you how fresh they are?

Paul Feig

Especially when the clam shells are extremely hot, then there's always a bit of pain.

Ed Gamble

But I guess they've got to cook it all together, right?

James Acaster

Sure.

Ed Gamble

Because they're cooking the clams in there and that's how they steam in their shells and they open up. Because you can't take the clams out and then cook them in-,

Paul Feig

Right.

Ed Gamble

Because then they're going to overcook.

James Acaster

Maybe there should be a bit of theatre with the waiter coming out and being, like, boom boom boom the dish out, and then in front of you with some cool techniques with cutlery, you know, de-shell all of them flicking the shells left, right and centre into bins behind them and stuff a bit like that, and it's all done for you.

Ed Gamble

Ah, that would be good. It's not a bad idea.

Paul Feig

I like it. I think it's good.

James Acaster

That's what the aubergine thing reminded me of, is when the three of us went to New York and they brought out my aubergine, and the guy just completely cut, you know, just carved it up and he mashed it up.

Ed Gamble

Did an autopsy on it.

Paul Feig

Oh, like with the fish?



Ed Gamble

Yes. It was grilled wasn't it?

James Acaster

It was a grilled aubergine, and that was pretty much all it was, in an Italian restaurant, with, like, olive oil on it, and he just criss-crossed it and then shredded it all up so it was all delicious. Which meant that I then copied it at home, so maybe that's why they don't do that in front of you, with the clams.

Paul Feig

They don't want you stealing their bit.

James Acaster

Because now I just do it at home. I've never been to that restaurant ever again.

Paul Feig

He doesn't need us. Exactly.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

Also, you shouldn't be trying the clam thing at home. That's irresponsible.

James Acaster

I could invent it. I could be the one who invents that.

Paul Feig

Have either of you been to Mr Chow's? They do that. It's a Chinese restaurant. There's one here, I know, but there's one in Beverley Hills and they come out-, the noodle chef comes out and does it in front of you, like they do a show.

Ed Gamble

I've seen that. Yes, I've seen that done before. It's very cool.

Paul Feig

It's amazing, it's like magic. They just keep pulling it and it gets thinner and thinner, and more and more-,

Ed Gamble

It's incredible to watch that. Don't try that at home, James.

Paul Feig

That would not go well.



James Acaster

We going to talk about Benihana before moving on, or is that crass?

Paul Feig

Oh, can we?

James Acaster

When it comes to the theatre of food.

Paul Feig

I enjoy a Benihana visit.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. You know, it's fun.

Ed Gamble

I think all of my knowledge of Benihana has come from watching American sitcoms where there will be an episode when they go to a Benihana.

James Acaster

Yes, watching the American Office.

Paul Feig

Of course, exactly.

Ed Gamble

In the American Office of course, yes.

Paul Feig

That's right. My dad took me-, well, I made my parents take me to one once when we were in Chicago, because I desperately wanted-, I was, like, nine or ten. My dad's-, he didn't like anything like that so he's, like, 'Oh, this is going to be a disaster.' For some reason he was counting on it being a disaster, so there he is sitting, the guy's doing the thing, you know. He does this one moment where they'll, like, cut up the shrimp, and he'll pop it onto your plate from far away.

James Acaster

That's good.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's so good.

Paul Feig

Pops it on the plates, goes right on my dad's tie.



Ed Gamble

Oh, God.

Paul Feig

Giant, brand new tie, big thing. He's 'Goddamit.'

James Acaster

The one guy who would have responded quite badly.

Ed Gamble

But that happens. Because sometimes I'm that guy, I can be grumpy, and my dad's the same, and I think you attract the bad thing happening to you.

James Acaster

Sure.

Paul Feig

I 100% agree.

Ed Gamble

Because it's just when everyone's on edge, because there's one sort of bad energy in the room, and then it always happens to that guy. And then it just tips over and the whole night's ruined.

Paul Feig

Yes, but then that's like when you take somebody to your favourite restaurant. And, you know, when my wife and I first started dating I had all these restaurants I really liked, big Chinese restaurants and stuff. And she's, like, 'Ooh, I don't like the look of them,' or, 'They seem gross,' or whatever, just because they weren't the highest end places. I'm, like, 'No, it's great, it's great.' Every single time there'd be a hair in her food, she'd see a cockroach on the ground. Just, like, 'I've never seen it any other time. Why is it happening with you?'

James Acaster

I would love it if I went to a Benihana with Ed and he got a shrimp flung at his tie. It would be the best thing ever, whether he got grumpy about it or not.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I would.

James Acaster

I would be very excited in the moment when it happened.

Ed Gamble



Yes. I'd say, 'I'm never wearing a tie again. Why am I wearing a tie? I've never worn a tie out to dinner before, and the first time I do it a shrimp hits it.'

James Acaster

All the way home, 'I'm never wearing a tie again.'

Paul Feig

Well James, you could buy him a tie with a big target on the front of it.

James Acaster

I might do, yes, yes. I might do it.

Ed Gamble

With a shrimp, just out there.

Paul Feig

Can you do it? But so, those are all what I thought about getting, but I would get is from the infamous Gardens of Taxco, with the menu that they say in the two jokes,. They make a garlic shrimp that is unbelievable. And it's not what it sounds like. It's, you know, kind of the curled up shrimp just cooked in this very kind of thick garlic sauce that's tomato based, and it's just so amazingly good. And, oh, I could just eat a mountain of it.

James Acaster

How much shrimp is in there, because that's what I always want to know before I order a shrimp spaghetti dish.

Paul Feig

I'm with you. You always get ripped off on shrimp, always. They're pretty good here. In one order you'll probably get, I don't know, dare I say ten or fifteen shrimp.

Ed Gamble

Oh wow.

James Acaster

That's good then.

Paul Feig

Yes. Because that's the worst, when you get, like, a shrimp curry and they're, 'Oh, there's three,' you know, and they're not big.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble



But it's like that thing of never going to a restaurant and ordering fish on a Monday, right? Is it a Monday? Or get the special fish dish on a Monday, because it's them just trying to get all of the fish out that they've had over the weekend before the new delivery comes in. Yes, have you been doing that a lot?

James Acaster

I love Monday fish.

Paul Feig

You've got your Monday shrimp, your Monday fish.

Ed Gamble

He's a Monday fish guy.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes.

Paul Feig

What's the rule with oysters and red tide? I never can figure that out. The r and the-

James Acaster

Is there a thing?

Paul Feig

Yes, there's something with oysters. There's just red tide, which I guess means if you eat them you'll die or something. But they also say don't get oysters in months with r. I don't know what the rule is, there just seems to be some rule.

Ed Gamble

That feels too neat a phrase. It feels like that matches up too perfectly.

Paul Feig

Well yes.

Ed Gamble

The oysters aren't sat there-

Paul Feig

It's like some celestial being is going, like, 'There's an r, okay?'

Ed Gamble

The oysters aren't going, 'Well, I'd better go bad. It's January now.'

Paul Feig



I don't know the rule, I just know that there's something they say. I try not to listen because I love oysters, I just want them whenever I want to have them.

Ed Gamble

I would have them whenever.

James Acaster

I'm going to be in my head now.

Paul Feig

Yes?

James Acaster

If I get one any other month than that, I'm going to be, like, 'Red tide.'

Paul Feig

That's right.

James Acaster

If I say red tide to people they'll-,

Paul Feig

This is my issue with oysters. Whenever I order a thing of oysters with somebody, that person will pick up the fucking lemon and immediately put it on the thing and it drives me crazy.

James Acaster

Sure, sure.

Paul Feig

Because I don't necessarily want it on.

James Acaster

You don't need to do a mother with that. Like, 'Shall I be mother?' They pick up the lemon, put it all over everything.

Paul Feig

Yes. I mean, who said that we all want-, I don't know, I mean you might like lemon.

Ed Gamble

I like lemon, but if I'm sharing a dish, whatever it is, whether it's oysters or whatever, it comes with a wedge of lemon, I'll always pick up the lemon wedge and I say, 'Shall I lemon?'

Paul Feig

That's good.



James Acaster

Shall I lemon?

Ed Gamble

You've always got to check and say, 'Shall I lemon?'

James Acaster

You have to ask.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you have to ask. Otherwise I'm happy to individually lemon my pieces.

Paul Feig

Right, there you go. But that's how a civilized person-, but there's just some thing where people just, like, commandeer it and off you go.

James Acaster

Yes, but those people are bad people.

Paul Feig

But what then makes sense to me is lemon is kind of, you know, a salt substitute basically, and so you're just salting something that's already salty so why-, I don't know.

James Acaster

Also, with oysters it's a very particular thing for yourself. It's like what you're going to put on it and then eat it, you want to do that. The ceremony of it is really nice. I don't want anyone else putting anything on my oysters. I want to be able to get each one, decide-, I want lemon, personally, shallots and some hot sauce.

Ed Gamble

Tabasco.

Paul Feig

Oh yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Then I'm happy.

Paul Feig

That's right. All I do is Tabasco, that's it.



James Acaster

That's it?

Paul Feig

Yup.

Ed Gamble

Think I'm going to get an oyster now. We've got Martinis, you didn't bring any oysters with You, Paul.

James Acaster

What's your oyster combo?

Ed Gamble

Depends, you know. That's the joy of it, they all come with their own little plates don't they, so you can mix it up.

James Acaster

Ed mixes it up in life.

Ed Gamble

Sometimes just Tabasco.

Paul Feig

Mignonette.

Ed Gamble

And sometimes, if I'm in America and they've got the cocktail sauce, put that on as well. That's great.

Paul Feig

Yes.

Ed Gamble

But sometimes just a straight oyster, guys.

Paul Feig

Yes.

James Acaster

Wow.

Paul Feig

If it's a really good region. There's one called Beau Soleil that we love, in the East Coast.



James Acaster

That was a TV series here.

Paul Feig

Yes, was it?

James Acaster

Yes, he wore masks of funny celebrities and the he said, like, different catch phrases for each celebrity.

Paul Feig

Really?

James Acaster

Beau Soleil, yes, yes. It's not aged well, but that's what he used to do. Yes, Beau Soleil.

Paul Feig

Now, what about raw clams?

Ed Gamble

I don't think I've ever had raw clams, you know?

Paul Feig

Oh, that's really-

Ed Gamble

I've had raw razor clam before. Love that.

Paul Feig

Oh, razor clam. And cooked razor clams, forget it. Oh, with garlic and all that?

Ed Gamble

Yes, so good.

Paul Feig

Those are transcendent. But no, like a good clam, like a littleneck clam, like at the Oyster Bar in Grand Central Station in New York, they're great because it's small, and what you do is you get those and then you get the cocktail sauce, the really hot-, and you can just really soak them in that.

Ed Gamble

Oh, I love it. Love it.

James Acaster



I really want to try this cocktail sauce now that I didn't know existed, because I just assumed shrimp cocktail was the same as prawn cocktail over here. And I've discovered there's this horseradish cocktail that if you-

Paul Feig

You can make it yourself.

James Acaster

- breathe through your nose you die.

James Acaster

We move on to your dream side dish.

Paul Feig

Yes. I struggle with side dishes sometimes, because they're never usually that exciting, you know? It more alleviates the guilt of the main.

Ed Gamble

Sure.

Paul Feig

You know, like if you get a steak it's, 'I should get some broccoli or something.' Some kind of green thing. But my favourite side is ratatouille.

Ed Gamble

Nice.

James Acaster

Ah ha ha. Has anyone actually chosen ratatouille properly?

Ed Gamble

I don't think so. I don't think so.

Paul Feig

There you go, I got a first off.

James Acaster

A lot of references to the film.

Ed Gamble

There's been a lot of chatatouille.

James Acaster

A lot of chatatouille, not enough ratatouille.



Paul Feig

I was worried it might be the secret ingredient.

Ed Gamble

No.

Paul Feig

But the minute-, one week you did portobellos so I was, like, 'Oh no, like anything could happen on this episode,' so I could stumble into something really terrible.

James Acaster

I mean, so the ratatouille I would say-, because we've talked about the film a lot on the podcast, and I do think the ratatouille in Ratatouille looks better than any ratatouille I've ever had.

Paul Feig

Ah.

Ed Gamble

Yes, okay.

James Acaster

I love the way it looks, the colours.

Ed Gamble

Because of the thin slices and the way it's all lined up yes.

Paul Feig

Yes, that's true. They're just made by a rat so.

Ed Gamble

Yes, just made by a rat.

James Acaster

Made by a rat. I love it.

Paul Feig

Well, the one I love is from a place called Cocotte. There's one by us in Chelsea but I think there's another one in Notting Hill. It's the roast chicken place.

James Acaster

We were talking about this earlier.

Ed Gamble



We were literally talking about it on an earlier episode.

Paul Feig

Are you kidding?

James Acaster

We recorded three episodes today, and the first episode I was talking about how I love the salads there.

Paul Feig

Yes, oh my God, and the chicken. I had it for lunch today.

James Acaster

I haven't had the chicken yet. I've had the chicken soup, which I think is delicious.

Ed Gamble

So, I used to live near one so I could get it delivered, but now I live too far away. Guttled, absolutely gutted.

Paul Feig

It's too much miles.

James Acaster

But yes, it's fantastic.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's so good.

James Acaster

And I didn't know they did a ratatouille there.

Paul Feig

Oh, their ratatouille is spectacular. It's just spectacular.

James Acaster

Well, maybe there's where I'm going tonight now. Because, like, yes I know I can get that at my house.

Paul Feig

And the other thing they have which is a great side dish too, which is my secondary one, is their chips are fantastic. You know, they're made with, like-, they put herbs on top of them and they do truffle ones too. I don't like truffle fries, it's too much.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it gets a lot doesn't it?



Paul Feig

Yes, because it's never real truffles it feels like. It's, like, truffle oil.

James Acaster

First time you had them were they exciting, truffle fries?

Paul Feig

Truffle-, they were titillating because it didn't seem like you should be having them, so it felt very-, but it quickly-, when it's that truffle oil, it's just too-, it's like truffle concentrate, which can be a little bit much.

James Acaster

That's when I felt like Ed and I knew that we were properly just, like, spoilt little boys now. It's when we were saying, like, 'For secret ingredient put truffle oil on there. It's not nice. It's not like the first few times you have it.'

Ed Gamble

It's not real truffle.

James Acaster

They've overdone it now and we don't like truffle oil.

Ed Gamble

Oh, awful. What a couple of awful guys.

James Acaster

Well, I've not had the fries from there either so I'll get the fries and the ratatouille next time.

Ed Gamble

Do they still do the, like, roasted potatoes as well?

Paul Feig

Yes.

Ed Gamble

They're fantastic as well.

Paul Feig

Those are really great, yes.

Ed Gamble

Oh, what a place. I miss that place.

Paul Feig

It's so good, I tell you.



James Acaster

Hey, you're coming round to mine on Saturday. Let's go there for lunch.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Paul Feig

And they weirdly travel well, those fries. Chips really travel well. It's only two blocks from our house but still, sometimes, you know, a chip the minute it leaves the store it just all falls apart.

Ed Gamble

Yes of course, yes.

Paul Feig

It just all falls apart.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Paul Feig

Nothing worse than a soggy chip.

Ed Gamble

We order from a place now and again where when you order on the website it says, 'Oh, when you get the fries put the oven on when you order, and then put them onto a baking tray to warm them up and, like, freshen them up when they arrive.' It's, like, well if I wanted to do that I would have cooked something.

Paul Feig

Exactly.

James Acaster

What you talking about

Ed Gamble

It's a takeaway.

James Acaster

Your raw chicken arrives. Marinade that.

Ed Gamble

Brine it for two days. Enjoy your takeaway. Unbelievable.



James Acaster

So, the ratatouille at-

Paul Feig

Cocotte, yes.

James Acaster

Yes, so what's, like, going on there that makes it better than anywhere else?

Paul Feig

Well, you know, they have all the vegetables and leave the peppers and all that, and zucchini I guess and all, but it's the sauce that it's in. It's got almost like a-, I just live anything with, like, a tomato sauce, but tomato sauce sounds too reductive. It almost sounds like it's a marinara or something. It's very flavourful, extra flavourful, almost like a brownish, you know, tomatoey look, and it just kind of comes together great. And it's kind of perfectly shaped. They do it more in chunks as opposed to the Ratatouille movie slices, and it's just tender and, you know, it always arrives really hot and it just, I don't know-, and it's got a bit of spice to it too so it's not dull.

Ed Gamble

I think it's a great choice as well, because you said that side dishes are to alleviate guilt, so you've got something with vegetables in it so you've got that element to it, but also it's rich and it's delicious, and it feels like a treat as well.

Paul Feig

Exactly, so it doesn't feel like homework.

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

Does it take you back to your childhood, like Anton Ego in the film?

Paul Feig

No. No my mom, bless her heart, was a terrible cook, surpassed only by my grandmother who was the worst cook in the world, but who was presented to me as the world's best cook.

Ed Gamble

Oh wow.

Paul Feig

So, talk about a mind fuck. I thought I didn't like food for the first twelve years of my life because, 'Your grandmother's chicken soup's the greatest.' It tastes like nothing. She didn't use salt or anything so it just was like this sludge, but they would all wax poetic about it. Then my mum was Canadian and so



she would make, like, beef stews. Which was okay, but they just didn't have any flavour. Like, nobody knew about spices where I was from in Michigan at the time.

Ed Gamble

So, why was everyone bigging up your grandma's cooking?

Paul Feig

To my dad-,

Ed Gamble

To keep her happy or did they genuinely think it was good?

Paul Feig

No, he thought it was great, but he had a very, you know-, that palate. You know, my grandmother was Jewish and my dad, you know, and all that, so it's that cooking where they don't want any sodium so nobody will die of a heart attack. So, everything's just taken down so many levels. And then, you know, she would boil chicken, so like boiled chicken's just like, you know-, unless it's in a soup, a good soup. Because my wife makes an amazing chicken soup. I can tell you her secret ingredient.

James Acaster

Oh yes?

Paul Feig

Ketchup.

James Acaster

Ketchup in a soup?

Paul Feig

Sounds crazy. Yes, put ketchup in the soup and it gives it enough kind of sweet and savoury.

James Acaster

Oh, nice.

Paul Feig

It brings it to life. And if only my grandmother had a bottle of ketchup in the house.

Ed Gamble

I can see why your dad was so shocked when someone threw a shrimp at his tie now.

Paul Feig

Exactly.

Ed Gamble



Growing up having bland chicken soup then suddenly-

James Acaster

That's got seasoning on it.

Paul Feig

Your grandmother hit me with a boiled chicken.

James Acaster

Well, I mean yes, I like the thought of you having a mouthful of the ratatouille and going backwards like Anton Ego did, but it's ended up in a kitchen with your mum shrugging at you, like, 'I don't know.'

Paul Feig

Very underwhelming.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, 'Sorry,' and then back to-

Paul Feig

Right. No, it was only the first time I had Mexican food that I actually, discovered I liked food.

James Acaster

Oh, wow.

Paul Feig

It was a salsa. The first think I ever had that blew my mind was-, they opened some restaurant Chi Chi's or something by our house and they brought chips and salsa. I was, like, 'What's this,' and tried the salsa and was just, like, 'I can taste.'

Ed Gamble

Then you zoom back into some Mexican kid's childhood. 'This isn't my childhood.'

Paul Feig

I'm playing guitar?

James Acaster

Everyone's looking at you. 'Who are you? Who are you?' Shake some salsa, I can taste.

Paul Feig

Another kid from the Chi Chi's restaurant. With bad parent chefs.

James Acaster

Happens all the time. Have you been on the Ratatouille Adventure Benito, in Disney, so I can talk about it?



Paul Feig

Oh.

James Acaster

He doesn't like it if I talk about rides that he hasn't been on because then it's spoilers.

Paul Feig

Yes, exactly.

James Acaster

But it's a really great ride.

Paul Feig

Really?

James Acaster

The whole thing is really 4D, and my favourite bit is when you go under the oven and they properly heat it from the top.

Paul Feig

So you feel it?

James Acaster

Yes, you properly feel it, and it's very exciting actually.

Paul Feig

Oh, I did not know they had that.

James Acaster

I would recommend it.

Paul Feig

Very good, I will definitely. Name-drop, I'm good friends with Patton Oswalt who, you know, is the voice of the rat.

James Acaster

Has he been on it, do you know?

Paul Feig

I don't know.

Ed Gamble

For sure he was invited to the opening of the ride.



Paul Feig

I wonder if it's because the ride didn't pay him, paid somebody else to do it.

Ed Gamble

I guess he probably had to record stuff for the ride as well, right?

Paul Feig

I would think. Or did it sound like a fake rat?

James Acaster

Oh, I think that sounded like Patton Oswalt, yes.

Paul Feig

I wouldn't think that, because it's Disney.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, I think it sounded pretty legit, actually. Yes, so maybe he has been on it, and been under the big heater. Text him to say, 'Have you been under the big heater?'

Paul Feig

I'll text him right now.

James Acaster

Don't give any context, he'll know what you're talking about.

Paul Feig

He'll know what we're saying.

James Acaster

If he's been on the ride he'll know what you're talking about.

James Acaster

Now, I mean this is going to be-, I'm sure there's a lot of honourable munchions, although can we even call them that for the drink course, for this one?

Ed Gamble

Yes, we've got a whole book of them.

James Acaster

Because, like, obviously you've just released Cocktail Time, there are a lot of drinks that you like. Was it very hard to decide what your dream drink was?

Paul Feig



It is, it is, because I would never end with a Martini. You know, to me a Martini you start the evening with. There's something about after food-

Ed Gamble

We've got that for you.

Paul Feig

Yes.

Ed Gamble

That's safe, that's at the top of the meal, and we're going with Martini with your gin, with the lemon twist.

Paul Feig

Yes, at the top. But, like, a Martini's too thin at the end of a meal. You need something, like, thicker-tasting, however weird that sounds, so it's a toss up for me. I've got three contenders. One is a Sgroppino. You ever had that?

Ed Gamble

No.

Paul Feig

Oh, it's great. It's an Italian drink. Basically it's vodka and, like, lemon sorbet, and I think maybe a bit of cream in there, and they, you know, blend it.

James Acaster

Where can I go to get one of these right now?

Ed Gamble

You have just absolutely-

Paul Feig

Did we just blow your mind?

James Acaster

Yes.

Paul Feig

Actually, you know where they make a great one is at Lucio on Fulham Rd.

Ed Gamble

There you go.

Paul Feig



We'd been told about them by a friend of ours in LA and so when we were in Italy it's, like, where can we, we gotta find one? And so we were told it was a Groppino so we go everywhere, 'Do you have a Groppino?' 'Groppino? What's that? No sir, we do not have Groppino.' Every we go, like, 'Groppino?' 'No.' I was, like, it doesn't exist. Find out it's called a Sgroppino. I'm, like, 'Really? You couldn't have put that s on the front?'

Ed Gamble

Did you go back to all of the places then you went, 'Sorry, I meant a Sgroppino.' 'Sir, that was three weeks ago.'

Paul Feig

They're, like, 'You're still holding this grudge.' 'Yes, I am. It's one letter off.' But they are, they're spectacular. So, there's that, but then I love dessert drinks that have heavy cream in them.

James Acaster

Great.

Paul Feig

Even though I'm lactose intolerant, so look out below, exactly.

Ed Gamble

Take a pill, take a pill. Get stuck in.

Paul Feig

Take a pill, it's worth it. It's worth it. So, a Grasshopper, which is an old-timey drink because it's, like, crème de menthe and, you know, it's like a pepperminty kind of drink. And it's just so good but, you know, it's heavy cream so that's a fun one. And if I ever make a Grasshopper for anybody they love it. Like, I've never had anybody have any other response other than, 'Oh my God, this is-'

Ed Gamble

Oh, it sounds amazing.

Paul Feig

Yes, yes.

James Acaster

I mean, obviously I'd order that immediately.

Paul Feig

There you go. So, that's great. And then a Manhattan, but a Perfect Manhattan which is-, you know, a Manhattan is usually whisky or rye with sweet vermouth and some bitters, but a Perfect Manhattan you take the one ounce of sweet vermouth and you make it half an ounce of sweet vermouth and a half ounce of dry vermouth, so it keeps it from just being a little too-, because sometimes a Manhattan can be a little too cloyingly sweet.



Ed Gamble

The first time I heard someone order a Perfect Manhattan I thought they were just being a really difficult customer.

Paul Feig

Yes, I know. It sounds like an ass-holey thing to do.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it really does. 'I want a perfect Manhattan please.'

James Acaster

Ed was after them, it was, like, 'And I would like a perfect Bloody Mary. It better be perfect.'

Paul Feig

I know, it's an unfortunate name. No, but they're fantastic. Yes, they're really, really good.

James Acaster

I mean, definitely the more that, like, I have cocktails the more that I either want them to just taste exactly like a pudding or very boozy and, you know, just get rid of all the sweetness and have it like that. I don't like anything in the middle. You know, I'd like the sweet ones if they have like a creamy like-,

Paul Feig

I think the Sgroppino will be your favourite.

James Acaster

I mean, absolutely.

Ed Gamble

Is it sort of a limoncello sort of thing?

Paul Feig

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I guess it's the same, right.

Paul Feig

I think there actually is a little bit of limoncello in there too, but it's mostly the, you know, lemon sorbet that does it, and the vodka to give it support. But they have to whip it up really, really well so that it's light but also that you can drink it. Because I don't like drinking out of a straw so I always like to drink right from the-, it comes in a champagne flute, usually.

James Acaster



Oh, nice.

Paul Feig

So, there you go.

Ed Gamble

You're definitely going to go and get one of those, right?

James Acaster

Yes, yes, I'm going to be looking for that every single menu. That and the Grasshopper.

Ed Gamble

You can make that. You can make that at home.

James Acaster

I can make it?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I just don't want my first one to be made by myself because, like, do I know if it's done right?

Ed Gamble

Is there a recipe for that in here?

Paul Feig

Not for the Sgroppino, but there is one for the Grasshopper.

Ed Gamble

For the Grasshopper.

James Acaster

I'll do the Grasshopper for me.

Ed Gamble

You do the Grasshopper for sure.

James Acaster

Absolutely do the Grasshopper. You'll be having Grasshoppers this Saturday Ed, when you come by.

Paul Feig

The Sgroppino's a lot labour intensive. There are blenders and all that stuff. You don't want to get involved with that.



Ed Gamble

I'm looking forward to Saturday at your house. Ratatouille and Grasshoppers.

James Acaster

Yes. He's meant to be coming over to see my new cat, but we're going to have a lovely cocktail afternoon.

Paul Feig

Oh yes. Oh man, what's your new cat's name?

James Acaster

Terry.

Paul Feig

Oh, good. Excellent. I love cats. We have a dog but I love cats.

Ed Gamble

Well, James show Paul a picture of your cat and then we'll see if he still loves cats.

James Acaster

Well, Paul doesn't know me well enough to be rude about my cat.

Paul Feig

Oh-ho. Is it a rescue?

James Acaster

No. Well no, well yes actually. It kind of is.

Paul Feig

Is it alive?

James Acaster

It's alive I promise you, even if it doesn't look like it is in the photo.

Paul Feig

Oh, he's a hairless. Oh, okay.

James Acaster

A hairless cat called Terry.

Paul Feig

Well, my new movie that's out on Netflix right now has a hairless cat in it so there you go.



James Acaster

And do you show it in a good light, Paul?

Paul Feig

I do, in a very good light, although he's not in the movie as much as he was going to be. But one thing about the male hairless, if you know what I'm about to say, their balls stick way out.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes.

Paul Feig

We had to digitally take his balls off. Because we had shots, like, walking around with his butt in front of one of my lead actors' faces and these enormous nuts were on the back.

James Acaster

100%. December 4th, that's when those babies are going.

Paul Feig

Yes, there you go.

James Acaster

Got it marked on the calendar. Bad luck, Terry.

Paul Feig

No-one needs to see those.

James Acaster

No.

Ed Gamble

So, you didn't notice those in the casting process, the big balls?

Paul Feig

No, we didn't. Because we were just, 'Look, oh he's so cute,' looking from the front. 'Oh, he's perfect, he's perfect.' And then he literally gets on camera and the ass goes up in the air, and you're, like, 'Oh my God.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, he knows to keep that quiet. That's not going on his CV.

Paul Feig

But who knew that that's what fur was covering up on other cats.

Ed Gamble



Matt, my cat is a big hairy cat. But yes, before we had those balls taken off, big hairy balls swinging around at the back. Just so embarrassing for everyone.

Paul Feig

I know. You just have to astarally project out of the room when those come out, come parading through.

Ed Gamble

So, basically that cat cost you a lot more money.

Paul Feig

It did, yes it did. And then we ended up cutting it out. Cutting the balls shot out. They were all gone.

James Acaster

Cat had to be told that by its agent. 'Now, they cut out your ball shots.' 'What?' Yes, I can phone them if you like but It's going to be a bit of a-

Paul Feig

Let's just say the balls had a separate agent, that's how big they were.

James Acaster

'Hi. I represent the cat's balls. You can talk to me about this.' So, which of the three cocktails are you choosing?

Paul Feig

I'm going to choose the Sgroppino.

Ed Gamble

Nice.

James Acaster

Great. Delicious.

Ed Gamble

Great choice.

James Acaster

I mean, it's my favourite cocktail.

Ed Gamble

Yes, there you go.

James Acaster

Haven't even had it, yeah.

James Acaster



So, we arrive at your dream dessert. I mean, you just said a minute ago that you don't like cocktails too sweet. Am I to be scared here? Is there a cheese board on the horizon?

Paul Feig

No, I know well enough to not give you a cheese board. No, I mean as much as I do enjoy, like, a cheese course, like if we're in Paris and they come around with that cart, I won't substitute dessert for that.

James Acaster

Praise Jesus.

Paul Feig

It's going so well. I'm not going to get thrown at the last minute.

James Acaster

I would have loved it.

Paul Feig

Well, again I'm so indecisive. I've got a high and low and I'm trying to figure out which one. What I love-, there's a place I talk about, La Grenouille, where they have the frog's legs in New York. They make this amazing passion fruit souffle that's so good, and then they pour this, like, passion fruit, you know, syrup in the middle of it. And that's so good. But then the other side of me's, like, I would just want like a butterscotch sundae. Just a straight up, you know, great vanilla ice cream, really good hot butterscotch. Because sometimes when you fly, you know occasionally I get flown first class by the studio, and on American Airlines they will come around after, you know. Like, 'Would you like a sundae,' and they'll make you a sundae.

James Acaster

Oh, my God.

Paul Feig

And it's so good. But the ice cream's always so frozen, like a block of ice.

Ed Gamble

Yes of course, yes.

Paul Feig

But you're just, like, trying to get through it because you're so desperate to have it.

Ed Gamble

I think that's your absolute dream isn't it? The dream luxury moment.

James Acaster

Just to hear, 'Would you like a sundae?' Absolutely.



Ed Gamble

When you're 30,000 feet in the air.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, wherever I am if somebody-, I mean, I remember being on a plane once and they brought along, like, an ice cream covered in-, like a strawberry ice kind of ice lolly, so like a Solero but like a choc ice. And that was a nice surprise. I've never had ice cream just dropped off in front of me before. And they came across and did them, and I was absolutely delighted. Also, I wasn't delighted when they dropped it in front of me because I'd already seen them starting doing it further down the plane.

Ed Gamble

Nightmare.

James Acaster

And I was, like, 'I can't believe this is going to happen to me.'

Paul Feig

And building anticipation.

James Acaster

Yes. It was so exciting.

Paul Feig

That's nice.

James Acaster

And so just that was exciting, let alone if someone came along and said, 'Do you want a sundae?' I mean, just any time in my life if someone's asked me if I want a sundae that's very exciting.

Paul Feig

It is a nice thing.

James Acaster

I feel like Macaulay Culkin.

Paul Feig

But the nightmare on a plane is sometimes you see them coming and you're, like, 'They're going to run out. They're going to run out.'

James Acaster

Yes.

Paul Feig



And they do run out.

Ed Gamble

That's always my feeling.

Paul Feig

One thing I can eat on the menu, they always run out of. And it's always the pasta course, which I try to stay away-, Because I don't want to be sitting on a plane eating pasta, sitting like a lump, so I try to avoid that. But no, I mean, if I had to pick I would probably actually go for a sundae. Can I not gain weight in the dream restaurant?

James Acaster

You can't gain weight if you don't want to.

Paul Feig

Okay, good. Excellent.

James Acaster

And if you want we can transport you onto a plane for the sundae, if you want that to happen.

Paul Feig

Okay. That's what I would like, to be sitting on a plane.

James Acaster

Absolutely.

Ed Gamble

It can be a real plane or we can just have, like, the set of a plane.

Paul Feig

That would be great, actually.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes you can just pop over there.

James Acaster

We can take the plane from Bridesmaids.

Paul Feig

Oh, there you go. Yes, exactly.

James Acaster

You did a plane scene on there.



Paul Feig

I would encourage you, the next time you watch Bridesmaids, to look at the windows in our plane because it makes me laugh still. Because we thought we were so clever, we had like puffs of smoke going by outside. And it looks ridiculous now. It's, like, clearly the plane's going about two miles an hour if you can see the clouds going by right outside.

James Acaster

Well, if anyone's looking at the windows of that bit, doing that-, I mean, there's a lot of stuff going on in that scene.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes. There's plenty going on in that scene.

James Acaster

A lot of stuff going on between all the characters. If anyone's going, 'I was looking at the windows,' like, Oh, missed the point of the film.

Paul Feig

No, there's always some nerd out there that will take you down for something like that.

James Acaster

Yes. Somebody's watched it a million times, in which case any criticism is invalid.

Paul Feig

Exactly.

James Acaster

Because they've watched it so much.

Paul Feig

That's right, and I say that as a nerd so I'm not slaming anyone.

James Acaster

We'll put you on that plane. With that cast? Do you want all that cast around you?

Paul Feig

Sure, yes. I like them.

James Acaster

Would they be good to share a sundae with?

Paul Feig

Yes, you know, they're all lovely. They're all wonderful people so I would do that.



Ed Gamble

So, it's just vanilla ice cream and butterscotch sauce in there, or anything else in there?

Paul Feig

No, I don't like nuts on there or anything, or the little chocolatey things. You know, those little-, I think they're called jimmies, but I think that's actually got a really bad etymology, I've hear. Yes, so whatever those little candies are.

Ed Gamble

Hundreds and thousands.

Paul Feig

No, just straight up. I just love butterscotch. It was my favourite thing when I was a kid. Like, you come home from school and in America there's rocks, and it comes out and you just pour it all over the ice cream.

James Acaster

Last time I was on a plane, just coming back from America last week, I didn't get a sundae but I did find on the entertainment system a Ben & Jerry's competition. And I watched that for quite some time.

Ed Gamble

What do you mean?

James Acaster

It was like Bake Off but with ice cream.

Ed Gamble

Oh, right.

Paul Feig

Oh, really?

James Acaster

But by Ben & Jerry's.

Ed Gamble

Sponsored by Ben & Jerry's.

James Acaster

So, Ben & Jerry's had done it. I can't remember what it's called. Cone Champs or something, and each episode was, you know, you've got to resurrect this dead Ben & Jerry's flavour from the graveyard and improve on it. Or, you know, Ludacris has got a flavour that he wants you to make for him that is based around Ludacris.



Paul Feig

Oh, but they don't give you recipes, you've just got to-

James Acaster

You've just got to go for it. There's a whole pantry. You run in there, you all grab different stuff and then Ludacris comes on the screen and it's, like-

Paul Feig

But then you've got to stand around for along time while it gets cold I would imagine.

James Acaster

Yes, well no because they're against the clock so some of them-, well, you know, were like, 'This isn't going to be cold in time,' and they're absolutely-

Paul Feig

Oh, that's part of the drama.

James Acaster

They're panicking. Yes, that happens every week, pretty much.

Ed Gamble

That show is so perfect for you that I bet you were just gutted that you weren't hosting it.

James Acaster

Yes, well I was delighted I was on a seven-hour flight I'll tell you that much. But, like, yes I was, like, 'How did this person get to host it? They don't even seem to like ice cream.' But, like, yes I mean, you know, they have different guest judges. I was, like, 'Oh, why isn't this me? I'd love to be a judge on something like this.' Everyone seems to be doing a pretty good job with their ice creams as well. It's quite exciting, and Ben & Jerry's, you know, they're big on chunks. And I'm sensing you're not a chunk guy with ice cream?

Paul Feig

If it's like a chocolate chip kind of thing yes, then I'm all for that yes.

James Acaster

Yes, but not like-

Paul Feig

Not on top, no. Not in a civilised world.

James Acaster

I want to live in an uncivilised world Paul.

Paul Feig



Yes. Well, if you make ice cream-, You know, I've made ice cream a couple of times. You go, 'Oh my God, like, no wonder it's so hard on you.' And either everything terrible, wonderful but terrible in there, is just assault, especially if you're lactose intolerant.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's a true assault.

James Acaster

I had to make an ice cream for Kevin Bacon once, and he said the main rule was no bacon.

Paul Feig

Really?

James Acaster

That was a shame.

Paul Feig

Really?

Ed Gamble

What?

James Acaster

He said no bacon.

Ed Gamble

What's this?

James Acaster

They had to make an ice cream for Kevin Bacon.

Paul Feig

Oh, I thought you were making an ice cream for-,

Ed Gamble

Yes, you said, 'I made an ice cream for Kevin Bacon,' I thought you said.

James Acaster

No, they.

Paul Feig

Oh. We heard I.

Ed Gamble



On the show?

James Acaster

You thought I made an ice cream for Kevin Bacon?

Paul Feig

Yes, we were all-

Ed Gamble

No, we were confused. Because I would have thought if at one point in your life you'd had to make an ice cream for Kevin Bacon, it might have come up on the podcast.

Paul Feig

I was going to say, that's one degree of Kevin Bacon right there.

James Acaster

It's not, actually.

Ed Gamble

That's a great name for a Kevin Bacon ice cream.

Paul Feig

Oh, my God. Come on James, get out there.

Ed Gamble

Zero Degrees of Kevin Bacon.

James Acaster

It was me. I misremembered.

Paul Feig

Just own it. Just own it.

James Acaster

It was me. I made the ice cream for Kevin Bacon and he said-

Paul Feig

It was Kyra Sedgwick you made it for, so your'e one away.

James Acaster

Then he said, 'No bacon,' yes.

Paul Feig

So, you're one away.



James Acaster

You know in the Ben & Jerry's thing they were like, 'You've got to make a flavour of ice cream based around Kevin Bacon.' And his main rule was no bacon, and they were all absolutely devastated.

Ed Gamble

Because they're all going-

James Acaster

Yes, they went, 'I know exactly what I'm going to-, oh.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, but me and Paul have come up with a better idea.

James Acaster

Yes?

Ed Gamble

Zero Degrees of Kevin Bacon.

Paul Feig

Yes, we like that.

James Acaster

Well, actually the ice cream flavour was called Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon, because he gave them his six favourite flavours of ice cream and they had to see how many they could incorporate into the ice cream. And some went for all six. I don't think those ones worked very well.

Ed Gamble

No.

Paul Feig

I still like ours better.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes. I think so, yes.

James Acaster

I think yours is nice as it is. It's more of a pun, it works with ice cream.

Paul Feig

There you go. Everyone's happy.

James Acaster



Yes, that would be better. And you'd think that Kevin Bacon plus a whole writing team, and people making a TV show, could have thought of that. Right, so they should all be ashamed of themselves. Plus all the people who work for Ben & Jerry's involved.

Paul Feig

With a host who clearly doesn't like ice cream much.

James Acaster

Yes, the host who couldn't give a shit where she was.

Ed Gamble

I'd give him an ice cream themed on his role in the Invisible Man. It would just be an empty pot.

James Acaster

Hollow Man.

Ed Gamble

Hollow Man. He was in Invisible Man, surely.

James Acaster

Yes, but Hollow Man's even better for it really, isn't it?

Ed Gamble

Yes, Hollow Man yes.

James Acaster

See, open it up. Bad luck.

Ed Gamble

Yes, he was nasty in that film though.

James Acaster

He was very nasty. Someone made an ice cream based around his character in River Wild and that's a very nasty character so, you know-,

Paul Feig

What would the Wicker Man ice cream be?

James Acaster

Full of bees. You've opened it and bees attack your face. I'm going to read your menu back to you now, see how you feel about it.

Paul Feig

Okay. Okay, a little nervous.



James Acaster

You would like a gin Martini to start, and then water, sparkling. Poppadoms or bread, chips and salsa from Gardens of Taxco.

Paul Feig

Yes, correct.

James Acaster

Starter, egg plant Parm from La Capania?

Paul Feig

Capannini. Capannina, Capannina.

James Acaster

Capannina, in Capri. Main course, garlic shrimp from Gardens of Taxco also. Side dish, ratatouille from Cocotte. Drink, Sgroppino?

Paul Feig

Sgroppino, yes. Well done.

James Acaster

Dessert, the sundae on a plane, butterscotch sundae on a plane, with the Bridesmaids cast. And the plane is not a normal plane, it's a set plane on a film.

Paul Feig

Exactly, with smoke blowing past the windows.

James Acaster

With smoke blowing past the window, which can be Ed vaping at the window.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, yes. That's fine, yes. I'll vape at the window.

Paul Feig

I would prefer that. Only bubblegum flavoured.

James Acaster

That's a great menu, Paul.

Ed Gamble

That's fantastic.

Paul Feig



Like it? Oh, good.

Ed Gamble

It's so balanced as well. Like, I could see myself eating that menu from the beginning to the end, yes. I'm feeling good about it.

Paul Feig

Well, it's kind of two countries come together, you know. Mexico over here and you've got Italy over here. And a little bit of America thrown in.

Ed Gamble

And the sundae's a lovely way to round off, I think.

Paul Feig

Yes, I know. Just who's not happy when they're having a sundae, really. I mean, most people like hot fudge and fair enough. I can't have chocolate because I can't have caffeine so, because I go crazy.

James Acaster

I get very excited whenever, like, you're at a table, there's a lot of people, usually when it's my family, and someone has the idea of ordering sundaes. And having sundaes and everyone's got them.

Paul Feig

Yes.

James Acaster

That's when I like it the most. I actually don't like it if I'm the only one with a sundae.

Ed Gamble

That's a lot of focus on you.

James Acaster

Yes, but if we've all got them and we're all eating our sundaes, that's good stuff. So, we'll order some for the whole Bridesmaids cast.

Paul Feig

There you go. Excellent. Have you ever walked down the street eating an ice cream cone? Like, just seeing the faces of people coming towards you, like double-takes. People go crazy. Like, everybody then wants an ice cream cone. It's sort of the most, I don't know, viral kind of dessert you can-

Ed Gamble

Yes, it spreads like a yawn.

Paul Feig

Exactly.



James Acaster

I don't think I can walk down the street with an ice cream cone anymore, because if I bump into people who listen to this podcast they just laugh their heads off that they're seeing me eating ice cream in public. I did it in Seattle. I got a Molly Moon's, which is like some of the best ice cream I have ever had, in Molly Moon's in Seattle. And I had three massive scoops.

Ed Gamble

He sent me a picture. It was insane.

James Acaster

Yes. So, Ed thought a baby was holding it because of how small my hand looked. And it had this home-made waffle cone. It was, like, humongous, but the whole thing was incredible. But I walked from there back to my hotel, which was a two-hour walk, you know, while eating this ice cream, but bumped into someone who knew the podcast and they could not stop laughing, seeing me with this massive cone of ice cream that was, like, humongous.

Ed Gamble

You've seen me walking through the street with a cheeseboard.

Paul Feig

That would very odd.

Ed Gamble

Paul, thank you so much for coming to the Dream Restaurant.

Paul Feig

Thank you for having me on. It's been an honour.

James Acaster

Thank you, Paul.

Ed Gamble

Thank you very much to Paul Feig for coming in. Very exciting to have him. James is hammered now.

James Acaster

I'm so drunk.

Ed Gamble

I'm less drunk because you might have heard that Paul spilled some. One of the drinks he knocked and spilled half of, and that's the one I got given so I feel pretty good right now.

James Acaster

He gave me an idea. Because, like, I definitely felt a little bit of a buzz there.



Ed Gamble

Oh, you always get the buzz.

James Acaster

And I thought, 'Man, those Dukes ones that we hear so much about, I can see how that could be the case now. Because I thought, 'One Martini, this will be fine.' No, by the end I was saying I made ice cream for Kevin Bacon.

Ed Gamble

Absolutely loved that bit. I loved all of it. What a lovely chat, and also it's very odd that he didn't say bad meat from a Brazilian restaurant.

James Acaster

Strange. I thought he would have taken the opportunity to promote one of his films.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

And chose bad meat from a Brazilian restaurant, but he did not.

Ed Gamble

He did not, so luckily we got to talk to him for his whole menu, which I thought was very good.

James Acaster

It's a delicious menu. The cocktail was delicious that he made us, so make sure you pick up a copy of Cocktail Time by Paul Feig so you can make those cocktails yourself at home.

Ed Gamble

And, you know, if you're looking for a gin, Artingstall's.

James Acaster

Get Artingstall's man. That was a delicious gin.

Ed Gamble

It was, it was very nice indeed. Great for a Martini.

James Acaster

It was very good.

Ed Gamble

Thank you very much for listening to the Off Menu podcast. We will see you again next week.



James Acaster

Bye bye.

Ed Gamble

Bye.