



Off Menu – Ep92 – Sue Perkins

Ed Gamble

Welcome to Off Menu podcast. Uncork this podcast about 40 minutes before you want to listen to it. Leave it on the side to aerate, you're in for a fruity treat. Hello James!

James Acaster

Hello Ed Gamble, how are you?

Ed Gamble

Very well thank you, how are you James Acaster?

James Acaster

Good thank you. I'm very well, very excited to ask our special guest her favourite ever starter, main course... oh..

Ed Gamble

Oh my God. What's happened?

James Acaster

For the first time ever I forgot what order I say them in.

Ed Gamble

Starter

James Acaster

Starter, main course, dessert, side dish, drink.

Ed Gamble

Why would you go dessert, side dish, James? Why would it go in that order? You were in the, it's the order that you eat it in and then the main course and side dish in order of importance. Why would you go starter, main course, dessert, side, drink?

James Acaster

Well if it's in order of importance it would be dessert, main

Ed Gamble

No, not for you I mean. No it's the order you eat it in and then

James Acaster

Ooh, I'd probably then go drink, side dish, starter, in the order of importance.

Ed Gamble

You're a mess, the way you normally do it is you do starter, main, side, drink, dessert.

James Acaster

Hmm, yes.

Ed Gamble



That's the way it is on the episode. So that's the way you say it. Do you want to try it again?

James Acaster

Starter, main course, side dish, drink, dessert.

Ed Gamble

Right, okay. Good stuff. We have a special guest every week and this week our special guest is

Ed Gamble and James Acaster

Sue Perkins

James Acaster

National treasure

Ed Gamble

National tresh. You all know Sue Perkins. Look, there's nothing more to say really I just want to chat to her. But the problem is, look, Sue's great, Sue's wonderful, very excited to have Sue in The Dream Restaurant but still, the rules apply, if she says the secret ingredient which we have decided upon that we don't like, then she's getting kicked out of the restaurant, national treasure or not.

James Acaster

'Fraid so.

Ed Gamble

And the secret ingredient this week is...

Ed Gamble and James Acaster

Baby corn.

Ed Gamble

Baby corn, I hate baby corn, it is bland, it's weird, it's weird hot, it's weird cold, it shouldn't be baby. I hate it.

James Acaster

Yeah, I mean, I didn't think I had a problem with it and then, I think it was my mum the other day pointed out, she doesn't really like it, and I thought, it doesn't taste of anything. And sweet corn, proper corn on the cob, tastes delicious

Ed Gamble

Yep, yep yep

James Acaster

I love it. It tastes delicious so why have we shrunk it down to a version that doesn't taste as nice?

Ed Gamble

But also, it's not, it's not even that is it, if it was like if I want a baby thing I want it to be like an amusingly small version of exactly the same food. You wouldn't give a baby corn to a mouse and it's like oh this is exactly like the mouse having a corn on the cob, it's just, it's not the same thing.

James Acaster



That's the, that's the test, is that if you gave it to a mouse would it look like a mouse eating a smaller version of the one that we have? And no it wouldn't with this, it would be weird

Ed Gamble

You know straw dollies? I always imagine that's what their dicks look like.

James Acaster

Yeah, I think you're right! I think if you're a straw dolly, that's what your dick looks like.

Ed Gamble

Yeah

James Acaster

It's a little baby corn.

Ed Gamble

Awful.

James Acaster

What way around are you going there?

Ed Gamble

Sort of small tip at the end

James Acaster

Yeah

Ed Gamble

I'm thinking like a tapered tapered dick, rather than a big old. Obviously it's preferable for the straw dolly to have it the other way around. But I think it would be tapered, like a clanger

James Acaster

Yeah, sure, I think so. Creepy... So!

Ed Gamble

Anyway, let's get all that smut out of our system to speak to Sue Perkins please.

James Acaster

Yes, yep.

Ed Gamble

So, this is the Off Menu menu of

Ed Gamble and James Acaster

Sue Perkins

Ed Gamble

Sue Perkins, welcome to The Dream Restaurant

Sue Perkins

Lovely to be in The Dream Restaurant



James Acaster

Welcome Sue Perkins to The Dream Restaurant, we've been expecting you for some time!

Sue Perkins

Hello beautiful Genie!

James Acaster

Ah, so good to see you Perkins and, I mean, we're over zoom and there's an open door behind you, you're sat in front of an open door and it looks like that's going into your kitchen which makes us feel very, that's very appropriate.

Sue Perkins

It's the biggest room in my house for good reason, in that I like disproportionate houses.

Ed Gamble

How small are we talking for the rest of the house?

Sue Perkins

Tiny!

Ed Gamble

Have you got a massive kitchen and then a box room to sleep in yeah?

Sue Perkins

It's basically, it's just one studio room and then an enormous kitchen. And I'm sort of quite conscious because it's the sort of kitchen that says, 'yeah, I know my way around', so I have to be on, if people come, it's not a big thing during lockdown obviously cos no one's here but outside of lockdown there's quite a lot of pressure I feel, if I'm cooking.

Ed Gamble

So do you have like some go-to things that you'll cook if people come over, to impress them, to live up to your kitchen?

Sue Perkins

Well, here's the thing I've got, what I'm gonna loosely describe as attention issues so I can't do recipes because the moment I start them, I feel trapped, I feel trapped in the method. And I'm like this with all things like I can't read an autocue twice, it drives me mad, I have to make something new up. So I don't have any tried and tested things. Which is why I don't bake because baking is really about process and you can't play fast and loose with those rules; chaos will ensue!

Ed Gamble

It's amazing for someone who doesn't bake or doesn't like baking and hates reading an autocue, that you used to host The Great British Bake Off.

Sue Perkins

I know, I know. It was, it was an act of faith everyday, mainly for the poor people producing it. No I love watching other people watching ovens, that's my favourite thing, it's very meditative. And I love food and so, you know, and there's no autocue and no script when we were doing it, it was just like absolute chaos. You know, I'd sit on a bap and someone would say, 'you're on a roll!' and then that would be the beginning of the show.



James Acaster

Oh, we remember.

Sue Perkins

Yep, or it'd be a Croatia week and I'd go, 'hey that custard's Split!', and no-one would understand and I'd go and feel sad. Or at least it was park land that I could walk in to feel sad in, you know there was always the context of England's green and rolling hills to mitigate the unmitigated awfulness of

Ed Gamble

You could go for a broody stroll after a failed pun.

Sue Perkins

Yeah! there was always land to, people were always trying to get us to have our photo taken with lambs and I wonder, I remember once finding a lamb and somebody trying to do a still and I sort of gently picked it up and it just sort of gently did a very loose shit all over me and it was very loose. I don't know what normal lamb's shit is like but this seemed to be almost a never-ending fountain.

Ed Gamble

They should have used that for the intro.

James Acaster

That would have been the best intro. If it was just you, you and Mel walking along the field and then wordlessly, you don't say anything, you just pick up a lamb and then all this shit goes down you and then the titles start.

Sue Perkins

Do you want us to say, 'welcome to The Great British Bake Off', or just nothing.

James Acaster

Actually no I think. Ah, I'm very torn now

Sue Perkins

It's difficult isn't it?

James Acaster

Because nothing would be really funny but also it would be funny if that happened, you stood there for a while and just said, 'welcome to The Great British Bake Off' and then started.

Sue Perkins

I think you're right though. It's to do with the length of time you afford the, the sort of cascadeness of shit, that need some proper quiet sort of contemplative viewing. It's like those people that just watch log fires, there might be a sort of small subset of the population that just like watching lambs shit.

Ed Gamble

There's a Netflix show where you just watch four hours of lambs shitting on a loop. Like white noise. Brown noise.

Sue Perkins

Just the one lamb though! Which is an ask.



James Acaster

Yeah. The one lamb

Ed Gamble

Does the lamb get smaller and smaller over the course of the four hours or?

Sue Perkins

Yes! Like a whoopy cushion but made of meat.

James Acaster

People sitting on the lamb by mistake. Slipping the lamb under people's chair. Here, here's a question about Bake Off then, if you find baking stressful yourself you're probably quite empathetic to the bakers when they get stressed

Sue Perkins

Very much so

Ed Gamble

Here we go.

James Acaster

No, it's not about me.

Sue Perkins

Okay, right.

James Acaster

I, one of the most, you know, one of the biggest news stories of my lifetime is the pavlova in the bin and I was wondering if you, I can't remember now who had to talk him down

Sue Perkins

Oh I had to talk him down. Yeah and he was offing and jeffing.

James Acaster

And try to convince him not to put it in the bin.

Sue Perkins

Yep, there was a lot of effing and jeffing which was the first time we'd had that on camera in Bake Off. I mean obviously there was a lot of it going on backstage mainly because I'm just foul of mouth but normally it's just, it's very mellow as you know but he, he really lost it and in that moment I was with him, it was life and death, and then slowly this creeping contextualising of just, I'm with a man in a tent whose ice cream has melted, this is, meanwhile in Syria, you know it's just... So I had to take him out, and we had to have little chat, a nice guy, and just say, come on, let's bring some perspective to this. Maybe, maybe not you know, somebody opened a fridge door and it might have affected the temperature. Was it, it was Ian's Baked Alaska wasn't it? That was

Ed Gamble

It was Ian, yep

Sue Perkins



Ian's... but I have to say, the aplomb with which he just, got the foot on the pedal of the pedal bin, just, it was like something out of Thelma and Louise when you see the close up of it going down. This is how I'd storyboard it if I was, if they made a movie of it

James Acaster

They will

Sue Perkins

Which I think they will now

Ed Gamble

Yeah yeah

Sue Perkins

It's a very extreme close up, foot smashing down on the pedal bin. Hard cut to pedal bin lid, it just crisply, there was no. I don't know about you but every time I do a pedal bin it's a slow, do you know what I mean, it's a slow pneumatic wheeze as it kind of, not this, Ian bang up. And then it just slid with one motion poetically. Ah, it was, ah it was beautiful.

Ed Gamble

I was there with him like, that that is me, that's me baking. And I've tried to do a bit of baking recently. I did a carrot cake last week that turned out quite well but there was a disaster half way through and it nearly went in the bin. Luckily I had my fiancé with me to say don't put it in the bin, don't be Ian on bake off.

Sue Perkins

There's a bit of Ian in all of us really, I people say, 'oh yes, but you can eat your mistakes in baking', I know for a fact most of the time you can't because I've eaten everything that came out of this tent whether it was raw, half baked. I've eaten, I've eaten... somebody made a trio of tarts and it was essentially a herring and mackerel tart and they positioned all the tarts one on top of each other but the sweet tart was at the top and it melted so this sort of rose water sort of drool ended up on a fish tart. I've eaten all of it. But I do think that you're right and that sometimes we need to be a bit more Ian and just go enough already.

Ed Gamble

Yep, put it in the bin, just get a Deliveroo.

James Acaster

Still though, a baked Alaska, I think that even if you mess it up that's gonna be delicious. It was very hard for me as a dessert fan to watch a man put a baked Alaska in the bin because I was like, there's no way you can't eat every bit of that and I wish my head, I wish, that if in that film that you just described, he pushes the pedal down and the lid comes up and if you look inside the bin, all you can see is my face with my mouth open and... the dream.

Ed Gamble

I think that the producers of Bake Off should look into casting James as a bin in the next series, just have him lying on the floor with his mouth open and any offcuts of raw pastry.

Sue Perkins

Oh, raw pastry is the best.



Ed Gamble

Just drop it drop it straight into his gob.

James Acaster

That was actually one of the things that didn't make the edit when I was on it was me hiding behind the bin for a while. I hid behind the bin for about ten minutes on my second day because I was trying to catch Paul Hollywood and trap him in a box. And that didn't make the edit.

Sue Perkins

Do you know what, it's hard to do. It's hard to do. I tried to net him for seven years, often by, I don't know if you filmed it in the same place that we used to, but there was a little stream and I would always try to sneak up behind him. Always wise to me, I've got a heavy tread, always wise to me that man.

Ed Gamble

And you stunk of lamb shit so...

Sue Perkins

Always, yep yeah.

James Acaster

Also, was he cocky about it every time he caught you?

Sue Perkins

So cocky. He's there like, 'I know you're there Perkins'. Because for a while, I mean ah shit, because for a while Paul and I only spoke through the medium of violence and we would, there were a lot of, early doors there were a lot of prop, like you know, sort of, quite life like plastic baguettes and he was like we'd sort of be Cato to each other's Clouseau and so we would just peer and you know, I mean really hard as well, there was no messing around. Like I'd, like I'd stab, smash a cob into his bollocks. Or he'd, I'd just finish a sort of very unformed link that wasn't really going anywhere and then he'd appear and just uppercut me with a baguette that would just knock my teeth together. And what I loved about it is we never, we didn't formulate a plan to do that, it just emerged. And I don't know whether there was some bristling sexual tension underneath it, who knows what the real subconscious driver was, but it was pure violence but with really stupid props. There was once, there was a French plait that I really got him in the twain with. He was legs akimbo delivering some I don't know interminable verdict on something that was never gonna make the edit. And I just ran and I just got it. Oh it was good.

James Acaster

When I was doing it, it was Sandi and Noel and I can safely say that all four of them really got on together, Pru, a big happy family, but I can not even imagine any of them doing any of those things. Just Toksvig finishing a link and Hollywood swinging the baguette at her face.

Sue Perkins

Well most of the time if I'm doing a link with Mel we're trying to wedgie one another, that's what we, we've been doing that for twenty-five years and it's some, and I can now deliver. Also in the beginnings of Bake Off it was very, we were just finding our feet in terms of the format so there were these quite long, and I have to say deeply tedious historical sequences where I'd be in a corridor of a stately home going, 'it was in 1847 that the meringue was discovered by Murial Meringue', and I, if we did them together then I would get used to the feeling of a lot of pants material being twisted, deeply hardcore twisted, sort of creating in its own way a sort of genital French plait. And it's amazing how far I can go with a quite intense piece to camera without snapping under those conditions.



Ed Gamble

It's good training, it's good presenter training.

Sue Perkins

God, I sort of think. I watch SAS Are You Tough Enough? Or whatever and I think, yeah I can smash that.

James Acaster

Yeah,

Sue Perkins

What I've put up with in the line of duty, I could smash that.

James Acaster

We could just ask you about Bake Off forever and be the happiest people in the world but we need to know your menu so, we should start with as always, still or sparkling water Sue Perkins?

Sue Perkins

I'm not an animal so it's gonna be still, I mean please. I read this thing about, I mean I've never liked sparkling water but I read this thing about sparkling water that it demineralises your bones.

Ed Gamble

Wow.

Sue Perkins

Mineral water that demineralises your bones. Apparently it leeches calcium and I'm a massive hypochondriac and I will take at face value any negative bullshit whatsoever about medicine. So if it says that it's gonna do that on some strange corner of the internet I believe it.

Ed Gamble

So, so what does it do, it like bubbles away at your bones and makes them weaker and stuff?

Sue Perkins

I'm gonna heavily caveat everything that I say from here on in with, I'm not a medical professional

Ed Gamble

Sure.

Sue Perkins

And I only scraped a biology O level. But my scant readings at the margin, I mean it's almost touching at QAnon, that's how marginal the internet reading's been.

Ed Gamble

This is the lighter side of QAnon though right?

Sue Perkins

Yes, exactly.

Ed Gamble

The sparkling water side of QAnon.



James Acaster

SueAnon

Sue Perkins

Yep, it's SueAnon. It's something to do with, something to do with fizzy drinks leaching calcium. And the process I imagine is sort, as you've suggested, a gentle nibbling.

Ed Gamble

Like those fish that nibble at dead skin on your feet, yep.

Sue Perkins

Exactly that. So the water gets into your blood stream, it hits the bone, yep, the caveat, hits the bone and there's just, it's not ferocious, it's not piranha-esque, it more of a, it's a trout tickling. Or a sucking, a sucking of calcium.

Ed Gamble

Or like a dishwasher tablet advert where you see like the cartoon of all the bubbles getting rid of the plates, that's what it does to your bones. Yep.

Sue Perkins

The plates, yes. Like, like Calgon, it's that Calgon-y thing isn't it? So it takes it all and then I imagine, after a heavy night on the Perrier you wake up, you get up and you just crumble.

James Acaster

Ed were you deliberately mentioning the Calgon thing because that's what I imagine that fizzy water does to my teeth and I've already talked about?

Ed Gamble

Yeah, sort of, it's that, that's constantly in my mind now when I drink anything fizzy is that James worries that's what it does to your teeth.

James Acaster

No, I don't worry, I don't worry, I think it's nice.

Ed Gamble

Oh, he likes that in the morning in a hotel.

James Acaster

Because I think it cleans my teeth.

Sue Perkins

If you were to put James a mouthful of fizzy water like, and this might have been asked before, and hold that mouthful of fizzy water, how long do you reckon before your teeth just sort of eroded?

Ed Gamble

You know what Sue, that's never been asked before.

Sue Perkins

Okay alright, well let's go into some specifics, you're with SueAnon now.

James Acaster



I'm annoyed that that's never been asked before. Well first of all it would just feel nice because they'd be getting cleaned by all the bubbles. The difficult thing is just keeping it bubbly because obviously in my head I think if it maintained the same amount of fizz for the whole time and never got less fizzy then I reckon it would, how long does it take a tooth to dissolve in a thing of Coca Cola?

Ed Gamble

Overnight they so don't they?

Sue Perkins

Man that's quick.

Ed Gamble

Yeah, well again, caveat, caveat's here as well. EdAnon.

Sue Perkins

EdAnon has just said one of his special facts.

Ed Gamble

Yep.

Sue Perkins

You leave a tooth, any of your teeth, or your mouth overnight in cola, that's it.

Ed Gamble

Gone. Dissolved.

Sue Perkins

Yep, it's the Pogues, by sort of 8am.

Ed Gamble

That's all that happened to him, he was very healthy otherwise he just had a mouthful of coke.

James Acaster

He was an absolute health nut

Sue Perkins

And he just sort of randomly let it in. He fell asleep with some coke in his mouth. So yeah I don't really like, it fills me up as well fizzy water. And if you want to be full before a meal, that's the point of the bed isn't it? You know you don't want the two warring factions of fullness, you don't want the bubbling sort of aggressive mineral, sort of calcium leaching water and bread. So still water just to have sort of neutral canter at the meal itself.

James Acaster

You might not have bread of course.

Sue Perkins

I might not have bread and therein lies a very serious question that I suspect you'll be posing.

Ed Gamble

Do you like other fizzy drinks Sue?



Sue Perkins

Not since the SueAnon investigation into fizzy drinks, no.

Ed Gamble

I was gonna say, you are consistent with the bubbles thing.

Sue Perkins

Absolutely now, it's an absolute policy and don't even think about bringing them in the house cos who knows what they're doing behind your back. No, I don't actually, I kind of, I sort of overdid it as a kid you know I was at that generation where it was just, you're off the teat at around about, you know, two weeks is enough for breastfeeding, get her on the Fanta. It's brightly coloured tartrazine filled fizzy drinks were the sort of, yeah they were the mainstay of my childhood so I kind of, I'm just scared of them now. And I don't like beer for that reason.

James Acaster

No?

Ed Gamble

Really?

Sue Perkins

Quite a flat ale I can, a light ale, a pale ale I can deal with. It tastes nice.

Ed Gamble

Who knew Sue Perkins was afraid of bubbles? This is a great exclusive for us. What a scoop.

Sue Perkins

Yeah, I know.

James Acaster

This is the kind of stuff that The Great Benito's gonna leak to The Sun.

Sue Perkins

Yeah they're gonna love it! But yeah I am scared, Champagne I can't stand it.

James Acaster

Right, consistent.

Ed Gamble

Yeah.

Sue Perkins

Absolutely, if nothing else.

James Acaster

Would you ever, ever in your life get into a jacuzzi?

Sue Perkins

Oh, forget it. But for different reasons. So for me it's not that it's gonna leak calcium from my bones but a slick of somebody else's bodily fluids



Eg
Yeah

James Acaster
Right.

Sue Perkins
Like I once got into a hot tub with a shaman at about 5am. He said he was a shaman, he was called John and he was wearing a grass skirt. And he basically said he wanted to perform a ritual

Ed Gamble
Oh no.

Sue Perkins
And, the ritual which was a cleansing ritual involved blowing raspberry vodka up my arsehole. And I went with it because I'm very open and I don't wish to be in any way demeaning to other people's beliefs. And I, since then, I have a very deep aversion to getting into a hot bubbling sort of arena with anybody, particularly someone wearing a grass skirt.

Ed Gamble
Sue, I'm gonna put it out there, I don't think that was the hot tub's fault. That story, that story took quite a few turns and at no point did I think, it's the hot tub's issue here.

Sue Perkins
This is, you know for somebody that sort of looks quite square and nerdy like I do, I often sort of find myself, it's not an unusual situation that I would be in a hot tub with a shaman. Because just accept and go with, these are my, I live my whole life like it's an improvised comedy.

Ed Gamble
Yeah, for me, 'yes and' would stop at the raspberry vodka up the arsehole.

Sue Perkins
No, it's 'yes and', and it's never 'no but', it's always 'yes and'.

Ed Gamble
It's 'yes butt'

Sue Perkins
It's 'yes and ooh'. But it's it was a very it was a very intense experience I will say, it was very well aimed and unforgettable.

James Acaster
I'll tell you the experience of listening to it, the experience of listening to you telling it, here's my experience, I was there and at the beginning of it I was like, right at some point during this anecdote I'm going to have to interrupt Sue and shout, 'popadmons or bread?!' because we've gotta get on with that next section, I'm listening to it, listening to it, listening to it and then going, it's the only time on this podcast, the whole time we've done it, I've gone, actually, I'm not going to shout popadoms or bread, I'm gonna ask more questions about this because this is ridiculous. Now it's the kind of story where you almost don't want to ruin it by asking too many questions because the bullet points alone are funny, it leaves a lot to the imagination, I think I guess what I really want to know is how John the shaman phrased phrased to you this proposition and made it sound like it was a ritual when it clearly isn't.



Ed Gamble

Is that really the question you want to ask the most?

James Acaster

Well, I guess there are other questions I would like to ask.

Sue Perkins

It's a complex buffet isn't it? I hadn't realised how complicated it was until I said it out loud.

James Acaster

Imagine being in the thing, being in the hot tub and John the shaman in any way making this sound legit to Sue and being able to go, 'oh Sue do you know, now we're in the hot tub, there's a really great ritual we can do and I've got some raspberry vodka which is very convenient, do you have an arsehole? Like, if you have that and we combine them then we can do the ritual that I like'.

Sue Perkins

Yes and... This was, this was at Maid's House there was a collection of really good eggs, quite esoteric, the Shaman didn't stand out, it was a sort of cabal of quite out there people and I was really into it and the hot tub came after a lot of vodka, it was like 'ah let's just all settle down and get in the hot tub'. It was then he said, and I just you know he said, 'I can sense you, I can sense you're unresolved'. Everybody in the world is unresolved but they always get you with that. 'I can sense you're unresolved', and I said, really hammered at this point, I said, 'yes John I am unresolved'. He said, 'there's two things I can do in this situation, I can, but I', and he genuinely said, 'but I don't have my eagle feather with me' that's what he said! In many ways I dodged a bullet, that's all I can say, I feel as though had I been on dry land and he'd had the eagle's feather this could have been a, it would have been the sort of anecdote that I would never say out loud. We don't know. But he said, 'I haven't got the eagle's feather with me but we could do a cleansing'. And I think the raspberry vodka was the nearest, it just needed to be a spirit and that, so he didn't, I didn't feel I needed to challenge the nature of the alcohol.

Ed Gamble

So it wasn't, the raspberry flavour was not key to the whole

Sue Perkins

Oh fuck, I didn't even challenge the arsehole either, it's all fine, I didn't even challenge I just was like, 'oh I've had a few'. You know I was a bit younger, I was better put together I was like, 'yeah have a look at it everyone', and it was just BANG and it was like an explosion from his mouth, I mean it was a real 'pfff', so yes there was an awakening. So in many ways he achieved the desired effect that I was not unresolved anymore, I was very resolved and I was very resolved to never be in a foaming hot tub ever again.

Ed Gamble

This is the first time on Off Menu that when we ask you for each course we're going to have to ask you which end you want to consume it through.

Sue Perkins

Yes, I want it blown rectally please, at a high tensile. I don't know what kind of mechanism, almost like a soda, it needs to be in a soda siphon and then delivered.

James Acaster



I hate to ask more questions about this, I'm really sorry that I've got more questions, and I wish I didn't, I'm just thinking about the listener here

Ed Gamble

That's sue blowing her nose by the way

James Acaster

Yeah, just so you know. There's not a re-enactment going on.

Sue Perkins

There's still some residual blowback.

James Acaster

I think the listener will want to know, cos I was listening to that story and going yeah okay, yeah and then this happened, I mean this is going to sound too graphic a question but I'm wondering if John the shaman had like a straw, or something that he would blow in.

Ed Gamble

James, just before you, thanks for asking this mate, because obviously I wanted to as well but I'm glad that you're the one doing it

Sue Perkins

Listen, I mean if he'd not got his eagle feather but had brought a straw, sort of weird in a way. That's intent. Straight from the mouth. So it was like...

James Acaster

Oh man.

Ed Gamble

Oh God.

Sue Perkins

Yes, it was like, it was sort of like a massive slurp and then 'pfff' like that, and it was 'pfff', a shower, which subsequently I've had done a couple of times, admittedly not rectally and admittedly clothed, with camera crews, and you know probably feeling a bit safer, on dry land. Yeah just a big, like a really high-pressured spit.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sue Perkins

It's a conundrum, isn't it that? Now I've unveiled it.

James Acaster

It's a conundrum because like, I mean, I want to know what he's up to know, if you've kept in touch if you know what he's doing.

Sue Perkins

We didn't keep in touch, no. He was an absolutely charming man.

James Acaster



You'd have to be

Sue Perkins

I think possibly still shamanising on the west coast. Possibly storming the Capital building, we don't know, it could have gone one of two ways.

James Acaster

I bet he had his eagle feather then

Sue Perkins

Oh yeah, oh that de rigeur. De rigeur, yep. So yeah, I don't know how we got into that.

Ed Gamble

We just asked you if you liked hot tubs because you don't like bubbles.

James Acaster

Yep, and I did not expect it to go that way.

Ed Gamble

It's intriguing that you won't drink fizzy water because you think it's bad for you but you'll let a man called John blow raspberry vodka up your arse.

Sue Perkins

What can I say, you know, we're all made up of contradictions.

Ed Gamble

You contain multitudes Sue.

James Acaster

Yeah, I mean, to be fair to Sue, she googled it, and there wasn't anything on the internet about that being bad for you. It said it will give you the

Sue Perkins

It seemed perfectly fine.

James Acaster

Yeah, it said if you're feeling unresolved, this is the way to go. Popadoms or bread??! Popadoms or bread Sue Perkins?! Popadoms or bread?!

Sue Perkins

Right, I've thought about this and popadoms are a giant, one giant crisp right? Who's not going to want to begin a meal with a giant crisp. It also kind of works better for the menu I'm planning although that may change. although I love bread. I could name you a billion types of bread that I would happily eat and have along with a meal. But come on, just to start with something as wrong as popadom, it's great, it set's you up, it sets you up for all manner of ills for what's to come. Do you know what I mean? I mean, it's just a disc of fried nonsense that one feels that one has to karate chop publicly. Have you done that? There's sort of the ritual of like, 'yeah load 'em up, oh yeah, bang, there you go'. Why?

Ed Gamble



I am worried that the pandemic has ended the popadom karate chop. I think that it's going to take a long time for public confidence to regrow enough for people to start karate chopping popadoms for the table.

Sue Perkins

Yeah, you know, you're right

James Acaster

I tell you what else I worry will go away in the face of the pandemic, is blowing raspberry vodka up someone's arse hole.

Sue Perkins

It's a sterile, it's a sterile fluid.

James Acaster

Yeah, to be fair, we're fine.

Ed Gamble

Yeah, we're sterile, it's happening in a hot tub, it's fine, it's fine.

Sue Perkins

You're right though that those old customs, that the single karate, the loan karate chop to a stack of popadoms. I'd not thought about that, you see these are the hidden costs of covid.

Ed Gamble

The hotel breakfast buffet.

Sue Perkins

Oh, gone. Although I don't do that anymore because I once ate an earring from some muesli and that really put me off. Oh God, even thinking about it makes me gip, oh God. I thought, oooh there's a high tensile hazelnut, and it was an earring, an old earring, oh and the fact that I'd eaten it. Oh christ, if I can go there now. So I won't do it. No matter how posh the hotel, I will not go for an open bowl of granola, ever, oh forget it. And I, oh the sickness is present now as I recall it.

James Acaster

Well you said you ate it?

Sue Perkins

Well I crunched on it, and then I'd eaten half of it by the time I'd fished it out. And then I felt so, oh dear. So yeah you're right, yes I'm happy for the breakfast buffet to be the casualty but the karate chopping, yeah.

Ed Gamble

The popadom chop? The chopadom? Gone.

Sue Perkins

But, but I think a popadom, it's filthy, it's salty, it also, it's a great balancing mechanism the popadom, it's got the rigidity should you wish to load it with stuff.

Ed Gamble

Will you be loading it with anything in The Dream Restaurant?



Sue Perkins

Well, I mean listen, you've not said it comes with anything so what I might do is keep it to one side, so I might karate chop my own popadom, I understand that people at the table or other diners might not want to join in because we're in different times, that requires a different response. But I've karate chopped it, I've probably gone for half of it, I might keep half and then later, we'll see if there's a point at which I want to use it as a sort of ford onto which I can put things.

James Acaster

What dips are you usually going for with a popadom?

Sue Perkins

You can forget lime pickle, that's just weird. I don't get it.

James Acaster

Oh, hold on a second.

Sue Perkins

Yeah I know, that's controversial because I'm, I always tend towards sweet so it's always going to be about the mango chutney. Yeah the yoghurt is weird because it it doesn't, it just cascades.

Ed Gamble

Yeah I agree with you, it needs to be thicker for me to go with a popadom. Look it's very delicious but you're right, it doesn't, and it also makes the popadom go a little bit soggy and reduces that rigidity.

Sue Perkins

Have you ever had a popadom cheese sandwich? I can't recommend it enough.

Ed Gamble

No, and I want one now. Are you talking about popadoms going a normal bread sandwich or are you talking about replacing the normal bread with popadoms?

Sue Perkins

The latter. Karate chop, you've got your two perfect halves. Thinly sliced, it's going to have to be thinly sliced because it can't tolerate a thick wedge. The mouth hits the popadom, it cracks, it's an, it explodes into shards, you go into a slight panic and then you hit the cheese and it's alright, everything's okay again. And they combine to make this weird, sort of savoury, creamy corn-flaky textured mess. Delicious.

James Acaster

What kind of cheese? Cheddar?

Sue Perkins

Absolutely, we're going for the most basic, entry level cheddar, don't waste a truckle on it, don't waste a truckle, don't unwax a cheese. Just go for something that's come in a multipack in your nearest sort of Costco. It doesn't matter. Yeah it's just textural.

Ed Gamble

And are you putting mango chutney in the popadom cheese sandwich. Because a chutney and cheese sandwich is delicious.



Sue Perkins

Oh my god, that's an elevation, yep. And that's why I'm here because I have I have rudimentary thoughts but together we can elevate them. Yes that's perfect.

Ed Gamble

It's not that I'm giving you that as a recipe by the way because I don't want you to get distracted half way through.

Sue Perkins

No, but also it's a recipe I can't follow and it's got, it's a suggestion which I can play with over time.

Ed Gamble

Great great great.

James Acaster

How did you discover the popadom cheese sandwich?

Sue Perkins

Well, on the rare occasion that I'd actually got some popadoms left, and as we know they become a soggy, unappetising mess the next day, but pop them in the oven and they can work wonders. So I thought hmm, okay it's hot now, it's hot and toasty, slightly tinged around the edges, what's gonna work? Cheese. And I've got, I haven't got it anymore, I don't know what I did with it, but I've got one of these weird, my mum used to have them, she used to have all these weird, like a little cheese slicer but also egg mandolins, like an egg guillotine, that just sort of comes down and just perfectly weirdly slices the egg. but I've got, I've got a cheese slicer and thinly did that and it slightly melted, so I karate chopped it, slightly melted. Unbelievable. So I try and order extra popadoms now and do it the next day.

James Acaster

It's a shame that you mentioned the cheese slicer really because I had imagine you karate chopping everything in the recipe, just karate chopping the cheese up.

Sue Perkins

Oh, no I mean, it depends, it depends what cheese. I mean I'd roundhouse kick a brie but I would, you're right, a simple karate chop to a cathedral city is probably better.

Ed Gamble

You'd need to be pretty good at karate to get a thin slice of cheese with a karate chop wouldn't you?

Sue Perkins

This is going to come as a shock but I'm only an orange belt. Only an orange belt. I'm not there yet. Not there yet.

James Acaster

That's very cheesy, it's the cheesiest of belts.

Ed Gamble

yeah, it's called a Red Leicester belt, I believe.

Sue Perkins

Imagine being able to so finely karate chop that you could slice cheese.



Ed Gamble

What a waste of that power.

Sue Perkins

It really is isn't it. It really is.

James Acaster

I would watch a series though, of Sue trying various martial arts moves out on cheeses.

Ed Gamble

Kung food?

Sue Perkins

Kung food.

Ed Gamble

Kung food, there we are.

Sue Perkins

Oh Ed, take the rest of the fucking day off you prince among men. Well we've got the title. So is it set in a different continent each ep or a different food stuff, how's the, how does the format break down?

James Acaster

I think that I would have it that it's like a YouTube series each episode is like 30 seconds long but we do travel the whole world so every episode is in a different country, so it's you, just there with a different, and you know the title of the video will be the martial arts move and the cheese and it's just you doing a roundhouse kick on the brie.

Sue Perkins

So I think, for the Japan one what I'd want, is an enormous tofu hanging like punchbag. and then just warming up, just getting some basic moves in there. Also you know you do the form in karate, you'd need some food stuffs that you were doing it with, so you'd bring that hand out on it would be, would be something. Yeah that is good, we need to work it up. I mean I'm no good at development because my brain is it can't do deep drill. But you know, I think there's something in it.

Ed Gamble

Yeah we can definitely do that, we'll work up a pdf.

James Acaster

If I may tweak the format

Sue Perkins

Yep

James Acaster

I think I would like it that every episode we've got someone who ordered a cheese board on Off Menu, one of the stupid idiot guests that have ordered a cheese board on Off Menu in the past, and they're sitting down to their cheese board and then they're interrupted when you like fall through the ceiling or something and then just do the karate move on one of their cheeses.



Ed Gamble

Yeah, cos the cheese board would be on like a plank right? So you could just you could just kung fu chop through the whole thing, you chop through the cheese and through the plank.

Sue Perkins

Absolutely, you're right, you emerge, you sort of, what you ideally want is to, when this inevitably becomes a tv version you've got somebody who's got a cheese board and you make them eat it in an atrium so you've got a glass ceiling and ideally what you want is that I've been helicopter dropped, I come through the glass ceiling

Ed Gamble

Straight through

Sue Perkins

You know, in a sort of fighting pose, right through the cheese board and then supporting you know stuff like that, that's it, gone. And around me it's just sort of, you know, just detritus of sort of regional speciality cheeses, atomised.

James Acaster

Yep, I'd never miss an episode.

Sue Perkins

I'll have some training to do, but it's good. I've now got a focus. What you doing? I'm just punching cheese. I started with a Roquefort but I'm gonna work my way up. I'm going to get to a Gouda by next Spring.

Ed Gamble

I'll be there as your assistant as well, just picking up all the shards of cheese and just gobbling as you're punching.

James Acaster

Yeah, he would be as well, disgusting.

Sue Perkins

But you've done, you've karate chopped your popadom

Ed Gamble

Yeah, I'm ready to go. I'm good to go now.

Sue Perkins

You've got that, you've got the textural elements. Because cheese without texture is. pointless. It's like eating a duvet isn't it, it's pointless.

Ed Gamble

I'll eat straight cheese. I'm a guy who'll eat a cheese board, cheese board with no crackers I can do.

Sue Perkins

There's no words for this. Do you not even have a grape to punctuate the funk?

Ed Gamble

No! Get it off the plank. I don't want a grape. I can go straight cheese, just give me a knife, or not.



James Acaster

No words

Sue Perkins

No words!

James Acaster

Just actions, and I tell you what the action's gonna be. Sue's gonna chop up all the cheeses with her hands, Ed's gonna be gobbling them all up and then the final character move is gonna be Sue grabbing Ed by the back of the shirt and the back of his belt and throwing them into Trafalgar Square. Final karate move.

Sue Perkins

Where you lie in a sort of cheese sweat for the next ten years.

Ed Gamble

Look, I can see James is relaxed now because I can see you're clearly not going to pick a cheese board for dessert.

Sue Perkins

Oh, there is no way. That's the devil's work. When someone says what's for dessert you don't see a cheese board. A cheese board is not dessert.

James Acaster

Thank you!

Sue Perkins

Somebody said, what is it, French have this weird you know they do, they talk about foods that open and close the stomach, when they're talking about degustation menus and stuff, and for me cheese

Ed Gamble

Raspberry vodka opens it up lovely.

Sue Perkins

Well, that opens everything, that's nose to tail, it really is. Everything is attendant. And expectant. But for me cheese closes down everything, I can't really do it. I've no interest in it. You know, other than in between a popadom, which is its rightful place.

Ed Gamble

In popadoms

James Acaster

Starter, your dream starter.

Sue Perkins

Well I don't, I don't eat meat anymore. But I've done a menu whereby I could still be eating it cos it's things that have made me so happy when I think of them, when I think of eating, so for my start I'm going to have crispy duck pancakes because it reminds me of the first time I ate interesting food, which was when I was 19, and I was taken to a Chinese restaurant, I'd never been to a Chinese restaurant, by my friend Nick. And we went with her dad and it was the first time a) that I'd eaten crispy duck but



also had food where you pick things, like you have the little shredded spring onions you have the shredded cucumber, you have the thick viscous, sweet sort of spicy oyster sauce and then you rolled it all up. But the best thing of all, it was my first restaurant with a proper lazy susan and it was like what, what brave new world is this? And the whole middle of the table just revolved, and it was like, I am never leaving, I am never getting up. My ideal kitchen would just have almost a series of concentric spinning circles with food on it and millions of people around and it would just be this endless sort of rotating camp cavalcade. So that its just such a, I mean I've been lucky, I've been all the way around the world since and eaten very weird shit, very very weird things. But that was my gateway food into other cultures and it came so late, I kind of had a, I ate really well as a kid but it was just standard British. And the idea that we'd have a takeaway was just, we'd occasionally go to a Harvesters and it would be like a slightly wetter extension of food that we'd get at home. But this was just like, what is this?! It's got texture and spice and what you might call flavour! So, that was, now I've said it out loud it was kind of weird it came so late in my life but it was massive. And now I think back to what Nick and her family must have though looking at me going, you know, sort of freaking out.

Ed Gamble

Just spinning the lazy susan around and around, just.

Sue Perkins

What is this spring onion?

James Acaster

Also I love that like you know, it was the first time you'd seen a lazy susan, it was the first time that you'd had to put your own meal together and stuff and just imagining you doing your own food and hearing the phrase 'lazy susan' and just being like, 'er I'm making my own dinner thank you very much, I don't think I am lazy. I'm working pretty hard over here, I don't usually have to make my own pancakes'.

Sue Perkins

Every culture has a self-assembly dish like fajitas, it's just like, oh god. You've cooked something in an oven, what do you want, you know. And you've stuck a firework in it sometimes if its somebody's birthday. How much applause do you need for this? Yes it sizzles but also it's that thing of running, I mean I'd never do it now, as I said, I don't eat meat, but the running of the fork and the meat shredding, way before pulled pork, way before all these sort of food trucks and trends. They were, you know, they knew how to roast meat slowly so that it had that texture but you still have the crispy skin which has been sort of almost cured and then you, you've got the heat from a bit of spring onion, you've got the smoothness of a bit of cucumber, sweetness from the sauce, oh god. It almost makes people want to eat meat again but not quite. It's so delicious. But it's also the lazy susan for me, it's not just the fact that this is a) as you say, the irony of it being served on a lazy susan when you're doing all the work is perfect, it's a perfect joke.

James Acaster

And your name is Sue.

Sue Perkins

And my name is Sue.

James Acaster

every time that you have a lazy Susan in front of you, is there jokes about it?

Sue Perkins



Yeah, yep. And I have to make that joke very early on otherwise it will come at me and then that will really annoy me.

Ed Gamble

How do you, what joke do you do, do you say, 'I can't even be bothered to turn this'?

Sue Perkins

Yes, yeah, I say, 'can someone turn this for me?'. Just every time, and it's met with. it's gone from a sort of weak laugh, well through to silence and now just hostility. There's a sort of hostile expectation that it's going to happen and in those moments I enjoy it even more. It reminds me of a lot of early gigs where, before we'd even come on, there was just hatred, and that's almost my happiest place. So yes, I will make the same joke every time. It's like, oh god, not again. I'm sorry I can't be arsed.

James Acaster

I would love it.

Ed Gamble

Yeah, James would love it every time.

Sue Perkins

Alright, well, when the pandemic is over and we're karate chopping popadoms with gay abandon, I'll make that joke and then you'll be sad.

James Acaster

I will love it

Sue Perkins

And then I'll get the raspberry vodka out and then you'll be really sad.

James Acaster

I'll be really happy with the lazy susan joke. Can I make a confession to you Sue about your name? So, and this isn't, I don't I don't get confused, like I know that you are, that you are Sue and that Mel is Mel, I know that. Okay.

Sue Perkins

Yeah, as sure as eggs is eggs.

James Acaster

I do know that. But. I always, pretty much all the time, go to call you Mel because I think, in my head, you look more like a Mel and Sue.. no, Mel looks more like a Sue.

Sue Perkins

I answer to both though.

James Acaster

Huh?

Ed Gamble

Do you?



Sue Perkins

I answer to both, over the years, absolutely. Yeah, it doesn't matter, and she does Sue. I've seen her go down the street and somebody will go, 'oi Sue' and she'll just go, 'yes'. It doesn't matter, it's all grist to the mill. I'm wondering now, I'm looking at myself which is not an uncomfortable, which is not a comfortable thing rather, on gallery view, thinking, this is going to really freak me out now, do I look like a Mel? That's gonna stay with me. You know when you're really pissed, really really shit faced, and you look into a mirror and you're trying to work out what you are and who you are, that is going to come to me in those moments. Am I a Mel?

James Acaster

Yes

Ed Gamble

Yes, am I a Mel?

James Acaster

I just think, you look more like a Mel than a Sue, and I think Mel looks more like a Sue than a Mel.

Ed Gamble

Yeah, that's tricky, it's a tongue twister.

Sue Perkins

Every time you say this I get really tense. It's like we're all just treading on egg shells.

Ed Gamble

I have no problems with your name because Alex Horne once referred to you as Superkins and so now that's what I think of you as, is Superkins.

Sue Perkins

I always bow when I see Alex Horne. We used to, we used to do a show, in Edinburgh his show was straight after mine and you know when there's like, there's this lovely camaraderie when you know, especially when you share a dressing room in a venue or you know, your shows about one another, it's just, yeah we would just bow as he took over the smelly room that I'd inhabited from another smelly comic and so and onwards forever. And I still do it, and I love him so dearly. See if he calls me Superkins, I'm happy with that, yeah.

James Acaster

Main course, what would you like for your main course Superkins?

Sue Perkins

Right, I'm going I'm going curry and I'm not going to be specific. I make a curry about five times a week, sometimes it's a chickpea curry, sometimes it's lentil based, it might be Sri Lankan. My favourite, which is what I'd plump for, would be Southern Indian. Loads of curry leaves, coconut, and don't, I know you're going to push me to a side dish but let me say this to you, right. A planet is nothing without its moons, not a single moon but multiple moons, so for me, the joy of an Indian meal is that there is a constellation of stuff around it, okay. If you try and restrict it to just a dhal, I'll feel hard done by, okay, I would feel aggrieved, so I would go for, yeah a Southern Indian curry. Maybe, this will make your stomach turn, maybe even a beetroot curry.



Ed Gamble

Wow.

James Acaster

Wow.

Sue Perkins

But it doesn't have to be, if you don't like that you can have an okra one, you can have, this is the thing, you can put anything you want in it and it's utterly delicious. So I have a camper van and when times are, were better, I would go out and I would just drive to the middle of nowhere. And in my camper van, I've usually got a couple of books, I think somebody gave me a pen knife, in the full and certain knowledge that I couldn't even open it, no idea. But it's there, and it's good to know it's there. And I've got a little flip up thing above the kitchen and all it's got is Indian spices.

Ed Gamble

Amazing.

Sue Perkins

And every night I will, I'll open up the door and I will make myself a curry because it's easy. Once you know that you've got to put this this this and this in it, and a bit of oil so that it pops. And you've got a can of coconut milk, everything else is just gravy. I love it. So it would have to be that. And on the side, I'd have a masala dosa. You, have you ever had that?

James Acaster

Yeah

Ed Gamble

Yeah.

Sue Perkins

So this is the same, I'm obsessed with things that, it's following on from the sort of Peking duck I suppose, is that it's stuff wrapped in a big you know comforting mitt of kind of pancake style stuff so in this case is this case it's a rice pancake. But, oh my god I could talk for hours just eulogising about how delicious that would be. And I've travelled a lot and that's always been the things. I've travelled up the Himalayas once with a couple of hot parathas in each pocket which was useful for not only my sciatica, but also you could just bust one out if you're hungry. When the altitude feels it's got the better of you, just smash that. You meet a holy man, he's hungry, you want to get, smash out the other one, that's a gift. You've exchanged something meaningful.

Ed Gamble

When you say a holy man do you mean a real holy man?

Sue Perkins

Oh no they were all, all the holy men I met were just eyes on a stick. And you know I'm quite old meat now, it's not like, they must have been desperate. Cos you know, it's you'd get to a sort of, you'd think it would be then end of the pilgrimage and then a sort of saddy would come out of nowhere, out of the ether, and there would always be a ceremony which would involve, just sort of gaping at my jugs or smearing ash on something. I mean, I don't wish, as I've said at the beginning, I respect all beliefs, but in my experience I've travelled most of the way around the world now, there ain't half a lot of perves. A lot of perves, that will use the mechanism of spirituality to have a good old ogle, possibly a touch, possibly a touch. And also, I mean I've sort of written about this before but when you go somewhere



new and somebody gives you a really firm grasp, how are you to know that that's not culturally appropriate So there's a lot of just thinking, you know, this is probably, grabbing my buttocks is probably something to do with this form of Buddhism and you just accept it. It's only afterwards that there's just a slight shadow of doubt. Like with shaman, this all comes back to the shaman. There's a slight shadow of, is that really?

James Acaster

Yeah, well I'm wondering when, when the doubt crept in there?

Ed Gamble

When you meet another Buddhist when you get back home and you offer then your buttocks.

Sue Perkins

Yeah, and they just bow and think, oh she's a little, she's a little strange. But yeah, it's all, that sort of food, in the midst of a pandemic in the midst of winter, it's easily made from store cupboard stuff really. And amazon or other more local and reputable retailers can provide you with curry leaves. Which is all you need to make it taste, you know.

Ed Gamble

A lot of your meal I've noticed Sue, is circles, you've got a lot of circles in your meal.

Sue Perkins

This is incredibly perceptive of you, because I'm always drawn to circles, I doodle them almost constantly and I, I'm going to have to show you now which is going to be shit because it's a podcast but I'm going to show you what I'm making at the moment and this is going to blow your mind, this is going to absolutely blow your mind.

James Acaster

Oh dear, here we go.

Ed Gamble

Oh! a knitted burger!

James Acaster

That is a... oh wow!

Sue Perkins

Yeah, and that is circles man.

Ed Gamble

Circles, circles all the way.

James Acaster

That is circles man.

Sue Perkins

This is what I was doing before I was on the podcast, right, I was just crocheting some circles which have formed this magnificent, almost fully operational burger.

Ed Gamble



Great! Yeah because we've got the popadom of course, we've got the pancakes for the duck, on a lazy susan, and then the dosa as well so we've got a lot of circles in there.

James Acaster

Let's not forget the arse hole as well.

Ed Gamble

The arse hole of course.

James Acaster

That's circular.

Sue Perkins

Yeah, traditionally circular. Traditionally circular.

James Acaster

Everything you've mentioned, every anecdote has been circular, the lazy susan, everything.

Sue Perkins

And my anus. Do you know, I have to say this since I've learnt it, I have to tell everyone that wombats poo in perfect squares.

Ed Gamble

That was in the news recently I believe, wasn't it? Weirdly.

Sue Perkins

Circular anus, octocube shit.

Ed Gamble

Cubed poo.

James Acaster

Have you knitted any other foods?

Sue Perkins

No but I'm quite into it now, so amigurumi is a sort of Japanese crochet of sort of creating life like things and there's an incredible thing that I've seen which is, you know when you go to sort of reputable, indie burger joints and you get like a compost paper, sort of cardboard tray, they've replicated that perfectly, and there's fries and ketchup and I still can't work out how they've done ketchup out of wool. But anyway, I'm into it. I'm bang into it.

James Acaster

I mean, have they knitted the wool or have they like, surely you could get a bunch of loose wool and just put it

Sue Perkins

It's from the lamb from Bake Off, I've managed to, just while it was shitting on me, it spent such a long time I could tease out it's beautiful brown fur and I thought, I'm gonna keep that because one day I'm going to knit a beautiful hamburger. I'm gonna knit a, and I have, that dream's become a reality over lockdown. It's all good.



James Acaster

So you having the curry and the dosa, that's your main and your side.

Sue Perkins

yeah, can I have that? So the dosas, potato and onions and mustard seeds and curry leaves. I make them but, cor it's a lot, you have to think about that two days before, cos you need to ferment the batter. Everything's battered, I love a batter, I don't think I've talked about, my love of batter, it's the thing that I cleave to in times of stress. You can always just make a pancake in any time, you can make a pikelet and from then you can upgrade to a crumpet. It's a world, it's a whole world. You can make a socca which is, I don't know if you've had that, that's like a chickpea pancake. Fucking incredible. Butter is the way to go. Have you had a Welsh cake?

Ed Gamble

I've had a welsh cake, I've only ever had a welsh cake when I'm staying in Wales and they leave them in the room.

Sue Perkins

Do they leave them in the room intentionally? Or is it, 'oh god I've left my drop scone, I've left my...'

Ed Gamble

yeah, it's not the previous, it's not the previous

Sue Perkins

They're like, 'I've got my passport'. Apologies to all Welsh nationals, I don't know where that voice is from.

Ed Gamble

'Right, you always forget your charger don't you, don't forget your charger, ah bollocks'.

Sue Perkins

'Ah shit Brian I've left my fucking Welsh cakes'.

James Acaster

These are good accents here, both of you.

Ed Gamble

Yeah, I notice that you didn't join in.

James Acaster

I'm not very good at accents, you know I'm not very good at accents.

Ed Gamble

Go on, do an impression of a Welsh man leaving his Welsh cakes in his hotel room.

Sue Perkins

Can I just say, this is going to ensure Welsh independence within the next year, what's about to happen.

James Acaster

Okay, okay, that's fine, I'm happy to help out in that department. 'Oh crikey, I've left my, I've left my drop scone in my hotel room'.



Sue Perkins

It's actually uncanny.

Ed Gamble

Yeah, it's amazing.

Sue Perkins

It was a sort of distillation of Wales, it wasn't just a, do you know what I mean? It was an embodiment.

James Acaster

So we're onto your drink now which is also circular?

Sue Perkins

Well the glass is circular. I mean I can't make liquid circular unless I make it into a fluid gel and that's molecular gastronomy and that's probably a little too much for lazy Susan. I would, well I have a cup of tea with every meal so I was torn between my two favourite beverages, a cup of tea, and vodka. Particularly Bisongrass vodka. And I just sort of think I'll go for the latter because why not, it's so delicious. It's pretty weird, it's got to go with a curry and Chinese, but you know I'm all about representing and I think you have to just, you have to just try these things. It reminds me of my mate Ollie who I travel a lot with, who is, they do this thing whenever we go away, the idea is that one person orders for the group in a place where you can't read the menu and he once got a microwaved toad, and I always think of him, and he ate it. Because that's the game, you eat, whatever appears, you eat it.

Ed Gamble

Yep you've got to.

Sue Perkins

It was a big, wet, bloated toad that kind of collapsed into a sort of gooey, gooey mess. And we played the game and I got a tarantula a deep-fried tarantula.

Ed Gamble

That sounds quite nice, see I think it's almost the thing that puts me off the microwave toad is the fact that it's been in the microwave.

Sue Perkins

It was just gelatinous I mean the way he describes it is horror. But in the spirit of Ollie I think I will pick vodka even though it doesn't go because you must always, you must embrace all flavours and textures even if they don't seem harmonious.

Ed Gamble

You're torn between the cup of tea and the vodka, you are the only guest on Off Menu so far whose worked out a way of having both at the same time. If you would like to bring John into The Dream Restaurant to give you a vodka while you have your cup of tea

James Acaster

yeah, well that's a point.

Sue Perkins

That's true, because there's another delivery mechanism. If I don't have the vodka orally can I have it in addition to the tea?



Ed Gamble

Of course you can Sue.

Sue Perkins

I didn't think I'd be saying that this morning, I really didn't.

James Acaster

To be honest that's always been a rule in The Dream Restaurant and no one's, no one's ever used it yet. We've always had it that, you know a little unspoken loop hole.

Sue Perkins

Oh, it's it's good to test the boundaries of what the restaurant can deliver. I mean that's an ask for some of the serving staff but I am a very generous tipper. That's all I'll say. And there'll be a compensatory mechanism with hard cash for whatever they may have seen that will have scarred them during the course of the serving of this meal.

James Acaster

Oh whoa, hold on a second, this is John doing the blowing right?

Ed Gamble

No, you're the waiter actually, you're the genie water

Sue Perkins

I'm afraid John is not available at the restaurant of dreams.

James Acaster

Oh no.

Sue Perkins

But maybe we can, because I would want to, I would want to spare people's blushes, I could self-administer in a sort of quasi-douche form. I'm happy to do that because I wouldn't want to make anyone else feel uncomfortable. So I'm sipping my tea, I've got my Southern Indian buffet and I'm just, almost simultaneously. And that's the great thing about batter-based foods, I pick them up, like a dosa, you've got one hand free to administer a raw alcohol douche. Because the eagle's feather was not available, not available.

Ed Gamble

Someone runs a very good Wikipedia page for this podcast where it says everyone's choices and I am looking forward to your entry for drink.

Sue Perkins

Oh christ.

James Acaster

Raw alcohol douche.

Sue Perkins

Yeah, so, bison grass, preferably Zubrowka but any bison grass vodka would be very very, yeah they could pop that in as a detail I'd be really appreciative.



Ed Gamble

Of course, of course.

Sue Perkins

Cos that's the important part of that story.

James Acaster

You're having two drinks, you're having a cup of tea and the bison grass vodka. And we're set on, it's that way around? it's the vodka douche and not the cup of tea douche?

Sue Perkins

Oh gosh. Well let's open it up for discussion. I mean what would one rather, the bracing alcohol or the warming mellowing tones of a standard builder's cuppa.

Ed Gamble

Well I'm worried that the vodka is for people who are unresolved, right, so it depends how unresolved you're feeling.

Sue Perkins

Well I'm not unresolved any more, I'm very resolved on that matter, that's the great thing about it.

Ed Gamble

Then why not go for the cup of tea?

Sue Perkins

You're right. And also I started this by saying that I don't like to do things twice. So we are absolutely right. It's a shot of vodka down the conventional shoot and let's see how you know, let's see how a clipper goes up the old, up the old thumb basket. Yep, okay.

James Acaster

One lump or two?

Sue Perkins

Oh well, I mean. Would I do, the thing is, if it's going, what I add to my normal, normally I have tea with skimmed milk and a bit of honey and I'm gonna stick to that. I see no reason to change.

James Acaster

I mean, does flavour come into it as much when it's

Sue Perkins

Well I don't, I'm not aware of taste buds in the rectal chamber but I suppose after that I'll be able to tell you. We'll see.

Ed Gamble

The honey will thicken it up a bit at least.

Sue Perkins

Yes there's a viscosity that will come as a welcome relief I think. And also it's antibacterial is it not, honey? So it's all, it all works. I mean I hadn't thought about it before but now I say it out loud, it makes perfect sense.



James Acaster

Lovely stuff.

James Acaster

We arrive at your dessert which I already know is going to be something that I approve of, we're absolutely fine here.

Sue Perkins

It will be circular, because it's going to be a steamed pudding which is the, which is the king of all the, because the thing about a steamed pudding is that it's just filth. Do you know ortolan, the French dish that they have to eat with a towel over their head?

Ed Gamble

Oh yes, I have heard about this.

Sue Perkins

So this is the, the songbirds drowned in brandy and it's such a shit thing to do and it's such a vile awful, anachronistic, bullshit thing to do that they would sort of put the towel over to say yeah, we're embarrassed we've done this. So for me there's a similar, albeit less, violent sort of notion around the steamed pudding which is that this is just filth. Suet-y filth. So let's just cover it in custard, in fact a lot of custard. And then put ice cream on top but just use all these sort of dairy, diversionary tactics, to mask the untamed horror of what you're about to eat. So I suspect that somebody else will have picked a sticky toffee, and I thought, I'm going to pick something that people only have once a year, but I look forward to all year, which is Christmas pudding.

Ed Gamble

Yep, yeah.

Sue Perkins

I love Christmas pudding and no one in my family likes it and everyone's like 'oh I don't want to make it'. And on my own I will put it in the steamer I will lacquer it with brandy, set it on first, put some brandy around it, put some cream, get some ice cream, get some caramel, get some, whatever I can put on it. And enjoy it for that one day a year. But it's everything I love about pudding. It's wrong, it's filthy, it's tasty. There's billions of different ways you can do it. You can do it with alcohol, lots of nuts, fewer nuts, more fruit. But it's just, it makes me so happy. But it's hot and I like a hot pudding. I don't know about you James, as a desert fiend, you can have, I love a tiramisu and all that but I want it steaming, furious.

Ed Gamble

Cos you want the hot but you want the hot pudding so you can add lovely cold elements to it and have the best of both worlds. BOBW.

Sue Perkins

And you've got your own ideal thermostat, you know how, what the optimal temperature of your pudding's going to be so you can just take it down slowly with a bit of the old, with a bit of whatever, unctuousness.

Ed Gamble

I've only got into Christmas puddings, I'd say, in the last five years, but now I love Christmas pudding. I've said it on the podcast before, my favourite bit about Christmas is, Christmas pudding on Boxing Day, cold Christmas pudding, fry it in butter, in a pan and then put ice cream on it and brandy butter.



Sue Perkins

Absolutely correct.

Ed Gamble

So good.

James Acaster

I'm going to do that today.

Ed Gamble

What? it's February mate, what, have you got a Christmas pudding knocking about.

James Acaster

Oh, how fast can the two of you get over here and unload some of this fucking Christmas pudding that I've got in this house because

Sue Perkins

I'm there.

James Acaster

So basically, remember when the Joe Brand episode Ed, which we recorded in November and I'd just eaten some Christmas pudding because my girlfriend had made, had made like a test batch the day before and then, she made massive, a humungous Christmas pudding which was delicious but we didn't eat it all because my girlfriend doesn't like Christmas pudding so it's all down to me. And there's this massive Christmas pudding there, not only have we got a massive Christmas pudding, I had you know, two servings of that Christmas pudding maybe, two large servings, but there's still more than enough for a standard Christmas pudding's worth of it in the fridge, and there's the back-up Christmas pudding that she bought from Marks and Spencer's in case that Christmas pudding didn't work.

Ed Gamble

Oh joy.

James Acaster

So I had two Christmas puddings in my fridge at the moment and I constantly don't know what to do about it, but now that you've said about the frying thing I'm going to try it.

Ed Gamble

Do that.

Sue Perkins

Make a, make a strudel right? Just, oh my god, just get some filo pastry, lay it, get all that out, crumble some nuts, break up the Christmas pudding, roll it around, bake it, for real.

James Acaster

That sounds great, I'm going to do those things. And now I'm really excited that I've got the Christmas puddings.

Ed Gamble

Yeah!

Sue Perkins



And it's every flavour that you want, and it's not just, you know, cinnamon is the dominant that you want, you know, like nutmeg in like an egg custard tart, but all of that just crammed into one piece. You could put some star anise in there, whatever you want, it's happy days. I say just all year round, that is, and you're right, the next day, yeah bubble and squeak whatever, great, but a fried Christmas pudding, imagine battering it, imagine a deep-fried Christmas pudding, imagine. Oh sweet christ. That's me for the whole day now.

James Acaster

Right, I'm going to read your menu back to you now and see how you feel about it.

Sue Perkins

It's nuts.

James Acaster

It's a completely circular menu, here we go. Still water, you want popadoms karate chopped with mango chutney, or you would like the popadom cheese sandwich with mango chutney, to try that out. You can have both. Starter, crispy duck pancakes on a lazy susan. Main course southern Indian curry, we're leaning towards the beetroot one with a side of the masala dosa. Drink

Sue Perkins

And here's where the podcast ended.

James Acaster

Zubrowka bison grass vodka through the mouth.

Sue Perkins

Orally, yep.

James Acaster

A cup of tea with skimmed milk and honey

Sue Perkins

Say it.

James Acaster

Rect-... Douche administered. Dessert, Christmas pudding, brandy ice cream, custard and caramel , and do you know what, do you want like Christmas pudding eight ways, like something like that, like all the things we've just discussed all the different ways, like the strudels

Sue Perkins

All the textures, like the textures of a Christmas pudding. Yeah.

James Acaster

You can have all of that, just the whole, every which way.

Sue Perkins

You're right, made into a fluid gel, made into a crisp.

Ed Gamble

You could get it as just the smell piped in as a gas.



Sue Perkins

Yes!

James Acaster

I'm going to, literally, as soon as we finish this, I'm gonna, I'm gonna eat it.

Ed Gamble

I'm really jealous, you know what I've just genuinely just done whilst we were talking, I've just gone on the supermarket delivery app that I use and just searched for Christmas pudding and surprisingly they're all out of stock.

Sue Perkins

Bollocks.

Ed Gamble

I think that's a delicious menu.

Sue Perkins

It's mental but I'm happy with it.

Ed Gamble

Douching aside, I think that's a, that's a wonderful menu.

Sue Perkins

Very much aside.

Ed Gamble

Sue, thank you very much for coming into the Dream Restaurant.

Sue Perkins

My pleasure, I loved it.

James Acaster

Thank you Sue.

Ed Gamble

Well, there we have it. A wonderful menu from Sue Perkins. I now want Christmas pudding so badly.

James Acaster

I'm gonna have some, as soon as we've finished this, I'm gonna fry some. Ed Gamble recipe. You fry it in some butter right?

Ed Gamble

Fry it in butter baby.

James Acaster

I've got some butterscotch in the freezer, dollop that on.

Ed Gamble

Oh yeah, you're sorted mate, absolutely sorted. You're going to have a joyous time. I've got a bottle of bison grass vodka so I'm going to go and do the stuff with that.



James Acaster

And Benito's going to make himself a cup of tea.

Ed Gamble

That was a great, a great menu, very revealing anecdotes. I enjoyed that very much, it was lovely to have Sue on the episode and also, she didn't say baby corn, thank the lord.

James Acaster

Very glad, because I was enjoying Sue's company so much I'd hate to chuck her out. It's not like Jayde Adams where I couldn't wait to kick her out of the restaurant.

Ed Gamble

Also, when she was talking about that veggie curry though I was thinking, oh baby corn could make an appearance here, she was listing veg. She put beetroot in the curry, she's not going to shy away from putting a straw dolly's dick in there.

James Acaster

We may have, we may have overlooked it. I think we may have not, you know, we'd done a lot of tangents, you know I think at that point we were trying to be quite resourceful and economic with our questions, if we had drilled down we might have discovered there was some baby corn in that curry. We may have been asleep at the wheel there. Apologies to any sticklers.

Ed Gamble

But I'm glad, I'm kind of glad that we were asleep at the wheel there because I was enjoying the road that Sue was taking us down.

James Acaster

Yes, yeah, absolutely, absolutely.

Ed Gamble

James we've been, we continue to be sent some wonderful things. The Great Benito indeed was sent a vegan, is it vegan? A vegan Honest burgers recipe box. Now I've had the Honest burger vegan burger at one of the restaurants before, back when they were a thing, and it was delicious so, lovely to hear that The Great Benito enjoyed his.

James Acaster

Yes, he seemed very happy when he told us about it. We both complemented him on looking so nice today

Ed Gamble

He does look nice!

James Acaster

And then he said it must have been his vegan burger box.

Ed Gamble

It does, we can't definitely tell you that eating a vegan burger box from Honest burger will make you look better, but it's just what's happened to Benito who looks fresh.

James Acaster



No. But you know, we don't normally give him complements and we both did today so.

Ed Gamble

No. Normally he looks like the beginning of Benjamin button. But here he is, like a little fresh baby boy now.

James Acaster

Hey! Ed. Does Sue Perkins have a podcast that can people can listen to?

Ed Gamble

Sue Perkins does have a podcast indeed. It's called, 'An Hour or So with...'. I have done it James, I have spent an hour or so with Sue Perkins in the past and, don't worry, she's also had some great guests.

James Acaster

I would love to listen to the episode with you on it though Ed. That's what I should start doing, that should be my gateway into podcasts, to make me feel easy about things. I'll just start listening to podcasts where you're the guest and then that will make me feel a bit better.

Ed Gamble

Yeah, I've done a lot of them and that'll ease, that'll definitely ease your way in. Maybe then maybe listen to things where you've been a guest as well. Cos you've done a lot of podcasts.

James Acaster

Yeah but I don't want to listen to those ones, I mean I was there the first time. You know.

Ed Gamble

Hm, that's true. That's how I feel when Benito asks us to listen to the edit of this. It's like, oh I don't need to, it was all, it was all great.

James Acaster

Also, you know, I make my requests of what I want to stay in and it doesn't stay in.

Ed Gamble

Yeah. James that was a lot of fun we'll be back next week I'd imagine.

James Acaster

See you next week Ed, I look forward to it. You're a good friend.

Ed Gamble

Okay. Yeah, you're a good guy and I like you very much. Bye everyone!

James Acaster

Bye!