



Off Menu – Ep147 – Sikisa:

Ed Gamble

Welcome to the Off Menu podcast, taking the biscuit of conversation, dipping it into the hot tea of the internet, watching the humour soak through it and then a big glob falls off and you scoop that up from the bottom of the mug with a spoon, and that's the podcast.

James Acaster

Fair enough. Ed Gamble there giving you the introduction. My name is James Acaster, I am a genie who can grant anyone any food from wherever they like in their whole entire history and the world of time. I'm a waiter, Ed is the maître-dream.

Ed Gamble

Ed Gamble, maître-dream.

James Acaster

And we like to welcome people into the restaurant and we ask them their favourite ever starter, main course, dessert, side dish and drink. Not in that order. And this week our guest is Sikisa.

Ed Gamble

Sikisa. Sikisa. Wonderful stand-up comedian.

James Acaster

Fantastic stand-up.

Ed Gamble

Only gigged with her for the first time recently, James.

James Acaster

Oh yes?

Ed Gamble

It's very annoying when you've not gigged with someone before and then you meet them and then they're brilliant.

James Acaster

Yes, that's very frustrating. I would like, you know-, course you want them to be rubbish.

Ed Gamble

Rubbish, and then I can feel good about my career.

James Acaster

Yes, you can go away going, 'I haven't wasted my life.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, but turns out she's absolutely brilliant, so it's going to be a pleasure to have her on the podcast.

James Acaster

Looking forward to it. However, as always, if she says the secret ingredient we will have to kick her out of the dream restaurant.

Ed Gamble

Bye Sikisa.



James Acaster

That's the rule for everyone, and this week the secret ingredient is.

Ed Gamble

Margarine.

James Acaster

Margarine.

Ed Gamble

Margarine. Margarine. We used to routinely have margarine at home.

James Acaster

Yes, so did we.

Ed Gamble

That was all we had in the fridge, never used real butter.

James Acaster

Absolutely.

Ed Gamble

Because it's healthier to have margarine.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It's also absolutely joyless.

James Acaster

Yes. Once you start having butter, you can't go back to margarine.

Ed Gamble

Once you have butter you can't go back-er. And that's what I always say.

James Acaster

Yes. Yes, yes, yes. We had margarine all the time growing up. To the point where I thought, 'That's normal,' and butter seemed like a mad thing to be putting-, like, butter you just used it in baking and stuff. Why would you eat it as it is, you know, on some toast or whatever? Are you crazy?

Ed Gamble

Now, we're a butter house.

James Acaster

Yes. Yes, yes. We're a butter house.

Ed Gamble

Do you go, like, Lurpak Spreadable? Or are you just using, like, a-, have you got a big block of butter?

James Acaster

I've got a big block.



Ed Gamble

Once you have a block of butter, you can't go back-er.

James Acaster

Yes. No. Once you've got a block of butter you can't go back-er.

Ed Gamble

Is that alright?

James Acaster

Yes. Well, it's as good as anything else you've ever said on this podcast. Yes, I don't know how we get away with it sometimes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, very low bar. A low bar.

James Acaster

You know, sometimes some other podcasters, they talk to us and go, 'Everyone loves your podcast.'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

And they say it in that incredulous way.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

And I'm like, 'I don't blame you for the tone.' Sometimes we say, 'Once you have a block of butter, you can't go back-er,' and not only do we say that and we know the standard of it and how good it actually is, people are going to adopt it and love saying it.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

They're going to really enjoy it.

Ed Gamble

They're going to say it to their friends and family. Every time they make some toast with butter they're going to say, 'When you have a block of butter, you can't go back-er.'

James Acaster

They'll all start saying it and we'll become a funny little joke. Look, we can't help it. We can't help that our very low-quality riffs somehow connect to the very essence of being a human.

Ed Gamble

Yes, we essentially do punch up on family conversations, is what we do.

James Acaster

Yes, we help you all talk to your family and friends with, I don't know, like, weird banter that you can circulate amongst your household.



Ed Gamble

Butter banter.

James Acaster

Yes. Once you have butter banter, you can't go butter back-er.

Ed Gamble

There we go. You'll be using that one.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, if Sikisa says margarine, she's out on her ear mate.

James Acaster

Yes, sorry Sikisa, but hopefully that won't happen.

Ed Gamble

No, hopefully not. Looking forward to speaking to her. So, this is the Off Menu menu of Sikisa. Welcome Sikisa to the dream restaurant.

Sikisa

Welcome. Thank you. I don't know why I said that.

Ed Gamble

You said welcome back.

James Acaster

Thank you Sikisa for welcoming me to the dream restaurant. We've been expecting you for some time.

Ed Gamble

I love those exchanges where you just say the thing back you feel like you should.

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

A classic is in an airport buying something in an airport and they say, 'Have a nice flight,' and you say, 'You too.' I do that all of the time to the person working in Smith's or whatever.

James Acaster

Yes, absolutely. Absolutely.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I did that to a Deliveroo guy the other day. 'Enjoy your meal.' 'You too.' Oh, what the fuck.

Sikisa

I've done that several times. Well, thank you for having me at this dream restaurant.



Ed Gamble

How many times a day do you think a WHSmith's employee in Heathrow Airport gets told to have a nice flight?

James Acaster

Yes. It means that when they eventually do have a nice flight, it's going to be brilliant. Because so many people have wished them to have a nice flight that when they do get on it, it's going to be the best flight ever. Everything run according to plan, I wasn't held up. Actually landed early.

Sikisa

Got upgraded to first class. Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Oh, that must be annoying. Because I feel like you've got, like, a quota of luck to be upgraded to first class. I've never happened to me.

Sikisa

Yes, no.

James Acaster

No never.

Sikisa

I've never had it. I've always hoped. I went to Jamaica for a friend's wedding, and she carried her bride's dress in her hand, just to be like, 'I'm getting married. Can we, sort of, get upgraded?' It didn't happen.

Ed Gamble

Oh, god.

Sikisa

She got stuck with the rest of us in, like-,

Ed Gamble

But then imagine being upgraded on a flight to, like, Glasgow. Where it's like an hour and a half and you're just like, 'Oh, it's never going to happen again.' I tried to do it on the way to New Zealand. Did I tell you this?

James Acaster

No.

Ed Gamble

I ran the London Marathon and the day after I was flying to New Zealand for New Zealand Comedy Festival.

Sikisa

I love the fact you threw in that you ran a marathon.

James Acaster

I love it.



Ed Gamble

Well, it is important. It is important for the story.

James Acaster

But in my head he just ran the marathon and carried on going until he was on the plane.

Ed Gamble

I wouldn't bring it up unless it was important, because I wore my marathon finishers t-shirt, and when I went up to the check-in, I limped. I put a limp on as if I'd, like, run the marathon and was like, 'Ran the blooming marathon yesterday, didn't I? Poor old legs.'

Sikisa

So you did it on purpose?

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes. Yes I was really putting on the limps, just like, 'It's annoying I've got to fly today really, because I ran the marathon for charity yesterday.'

Sikisa

And they were like, 'We don't give a fuck.'

Ed Gamble

Yes. Essentially they said, 'We don't give a fuck.' Although, they did upgrade me to the leg-room seats in economy.

James Acaster

Because of achy legs from running the marathon?

Ed Gamble

Old achy legs.

James Acaster

Yes. Although, they must have known that-, because when you've run the marathon you've run it for a diabetes charity, haven't you?

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes.

James Acaster

So, they must have known, it's not really doing it for charity.

Ed Gamble

He's doing it for himself.

James Acaster

He's doing it to get the money back.

Sikisa

He's just being selfish about it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I essentially use diabetes charities like a bank for the future. They're like a big ISA.

James Acaster

Are you a foodie, Sikisa? Are you a fan of food?



Sikisa

I'm way too much of a fan of food. I was very anxious about doing this to be honest with you, because trying to pick a specific menu is my worst nightmare. You know when people ask you that question?

Ed Gamble

Welcome.

Sikisa

Yes, thank you. Thank you very much. When people ask you that question, 'Oh, what do you want to eat? What do you want to eat?' I'm like, 'Whatever. I will find something,' and they're like, 'No, no but what do you want to eat? Like, do you want Thai or Mexican?' And I'm like, 'I don't give a fuck. Put some food in my mouth. I will find something.' I'm also one of those people that spends way too much money on food. Especially at food markets. There's a very good one in Exmouth's market in Angel and they've got, like, maybe five or six stalls there, and I will go there quite regularly and I will end up buying four, five different meals from each store in one day. It's because I feel like I'm never going to eat this kind of food again.

Ed Gamble

Totally. I totally get this.

Sikisa

But I'm like, 'I'm going to be in this market tomorrow.'

Ed Gamble

Yes. It's that thing of, like, I have it as well, whenever I see a menu or if I was at a food market I'd be like, 'I'm clearly never going to have this ever again. Like, this is the only opportunity I have, so I have to eat so much of it, I now hate it forever.'

Sikisa

Yes, but I will have it for breakfast, lunch, dinner, maybe brunch. I don't know. Whatever we can fit this in. And I'm just like, looking at all this food. I think the most amount of money I spent in a food market has been £45, because they're like £5 normally for those kind of things. So, I spent, like, I bought nine items of food.

Ed Gamble

So, are you buying something and then spotting that there's another stall that you want something from?

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, have you ever thought to do a full loop of the market? See what you want the most and get that?

Sikisa

I have done that.

Ed Gamble

Oh right, okay.

James Acaster

Yes, and then do another loop and you get other things.



Sikisa

Yes, I'm a pro at this. I have been like, 'Okay, you know what, let's just go and start from the beginning. Let's loop around, let's see what we like. Yes, okay.' And then we do another loop and it's, 'Buy everything.'

James Acaster

Yes. Now look, if you're buying, like, nine or whatever dishes, where are you going to eat these? Because, like, when you're at a food market you've got to find a little place to go and sit down and if you've got a lot of stuff-,

Ed Gamble

I'm imagining you with a big, like, teetering pile of stuff.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Yes, there's a bag. There's a bag of food. I will find somewhere to eat. So, there's parks obviously. There are benches. There's corners of streets. There is-,

Ed Gamble

That got bleaker and bleaker, with every single location.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

There's my bed.

Ed Gamble

We did it.

Sikisa

There's the toilet.

James Acaster

I guess you want to be somewhere with, like, when the people around you are changing quite a lot, so they're not seeing, 'Oh, that's, like, the fifth one and that bags never ending and she's eating-,'

Sikisa

Oh, no. I would never eat them all at the-, no, no, I lie. I was about to say I'd never eat them all at the same time. I have done that, where I've just picked at bits and then been like, 'Oh okay, it's alright,' and then been really disappointed with one dish and maybe tried to fob it off to a friend. Or actually, I've been quite good and have given food to homeless people.

James Acaster

First person on the podcast who's said that I think.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's true.

Sikisa

Oh, oh wow.



James Acaster

Over 100 episodes in now, no one's ever given food to the homeless.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Sikisa

Shut up.

Ed Gamble

Before you get too big for your boots Sikisa, because I saw that flash across your face when James said, 'You're the only person to have talked about giving food to a homeless person,' and you were like, 'Oh really?' You only gave food to a homeless person, because you bought yourself nine bags of food.

Sikisa

Hey, hey, hey. It's not about how or how it came about, it's the fact that I was kind enough to not throw it in the bin, but to give it to a homeless person.

Ed Gamble

Yes, okay. You put one of your trays of food that you ate the rest of in the toilet to one side, and then you gave it to a homeless person.

James Acaster

Yes, that's good.

Sikisa

Allow me. Allow me.

Ed Gamble

Allowed.

Sikisa

Thank you.

James Acaster

Is this a bit of a compulsive thing sometimes? Because with me, like, there's some things that if I buy them, I want to buy the whole set. Like Nakd bars. So, like, I can't just buy one single Nakd bar, I'm like, 'No, I want to get a nice selection.' I'm not going to eat them all at once necessarily but, like, I want to get all the ones that I like and go away with them. I've never bought just one before.

Ed Gamble

I love the idea of you being like, 'Well, you know, I understand compulsive eating,' which, you know, it's a serious issue, compulsive eating, people overeating and stuff. You're like, 'You know, I have to buy all the different colours of Nakd bar.'

James Acaster

Well, I don't mean compulsive like that. I meant-, I guess more my own life, just more of a, you know-,

Ed Gamble

You like colours.

James Acaster

Yes, want to complete the whole set.



Sikisa

When you have a Skittles, like a packet of Skittles, do you have a pacific colour? I can't say the word specific, by the way.

James Acaster

It's okay. You said, 'A skittles,' as well. I love that.

Ed Gamble

We let that slide. We won't let pacific slide.

James Acaster

Yes, we let that go.

Ed Gamble

That sentence was a disaster.

James Acaster

When I have a skittles.

Sikisa

What do you mean? Fine. When you have a packet of Skittles, fine. Okay. When you have a packet of Skittles, god.

James Acaster

Do I have a favourite colour? Green has always been my favourite colour of sweet, just because it was my favourite colour as a kid. So, then I just transferred it over to sweets.

Ed Gamble

And that's still the same?

James Acaster

I think so, yes.

Ed Gamble

So, now something as an adult that is your favourite sweet is because it was your favourite colour as a child and you decided it was your favourite sweet?

James Acaster

Correct. Correct, yes. That is exactly right. Still my favourite colour of Opal Fruit, Wine Gums.

Sikisa

The green one is the worst one.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I agree. I don't like the green ones.

James Acaster

Really? The worst? Worse than orange?

Ed Gamble

Although I quite-, yes. I don't really like Skittles.



Sikisa

Wait, hold on, wait though. Is it just the ordinary Skittles packet that you don't like, or have you tried the other flavours of Skittles?

James Acaster

What, the sour ones and stuff?

Ed Gamble

Talk me through them. Sour?

Sikisa

Sour, tropical.

Ed Gamble

I'm not going to like them. I don't really like overly sour things.

Sikisa

Yes, the sour one fair enough.

Ed Gamble

Tropical flavour is not my vibe.

Sikisa

What do you mean tropical flavour? You know you-,

James Acaster

Yes, what do you mean?

Ed Gamble

What? I mean, I don't like tropical Skittles, I don't like Lilt, I don't like anything like that. And quite often it tastes synthetic. Don't you two try and back me into a corner.

Sikisa

Well, like, you have got a West Indian woman on your podcast today.

Ed Gamble

Yes but-,

James Acaster

Yes, how about you think of that?

Ed Gamble

I'm sorry. I'm not talking about authentic things. I'm talking about synthetic tropical flavours.

James Acaster

Look at how angry he's getting. Look at how aggressive he's getting already.

Sikisa

I know, right?

Ed Gamble

Because I will not be crushed by this.

Sikisa

Synthetic, I will allow you. What about berry Skittles?



Ed Gamble

I think it's the texture of Skittles that I don't like.

Sikisa

The Crushing?

Ed Gamble

The hard, like, sugar shell and then I think what happened was is once I put a whole pack of Skittles in my mouth at once, chewed them all up into a big ball, and then spat the ball out to see what it would look like. And I think that put me off Skittles.

James Acaster

Oh, yes. It's put me off Skittles just listening to that.

Sikisa

Why would you do that?

James Acaster

I'm never having a Skittles again after that. After that description. How old were you when you did that?

Sikisa

Was it yesterday?

Ed Gamble

It was yesterday. It's been a whole day since I've eaten Skittles.

James Acaster

The bit that I'm interested in is, 'Spat it out to see what it would look like.' What did you think it would look like in your head? Like the rainbow?

Ed Gamble

Yes, I thought maybe, you know, all different colours, like maybe I'd created stripes or, like a sort of tie-dye pattern, and they're all like a horrible sugar, like-

James Acaster

White.

Sikisa

White.

James Acaster

White inside and like, 'Ugh.'

Sikisa

Just blots of colour around it, yes?

Ed Gamble

Yes, and not in a pretty way.

Sikisa

No.

James Acaster



No. Let's get away from Ed's disgusting Skittles ball and talk about something nice. You've got an Edinburgh show coming up, Sikisa, correct?

Sikisa

Yes, it will be my debut.

Ed Gamble

Exciting.

Sikisa

Yes, which I'm quite excited about, because it's all about parties, and I love a party.

Ed Gamble

Oh yes?

Sikisa

It's one of my favourite things to do. It's about pacific-, I can't say words, can I, today?

Ed Gamble

We know what you mean. You've got-,

James Acaster

I think she-,

Sikisa

I feel like I'm going to get so many comments on the website saying-

James Acaster

The ones who do the comments on, like, how to say, like, words there, I mean, they're boring, aren't they, the nerd trolls?

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Words are about meaning, and we know exactly what you mean.

Sikisa

Thank you very much. I appreciate you. This is why you're two of my favourite boys.

James Acaster

Yes. Even though Ed doesn't like tropical stuff, let's not forget that.

Ed Gamble

No, but again, I think we're spinning that out into far more of an issue than it needs to be.

Sikisa

It's about one particular party which is a house party. I talk about food in this show, in one section of it, because I think there's a massive difference between-, I don't want to sound like I'm being discriminative against white people. It's just from my own experience, okay, just from my experience, I think there's a difference of when white people have house parties, and the food that they put in that party, compared to black people, because I have been to several 'house parties' where I've been told, 'You don't need to eat,' and I've turned up and there's been cold sausage rolls, pineapples on sticks, quiche.



Ed Gamble

Keep talking.

Sikisa

Yes, quiche.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Look, me and James are drooling over here.

James Acaster

Oh, come on.

Sikisa

Yes, I'm like, 'What?' There's been hummus, like four different types of hummus.

James Acaster

Woah, yes.

Sikisa

And bread, and, like, cheese, just different types of cheese, when I'm like, 'Okay, this is not food, and I've had to order, like, a Deliveroo to get it to the party.'

Ed Gamble

Have you genuinely gone to a house party and ordered a Deliveroo for yourself before?

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Don't look at me like I'm mad, Sikisa?

Sikisa

Why are you looking at me like that for? You looked at me like I was mad.

Ed Gamble

I'm impressed. I think it's an amazing-

James Acaster

You don't like our cold sausage rolls and quiche?

Ed Gamble

I think it's an amazing move, but-

Sikisa

I've ordered a Dominos to a birthday party, that I didn't know anyone at the party.

Ed Gamble

Wow, and was the Dominos, this is a key question, just for you or for the party?

James Acaster

Yes, yes.



Sikisa

I think you already know the answer.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I do, yes, and well done.

James Acaster

Did you keep it just for you, or did someone else get in on it?

Sikisa

The person I was dating at the time had some, one slice.

Ed Gamble

Before you realised?

Sikisa

Yes, because I was like, 'Wait, you're at fault. You told me not to eat, so this is your fault.' I've ordered a KFC to a house party before. There's just no adequate food for me then.

James Acaster

So, what is good house party food?

Sikisa

For me, it's you've got to have at least minimum three different types of chicken.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

When you say types, what are you talking about?

Sikisa

What do you mean?

Ed Gamble

The cut of the chicken? The flavour of the chicken? The restaurant it's coming from? What different types of chicken?

Sikisa

Oh God. Okay, we're going to go-, so, I feel like this is now going to go into, like, chicken, like, a whole-,

James Acaster

Yes, right, yes, I thought that was where it was going.

Sikisa

Like, I feel like the podcast will just be about chicken, which is fair enough. When I say different types of chicken, like obviously there's fried chicken, jerk chicken, barbecue chicken, roast chicken, wings, which is separate, by the way.

James Acaster

Yes, absolutely.

Ed Gamble

So, we're not going to get started on wings today? Are you saying, like, we can't go down that road?



Sikisa

No, we can't do it. You've got to cater for the vegans nowadays, so you've got to have the wing or, like, the Chic'K'n with a K in it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, chicken.

Sikisa

The the Chic'K'n with a K, the fake chicken. The the Chic'K'n, you've got to have that, and then you've got, like, stew chicken, curry chicken. There's different types of chicken, but you have to have a minimum of three at a house party.

Ed Gamble

Of three? What's your top three that you want to see when you walk into a house party? If they've only got three, what three types of chicken are you after?

James Acaster

We know cold chicken drumsticks is a given, with no seasoning.

Sikisa

Do you want me to walk out of the podcast?

James Acaster

Hah?

Sikisa

Do you actually want me to walk out of this podcast?

James Acaster

I was just giving you a freebie.

Ed Gamble

James, baked chicken breast.

Sikisa

Oh boy.

Ed Gamble

With a bit of ketchup to dip it in?

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Oh mate, now you're just egging me on. No, no, no, no, no. Okay. So, if you're at a house party, I will say you can have chicken skewers. I will allow that. Yes, you can have chicken skewers, fried chicken and chicken wings, minimum.

Ed Gamble

Yes, minimum.

Sikisa

Then obviously you've to have the coleslaw, potato salad, rice and peas, plain rice, macaroni pie, salad, curry goat, fish, duck-



James Acaster

Yes, and all this, I mean, needless to say but it's all, like, store-bought stuff, just in the tubs?

Sikisa

Maybe the potato salad and the coleslaw, if you haven't got time to make it, but no, okay? No, no, no, no, no.

Ed Gamble

The thing is with all that, at a house party, you want to be moving around, you want to be mingling, which is why a little mini quiche is so convenient, Sikisa, just so you can take a little mini quiche, pop it in your mouth, chat, chat, chat.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Yes, but you can chat with a plate in your hand.

James Acaster

If you're dancing with a mini quiche, it wobbles in a really satisfying way and enhances the dance.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you can dance with two carrot batons with hummus on the end.

Sikisa

No, no, no. Alright. So, you eat at the beginning of the-, alright, so okay, you tell people the house party's going to start at 8:00, which means it starts at 9:00.

Ed Gamble

Not in my house.

James Acaster

No, Ed's parties are not fun.

Ed Gamble

If we start at 9:00, how's it going to be over by 10:30?

Sikisa

Oh boys, you lot need to throw an off-menu house party, please. Please let it happen, and please can I be invited? There'll be no judgement, just me just writing some notes.

James Acaster

We'll feel a bit judged when the Dominos arrives.

Sikisa

Yes, so you've got to, like, make you get enough food ready for the start of the party, and then if you want to, you can have leftovers for people to nibble at later on, but people will normally eat at the beginning of a house party, just on a plate, mingle, have a chat, dah, dah, dah, dah, and then the music is not, like, the banging dancing music at the beginning, it's just like the casual, 'Good vibes. It's going to be a good night,' house party kind of music, and then once everyone's finished, then you throw in the bangers, and then everyone dances off the food that they just ate. Exercise, people.

Ed Gamble

Yes, and by-



James Acaster

I already know what he's going to say.

Ed Gamble

By bangers, do you mean mini cocktail sausages?

James Acaster

Yes. Nearly said it. Saw you open your mouth. Went, 'Oh, he's got it. He's going to say, "Cold cocktail sausages on a stick." Fuck that.' Still or sparkling water, Sikisa?

Sikisa

Can I just say-,

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

You've been doing this for quite a while now. Why's there only still and sparkling, and why have you not upgraded to at least, like, a soft drink, or like a Ribena, or like a cocktail at least? I thought we maybe had got to a cocktail level, like, now.

Ed Gamble

Well, I think we're doing it as if we're in a restaurant, so I personally have never been to a restaurant where the waiter's come over at the beginning and said, 'Still, sparkling or Ribena?'

James Acaster

Yes, but, you know, one day.

Sikisa

You said this is my dream restaurant, right?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, look, feel free.

James Acaster

Also, people have found loopholes. We found-, when we did our menus for the hundredth episode, I chose a jug of Cawston Press, which is my favourite drink, rhubarb Cawston Press, with crushed Cawston Press ice cubes all the way through.

Sikisa

Oh no.

James Acaster

Guess what, less than a week ago, I went to a restaurant for a meal and instead of sending out water, that's what they send out.

Sikisa

They probably listen to the podcast, that's it, yes.

James Acaster

Yes, I think so.



Sikisa

I'm not going to lie, they were like, 'Oh my God, guess who's in the restaurant? Guess who's in the restaurant?'

James Acaster

Yes. They sent it over. I couldn't believe it. They also didn't even make a big deal about the ice. The ice was in the glass, but I'd forgotten that I'd said that. I was just really jazzed that they'd given me some Cawston Press, and then realised midway through that, 'This is ice that they've made from Cawston Press,' and it really made my day. So, whatever you pick now, this might happen for you.

Sikisa

Oh. Cocktail.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I'm onboard with that hack, because look, normally people wait until the drink bit to pick a cocktail, but I-,

James Acaster

Sure.

Sikisa

Oh, I can do that later as well.

Ed Gamble

No, Sikisa, you live your dreams.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Okay then. Like, I want to go back to my Ribena dreams, please.

Ed Gamble

Ribena dreams.

James Acaster

The simplest cocktail of them all.

Sikisa

Yes.

James Acaster

What flavour Ribena?

Sikisa

Original. Original.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Toothkind. Toothkind. Do they still do Toothkind?



James Acaster

Yes, I mean, that is a thing. I should just-,

Sikisa

I know. I remember that. He said that and I was like, 'Oh my God.'

Ed Gamble

'Original or Toothkind?' That should be the new, 'Still or sparkling?'

Sikisa

Oh my God.

James Acaster

And they should have got Toothkind, yes, exactly, but you don't want that.

Sikisa

No, I don't want that. I would like the original, please.

James Acaster

Is this, like, a long history you've got with Ribena?

Sikisa

I just prefer Ribena. I think Ribena just reminds me of, like, good old times. I don't know what good old times, but good old times.

James Acaster

Mind, I bet if you cast your mind back you can remember some good old times with some Ribena.

Sikisa

Yes, with a Ribena.

James Acaster

Yes. I mean, you've had it since you were a little kid?

Sikisa

Yes. Who hasn't had a Ribena?

James Acaster

Well, I mean, yes, to be honest, when I was a little kid, I don't think I was even allowed Ribena.

Sikisa

Cawston Press? Just-,

James Acaster

Yes, just Cawston Press, 24, 7.

Ed Gamble

We were a Robinsons house.

James Acaster

Ah right.

Sikisa

Ooh, okay.



Ed Gamble

We were a Robinsons house, mainly Robinsons Apple and Blackcurrant, or Robinsons Barley Water, or Lemon, or Orange. All Robinsons though.

Sikisa

I was a Ribena and a Sarsaparilla.

Ed Gamble

I beg your pardon?

Sikisa

Do you not know Sarsaparilla?

Ed Gamble

No.

Sikisa

You've never heard, no?

James Acaster

I don't think I know what you're talking about.

Sikisa

Have you never heard of Sarsaparilla?

James Acaster

No.

Sikisa

What? Okay. It's still available, because I've got one in my cupboard.

Ed Gamble

So, is that the last one left? When you say it's still available, do we have to come to your house?

Sikisa

It's not ancient. No, you can get it in the stores. It's just a weird, like, diluted drink. It's the same thing as, like, Robinsons or Ribena, but it's just called Sarsaparilla. The only reason why we really like it is because we used to go to this store when I was younger called Jackets. I don't know-, no?

James Acaster

No, I don't know Jackets.

Sikisa

Oh my God.

Ed Gamble

Don't know Jackets.

Sikisa

Jackets was if you-,

James Acaster

We're making you doubt your whole existence here. Does any of this exist?



Sikisa

You are, you are basically. I'm like, 'Am I real? Is this real?'

Ed Gamble

We made an agreement before you arrived that we were going to deny knowledge of anything you said.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Is this actually happening? Are you two real?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

We're on the verge of going, 'What's chicken?'

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Jackets was a, like, fast-food restaurant that basically sold jacket potatoes.

James Acaster

Great.

Ed Gamble

Where was Jackets? Was it, like, a chain?

Sikisa

There was a chain. It closed down in, like, the late nineties, or early nineties, or middle nineties, nineties, and yes, it closed down and I was very upset that it closed down. It's not like I can't bake a jacket potato in my house, but it was just nice to have someone do it for you.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It's a real decision though. To bake a jacket potato, you're like, that's an hour, right?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

But if you suddenly just want a jacket potato, you need somewhere to go and get it.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Yes. It was decent. Like, I really enjoyed it, and I was very sad, but they had Sarsaparilla in their dispensary, and that's what I used to have when I would go there.



James Acaster

Favourite flavour of that?

Sikisa

There's only one flavour, just one flavour.

James Acaster

Okay, and you're not trying to-,

Ed Gamble

What is it? Is it blackcurrant?

Sikisa

I don't actually know what flavour it is.

James Acaster

This is exciting.

Sikisa

It's one of those weird drinks that you have no idea what flavour it is.

Ed Gamble

It's its own flavour.

Sikisa

Yes, it's just its own weird flavour, and it's, like, what it looks like is that someone's-, oh no, I'm not saying it.

Ed Gamble

Oh, that's when you should absolutely say it.

James Acaster

Yes, go for it.

Sikisa

It looks like a demon has pissed, like really dark.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

It's, like, really dark.

Ed Gamble

It looks like a demon's piss?

Sikisa

Yes.

James Acaster

It's a good demon's piss.

Sikisa

Yes.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I'm just want to google it. I want to have a look, and I'll see if you can guess it. It's one single flavour?

Ed Gamble

Well, I don't know why anyone's looking at me. I'm not involved in this. I've never had it. I don't know what it is.

Sikisa

Yes.

James Acaster

You don't want to guess?

Sikisa

Or-,

James Acaster

Oh, hold on, Sarsaparilla. Oh, I think I know what that is, because I remember-,

Ed Gamble

Oh okay, I only know that from The Simpsons.

Sikisa

Sarsaparilla?

James Acaster

Yes, I think I know it from a cartoon. Is that like a-,

Sikisa

Maybe I'm just pronouncing it wrong. You know I'm not good with words.

James Acaster

So, is that like a-,

Ed Gamble

I still don't know what flavour it is.

Sikisa

I call it Sarsaparilla.

James Acaster

Like a root beer? Does it taste like a root beer, or is it vanilla?

Sikisa

It's a root beer.

James Acaster

Because that's what we've found, two things. One says it's vanilla and one says it's a root beer.

Sikisa

It doesn't taste like vanilla.



James Acaster

Okay.

Sikisa

The root beer, it probably tastes more like that than vanilla. Maybe I am pronouncing it wrong.

Ed Gamble

Yes. I only remember a bit in The Simpsons in a saloon where someone says, 'I like Sarsaparilla.'

Sikisa

If it's-, it can't be Sarsaparella.

James Acaster

I've got to drink this. I've got to have it. Yes, I mean, that does look like it says Sarsaparilla.

Ed Gamble

Sarsaparilla.

James Acaster

Sarsaparilla, yes.

Sikisa

Is that a tropical symbol? You won't like it.

James Acaster

Yes. That looks pretty tropical. Yes, that's palm tree on that, Ed. Not for you.

Sikisa

Yes, it's a palm tree. You won't like it, no.

James Acaster

You're having some Ribena.

Sikisa: Ribena

Thank you.

James Acaster

I was a Sainsbury's own brand boy, by the way.

Ed Gamble

Really?

James Acaster

Yes, High Juice and stuff, just so you know.

Sikisa

Good for you.

Ed Gamble

Hi-Juice.

James Acaster

High Juice, yes. I liked Hi-Juice.



Ed Gamble

Did you ever pick up the bottle and go, 'Hi, juice'?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Every day.

James Acaster

Every day.

Sikisa

'Hi juice.'

James Acaster

Poppadoms or bread? Poppadoms or bread, Sikisa, poppadom or bread?

Sikisa

Aggressive, but neither.

James Acaster

Oh, here we go.

Sikisa

I'm really being really rebellious on this podcast. I'm so sorry.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you're skipping. You're skipping a course. Are you skipping it?

Sikisa

I'm not, no. It's not that I want to skip a course. I would like some chips please, and dip.

James Acaster

Yes?

Ed Gamble

What sort of chips?

Sikisa: Like tortilla chips.

Ed Gamble

Like tortilla chips, okay, not potato chips?

Sikisa

Yes. No.

Ed Gamble

No, okay.

James Acaster

Yes, not chip shop chips?

Sikisa

No, too early.



James Acaster

Yes. We're talking, what, like, Doritos? What flavour?

Sikisa

No.

James Acaster

Okay. Okay.

Sikisa

Like, normal light-y, like the proper Mexican chips.

Ed Gamble

Yes. What I'm really enjoying, Sikisa, if I can say, is your sort of MO on the podcast so far is to say something that's quite broad, and then we try to specify, and you get offended by anything that we say. Chips is the broadest thing you could possibly say, in all food.

Sikisa

No, but when you say, 'Chips and dip.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, I know, that's why I thought that was what you meant, but I thought, you know, but you could have like a crisp with dip, like a potato crisp with dip, couldn't you?

Sikisa

Could you?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

What would you dip potato crisp in?

James Acaster

You could have anything.

Ed Gamble

I don't want to bring hummus up again.

James Acaster

Yes, but the way you react is as if you've said a food and we go, 'Oh, are you a cannibal? What? Get the fuck out of here.'

Sikisa

Okay. I'll fight.

Ed Gamble

No, keep it up.

James Acaster

Yes, we enjoyed it.



Ed Gamble

We love it.

James Acaster: So, only one person, I think, has done this hack before, which is Desiree

Ed Gamble

Yes, which is a long time ago.

James Acaster

Yes, a long time ago. I'm glad to see it return, because not enough people hack this part of the podcast. It's there for hacking.

Sikisa

Thank you.

James Acaster

I hate it when people complain to us, going, 'What, poppadom or bread? What a ridiculous choice.' I go, 'Well, hack it then. Get in there and hack it.'

Ed Gamble

Try and hack it.

James Acaster

You're hacking it, and I respect it.

Sikisa

Yes, because also, I find poppadoms and bread a bit too carb-y for the beginning of a meal.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

I would like something that I could, like, maybe just snack on, that's not too heavy but also has flavour, however, I will say that you could have, like, different types of naan bread, but however, can I answer your question? Because you know we were talking about bread?

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

When you are in a restaurant, do you lot ask for olive oil with your bread?

Ed Gamble

Take whatever comes really. Some places do it. They bring the bread with the olive oil and the balsamic vinegar, and some places bring butter. I just take whatever they bring.

James Acaster

I take what they bring, but I will definitely-, I like dipping bread in olive oil and balsamic.

Sikisa

It happened to me the other day, and I was like, 'Oh.' Not, olive-, I've never had it before. Like, I've never had someone bring out the bread, and then my friend was like, 'Can you bring out some olive oil, please?' And I was like, 'Who are you? What is happening right now?' I was like, 'Just because we're in a members-only club, doesn't mean you have to get all fancy up in here.'



Ed Gamble

Right, I see.

James Acaster: Oh, yes, I know, yes, that's -

Sikisa

So, it came out, and I was like, 'Oh, what's happening right now?' And she proper dipped it in. I was like, 'You're having oily bread. Okay.'

Ed Gamble

Are you not a fan of the oily bread?

Sikisa

I tried it. I'm not going to lie. I did try it. It's oily bread. I don't know how to feel about it.

James Acaster

Yes. When you put I like that-, see, I hadn't really thought about it like that, but yes, when you put it like that, oily bread, it doesn't sound appetising.

Ed Gamble

It is though, isn't it?

James Acaster

It is, but then I don't know, I've never eaten it with that thought in my head. I've never been thinking, 'I'm eating oily bread right now,' and maybe that would ruin it for me, and that's what you had in your head when you were eating, yes.

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but that works with any food. If you have a steak and you go, 'I'm having hot cow,' it ruins it, doesn't it?

James Acaster

That sounds nice.

Sikisa

Yes, 'Ooh, would you like a hot cow?' 'Yes please.'

James Acaster

Yes. Now, I want to ask you, and please don't get offended, what dips you're having specifically with the tortilla chips?

Sikisa

I would like mild slash spicy salsa, and a guacamole, please.

James Acaster

Lovely. Now, we've discussed this on the podcast before, and we were talking about home-made stuff at house parties earlier. The dips, are you happy with store-bought dips, or would you prefer for your dream meal home-made ones, and if they're home-made, who's making them?



Sikisa

I would assume that because we're in a restaurant, it would have been home-made. If there's a restaurant buying the store-bought stuff, they should be closed down.

James Acaster

Sure. Oh dear.

Ed Gamble

Oh no. James, you're the waiter. What's happening back there?

James Acaster

Well, luckily for, it's a dream restaurant, so it's just whatever people ask for, so I'm okay. It's literally whatever dip you want back there, in the whole universe.

Sikisa

Well, for me personally, as long as the guacamole is a decent guacamole. Oh, Wahaca do a banging guacamole, do a banging, oh, sexy guacamole.

James Acaster

Yes, it is quite sexy.

Sikisa

It's very sexy. I don't like watery salsa. I like salsa that is quite chunky, but not too chunky, but enough that you can actually, like, see the tomato on your tortilla chip, with a little bit of spice and chilli in it. Thank you.

James Acaster

Yes. We were talking about store-bought guacamole the other day. You know what we call it?

Sikisa

What do you call it?

James Acaster

Shrekaria.

Ed Gamble

Shrekaria

Sikisa

Why?

James Acaster

Because it's like Shrek's diarrhoea.

Sikisa

Oh wow. Okay, store-bought guacamole is Shrekaria?

James Acaster

Yes, I'm trying to get that-,

Ed Gamble

Shrekaria, yes. You'll never be able to forget that.

Sikisa

I'm not.



Ed Gamble

If you go to a party and they've got store-bought guacamole out, and they've just taken the lid off, all you're going to think is you're going to think of Shrek on the toilet, not having a good day, straining away.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Oh, that's really annoying, because after this I wanted to go home and have home-made guacamole. Now-,

Ed Gamble

Home-made's fine.

James Acaster

Home-made's fine.

Sikisa

Just store-bought?

James Acaster

Store-bought.

Ed Gamble

Home-made's a health day for Shrek.

James Acaster

Looks lovely. The store-bought one, that looks like-, it's too pale.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

It's too smooth. There's nothing going on there. It just looks like it's rushed out of Shrek's butt.

Sikisa

There are no chunks, you mean?

Ed Gamble

It's gone straight through him.

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes. What would he say again?

James Acaster

Well, we all know what he'd say.

Ed Gamble

Shrek?



James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

How would he do it though?

James Acaster

'Oh, Donkey. Oh, the Shrekaria's coming. Donkey.'

Ed Gamble

Even he calls it Shrekaria.

James Acaster

'Donkey, I've got bad Shrekaria, Donkey. You better pass me the toilet-, oh no, Donkey. It's coming out a bit, coming out of it so smooth, the Shrekaria. Oh.'

Sikisa

I'm so glad they cut that out of Shrek.

James Acaster

Yes. Your dream starter?

Sikisa

This was so much problems for me, but I'd decided that I was going to have-, see, now even though I'm about to say it, I don't want to say it.

James Acaster

How many things are you torn between?

Sikisa

Right, so it was between sushi and dim sum with scallops-, sorry, and scallops. Not with scallops, and scallops.

Ed Gamble

So, really you're torn between sushi, dim sum and scallops, but what you've done is you've lumped two of them together to try and get away with having two in one, right?

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Sikisa

Well, that's what I would do anyway.

James Acaster

Sure.

Sikisa

Because I really love sushi. Sushi's one of the things I absolutely love, and me and my best friend share our love of sushi to the point where-, do you share sushi?

James Acaster

Do we?



Sikisa

Like, if you were out with someone and you were going to have sushi?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

You know we don't actually live together, right?

Sikisa

I know, but, like, I'm assuming you lot eat together.

James Acaster

Have I? I think I've shared sushi in the past. I think I have. To be honest, most of the time I'm having sushi, I'm the only one who likes it at the-, you know, like, I'm often with people who don't really like it, so I'll just have some, and I'm rarely with someone else who really likes it.

Ed Gamble

Why are you in a sushi restaurant then?

James Acaster

Well usually, like for example, Sticks'n'Sushi, which I like that place-,

Sikisa

It's amazing.

James Acaster

Yes, but that's got other stuff on the menu.

Ed Gamble

Yes, true.

James Acaster

People go there with me, and then I go really crazy for the-, I can't remember which one it is, what it's called. It's got the word 'devil' in it, I think, not devil's piss, but, like, it's the best one.

Sikisa

I order that on Deliveroo and it's the best thing ever.

Ed Gamble

Oh, but it's so lucky to live near enough a Sticks'n'Sushi to order that on Deliveroo. I would go mad. That cauliflower, the cauliflower in the black truffle sauce is just incredible.

Sikisa

Oh my God, it's the best. Oh my God. It is the best thing ever. I have that with the ebi bites.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

And the tempura sushi. It's the-,



James Acaster

Yes, the tempura sushi, because the way that they do the coating on it with that bubbled kind of coating, it's so satisfying, it's so good.

Sikisa

Yes, so this is why I love sushi, but me and my best friend have a habit of spending way too much, it's a money thing, with sushi, even though we don't have money. We always end up spending way too much money, because we both will order the same thing, but instead of sharing, we'll just order, like, my own one and her own one, and then we get full-up but we still want to eat all the sushi, and then we're just like, 'Why have we ordered so much sushi?' People look at us like, 'You're never going to finish this,' and we're like, 'Watch us work,' so yes, but yes, I love sushi, but also I love dim sum and scallops.

James Acaster

Yes, so dim sum, what are you getting at a dim sum place?

Sikisa

It's normally, like, the prawn and pork dim sums are lovely.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Sikisa

I love prawns generally. I love seafood in anything I eat, but, like, in a dim sum, it's very nice. Crab as well, I do love a bit of crab. That sounds really wrong, but scallops-, I was about to say scollops - scallops-,

James Acaster

I go between both.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I to and for.

James Acaster

I say scollops sometimes. Sometimes I say scallops. People say that about me.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Sikisa

What, that you go in between things?

James Acaster

Yes. People say-, they call me Jimmy Two Scollops.

Ed Gamble

Yes, or-,

James Acaster

Jimmy Two Scallops.



Ed Gamble

I know what you mean. I think I to and fro as well, scollops, scallops. I can't even work out which one I would say now.

James Acaster

No.

Sikisa

Scallops.

James Acaster

I think I say scallops, but then now I'd saying it, it sounds stupid.

Sikisa

Scollops.

Ed Gamble

I think I say scallops.

Sikisa

Benito?

James Acaster

I might say scollops. He's a veggie though, so he's hardly ever saying it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, he barely says it.

James Acaster

He's only ever said, like, 'Stop throwing those scollops at me.' That's all he's ever said.

Ed Gamble

Yes. How do you want your scollops slash scallops cooked?

Sikisa

Are there different ways to cook them?

Ed Gamble

Again, this has happened again, hasn't it?

James Acaster

Uh oh.

Ed Gamble

So, I've asked you a completely, what I would consider, normal and innocent question.

Sikisa

Sorry. Okay. Right, I would like it cooked in a garlic butter.

Ed Gamble

See, how was I to know that?

Sikisa

Sorry.



James Acaster

I would not have guessed that.

Sikisa

I thought you mean like, you know how you've got, like, steaks, medium-,

James Acaster

Sure.

Ed Gamble

Yes, right, okay, but that's also an interesting question because scollops slash scallops, you can cook them all the way through but that is overdone. You want to see a little bit of, like, translucence in the middle of a scallop. It needs to be, like, medium, right, essentially?

Sikisa

Yes, that's the perfect scallop, scallop.

Ed Gamble

But some people are weird about that.

Sikisa

But they don't know good food.

Ed Gamble

There we go.

Sikisa

But, like, the scallops, you have to cook it perfect. Slightly underdone-, is it slightly-, yes, just slight, slight-,

Ed Gamble

That's how you have to ask for it in a restaurant.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Yes, slight.

Ed Gamble

Ah, I know what you mean. Thank you.

Sikisa

Underdone is perfect.

James Acaster

So now, you're torn between these three. You still haven't made a decision, and I know you think you're getting away with this, we're going to let you have all three of them, but we cant.

Sikisa

Really? It's my perfect restaurant.

Jame

Acaster: Well, I would say I would let you have a scallop slash scollop with one of the other ones, but I don't think we can do a tray of sushi and dim sum for the starter.



Ed Gamble

Yes. No, definitely not.

Sikisa

What if I called it-

Ed Gamble

There we go, yes.

Sikisa

A platter of seafood.

James Acaster

A platter of seafood?

Ed Gamble

But if I heard that there was a platter of seafood, I would assume it would just be lots of different-, like, some prawns, some oysters, some scallops.

James Acaster

Yes. I wouldn't think sushi and dim sum and dumplings.

Ed Gamble

I wouldn't expect sushi and dim sum. If I ordered a platter of seafood and they brought some dim sum and some sushi, I'd be like, 'This is misrepresented on the menu. What the hell have you done?'

James Acaster

Yes, 'What?'

Sikisa

Fine, okay.

James Acaster

I feel bad putting our foot down.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Sikisa

You are. You are quite strict on here.

James Acaster

I feel bad about it.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

But I mean, you know, I reckon if this was a main course, I would let you get away with that.

Ed Gamble

Maybe if you'd not come in here and been so rude about our white party food, then-,



James Acaster

Yes, because this is Off Menu, the ultimate white party. You come in here.

Ed Gamble

You can pull it back if you have vol-au-vents for main course.

Sikisa

Scallops, definitely, please, and dim sum.

James Acaster

Yes, okay great. That sounds great.

Ed Gamble

I think that's the best pairing as well.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I think scallops and sushi would feel a bit weird, like cooked scallops and then sushi, although have you had raw scallop at a sushi place?

Sikisa

No.

Ed Gamble

Oh my God, it's so good.

James Acaster

Yes?

Ed Gamble

It's so good. I went to this omakase thing and he did raw scallop and cut it-, I can't remember how many times. It was a significant amount of times like eighteen times, like, cross-cut it so it softens it up and tenderises it, just all in one. It just melts in the mouth. It was incredible.

James Acaster

Wow. Main course now though, and I'm thinking, 'Ah, I already-, I can smell a hack coming around the corner.'

Sikisa

You would be incorrect. I am going to pick something called souse. It is a traditional-, it would be West Indian, in some other West Indian countries, but it's mainly Bajan, so it's the country where I'm from, Barbados. We have it traditionally on a Saturday for lunch and for dinner. So, it's called souse, and it is-, it's called pudding and souse, the full version, and the pudding is grated sweet potato which has been shaped and steamed, and the souse itself is pickled pig, or pickled pork. The reason why I said 'pig' is because traditionally, you would use the whole pig, including ears, snout, trotters, tongue, but I-,

James Acaster

Butt?



Sikisa

I have done that once, and no. I have eaten trotters. I've got no problem with trotters, but everything else I've been like, 'Ugh,' so I normally would have it with lean pork. So, it's pickled pork with, like, cucumbers, peppers. It's slightly spicy, and then you would have it served with breadfruit.

James Acaster

Is it all, like, portioned up? So, the pig, do you get it all, like-, is it on, like, a big tray all portioned up, and you choose the bits you want, or is it always on the-,

Sikisa

No, it's just served how it is.

James Acaster

What are you looking at me like that for?

Ed Gamble

I'm trying to work out what you're imagining.

James Acaster

Sikisa was saying that the whole pig is used.

Ed Gamble

Are you imagining a whole pig in, like, a vat of vinegar being pickled?

Sikisa

Oh, whole pig-, yes, are you-,

Ed Gamble

Are you imagining like The Shape of Water, you walk in and there's like, just a whole pig bobbing around in-,

James Acaster

No, I'm not imagining that, I'm just saying if the options are, you know, bits of the whole pig, I would think that if you were doing that, having it that way, you'd want it all, like, laid out there, and you can pick what bits you want.

Sikisa: Oh, I see what you-, you like it how they do, like, a hog?

James Acaster

Yes, I guess, but I just want to-,

Ed Gamble

Are you thinking, like, an autopsy, like-,

James Acaster

Not laid out like the actual pig.

Ed Gamble

Like, all arranged in the shape of the pig, yes?

James Acaster

Yes, sure.

Sikisa

You just go up and the pick out what you want and stuff like that.



James Acaster

Yes, I'd like that.

Ed Gamble

It's a race for the middle, essentially.

Sikisa

Yes. No, unfortunately not, no. It's all already, like, cut up and boiled, but I've accidentally had the traditional version, and I was like, 'Oh crap, I've got tongue in my food.'

James Acaster

Yes, that's what I meant. Like, do you get to choose the bits you want, or is it all just, 'Bang, there's the whole thing,' and it's like you don't know what you're going to get?

Sikisa

No, but it's all-,

James Acaster

So, I don't think I've ever had pickled pork before. What's the flavour like?

Sikisa

I can't really describe it, because it's normal for me. For me, I would eat it all day, every day.

Ed Gamble

Does it taste, like, briney and pickley?

Sikisa

No.

Ed Gamble

So, no, it doesn't taste like-,

Sikisa

No, it doesn't, because the pig itself is boiled, and the cucumber and the peppers give it some sort of sweetness to it, and then when you pull it with the pudding and the breadfruit, it just brings the whole meal together.

Ed Gamble

So, is the pork pickled for a long time, or is it a quick mix with, like, the vinegar and stuff, or is it-,

Sikisa

No vinegar.

Ed Gamble

No vinegar? How do you pickle it then?

Sikisa

So, we say 'pickled'. Oh, I've realised what you lot mean. When I say 'pickled', our pickling isn't you lot's pickling. When I say 'pickled', I mean you boil it and then you serve it with the peppers and the chopped-up cucumber, and the hot pepper chillies. That is our pickling.

Ed Gamble

Right, okay, cool.



Sikisa

So, that's what we say is pickling.

Ed Gamble

So, it's not a preserving thing or anything like that?

Sikisa

No, not at all, no.

Ed Gamble

Okay, that makes more sense.

James Acaster

Apologies.

Sikisa

No, apologies from me, my bad.

Ed Gamble

No-one's at fault here, guys.

James Acaster

Do you remember when you gave me a lift home from a gig once, Sikisa, and we lived quite close to each other at the time, and you were saying about the good Caribbean restaurants that are around, and I was like, 'Have you been to Rum Kitchen?' And then you really laughed for ages?

Sikisa

Oh yes, I do remember that, and I felt really bad after you left the car, because you were talking about Brixton.

James Acaster

No.

Sikisa

I obviously have lived in South London all my life, and, like, Brixton is my closest biggest town, and you were in the car talking about, 'Yes, I'm going to have my birthday soon. I'm going to take some of my friends to Rum Kitchen.' I was like, 'Why would you do that?' I was like, 'Why would you literally do that to yourself?' I'm like, 'There's Wings 'n' Tingz around the corner. Go to a genuine, authentic West Indian restaurant.' I remember you tweeted me, because we hadn't chatted much apart from that one occasion. That was the first time we properly met.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

I was on my way home, and I was like, 'Do you want a lift?' Because you were carrying really big bags. I felt really bad, because you were talking about Brixton. I was like, 'Mmm, yes, yes, okay.' Then you mentioned Rum Kitchen and I was like, 'This boy. No.' Then I was like, 'I need to educate you about Wings 'n' Tingz,' and then you tweeted me and said, 'I should have listened to you. I should have gone to Wings 'n' Tingz,' and I was like, 'Yes, you should have,' because genuine genuine West Indian restaurants are very hard to find. They've got really good rum in Rum Kitchen, hence the Rum Kitchen, but-

James Acaster

Yes.



Ed Gamble

Yes, don't bother with the kitchen.

Sikisa

Yes. I feel bad for them, because obviously I feel like a lot of people will go there and will think, 'This is what genuine West Indian food tastes like,' but I'm like, 'Support the small businesses.'

Ed Gamble

I go to Turtle Bay. That's more authentic.

Sikisa

Why do you-, you're doing this on purpose. You're actually doing-,

Ed Gamble

I go to Turtle Bay, and I have some lovely jerk halloumi. That's what-,

Sikisa

Okay. Ladies and gentlemen who are listening to this podcast, I'm so sorry, we have to cut this episode short, because Sikisa has now left the building. Why would you? No. I will say, I've been to Turtle Bay. I've given it a go at least three times, and the first time I was like, 'Oh, this is alright, this is cool,' and then I feel like they changed their menu the second time I went, and it just went downhill from there. If you want traditional Trinidadian food, go to Roti Joupa in Clapham, which is absolutely banging. They do proper traditional Trinidadian rotis. I walk is there and they already know what I want. I just think, if you're going to have, like, a traditional West Indian food, you would go to the West Indies obviously. Well-,

Ed Gamble

Number one.

Sikisa

Number one, go to the West Indies.

Ed Gamble

That's number one recommendation for restaurants.

Sikisa

Like, you should go to somewhere that is a small business, or that someone's gran is in the kitchen who was there.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Like, food from the Caribbean is so diverse, like, people will obviously think about jerk chicken when you're talking about Caribbean food, or, like, rice and peas, but not the whole of the West Indies do that. Like for example, souse is our traditional Saturday meal in Barbados, and our traditional dish in general is called cuckoo and flying fish. So, and none of what people think is Caribbean is that.

James Acaster

I want to hear more about this flying fish dish?



Sikisa

Cuckoo and flying fish is again a Bajan traditional dish. If you don't know, we have recently become independent from the Queen in Barbados.

James Acaster

Congrats.

Sikisa

Thank you. Rihanna got a medal for singing. It was nice, and what my mum did was cooked traditional Bajan food the whole weekend that the celebration was on. So, I came home and there was, like, souse, cuckoo and flying fish, sweet bread in the house, and I was having the best weekend ever. So, cuckoo is made out of cornmeal and okra, and flying fish is a fish normally found in Barbados. It's running out, like, basically now. It's very hard to get flying fish nowadays.

Ed Gamble

Because they've all learnt how to fly.

James Acaster

They've all learnt how to fly-

Sikisa

Well, they do actually fly. If you google it-, google it.

Ed Gamble

They're big jumpers though, aren't they really, yes?

Sikisa

They're big jumpers basically. That's why they're called flying fish. So yes, flying fish is very nice. You can fry it. You can steam it. It's served with a very nice gravy. It's one of my favourite things in the world. I would have picked that as my other dish.

Ed Gamble

You mentioned macaroni pie earlier as well.

Sikisa

That's my side.

Ed Gamble

Oh, okay.

James Acaster

Well, let's get onto it. Let's get onto it.

Ed Gamble

Let's hear about it.

James Acaster

Let's get onto this macaroni pie side, because I am glad also that this has come up again, because when you said it earlier, we were too busy being cheeky little boys, pretending that we love sausage rolls, and we didn't get to talk about macaroni pie properly.

Sikisa

I felt like something was wrong.



James Acaster

Well, I do like sausage rolls, but not cold party sausage rolls. I'm not going to make out-, but macaroni pie as a side, this is very exciting, because I don't think I've had a macaroni pie.

Sikisa

You lived in South London for how long? We had a conversation in the park about you going to authentic West Indian restaurants, and what, this was like two-and-a-half years ago, three years ago?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, and by the way, he did take his friends to the Rum Kitchen for his birthday.

James Acaster

Yes, I did, and that's why I tweeted saying-,

Sikisa

Yes, I know, that's why he tweeted me.

James Acaster

That's why I tweeted her saying, 'You were right. I should have-,'

Ed Gamble

We didn't have food there though, did we? We had drinks.

James Acaster

No, we actually didn't have. We just had drinks at the end of the night.

Sikisa

Because you looked at the menu and were like-,

James Acaster

Well, what I did that day was I went around Brixton Village for a whole day. So, we met at Tea and Toast Café in the morning for breakfast, and then all day-,

Ed Gamble

Which is authentic white food.

James Acaster

I'd say yes, fair. I mean, that's as authentic as it gets.

Sikisa

Can we cut this whole bit out about me cussing white food, because they're going to be on me all day?

James Acaster

Yes, and then we went up to a bunch of different places. I think we just ended in Rum Kitchen for drinks.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



Sikisa

Fair enough, no.

James Acaster

I remember being in Rum Kitchen and having one too many drinks, and starting to think dark thoughts and being like, 'It's time to go home. You've ruined your birthday. Well done. You've been out all day. You had a brilliant time. You had one drink too many and your brain's gone, "Everyone in this party hates you."' It's like, 'Right, go home. They spent a whole day with you, James.'

Sikisa

What did you have there?

James Acaster

Don't go there, for anything. I think that's why I tweeted you saying, 'Oh yes, we should have gone to Wings 'n' Tingz.'

Sikisa

Wings 'n' Tingz, yes.

James Acaster

Yes, that was the low point of the day. Sorry, ruined it for myself.

Sikisa

Did you have a rum there?

James Acaster

Yes. I mean, whatever I had, it sounded delicious and it tasted delicious, but I'd been eating all day, and drinking all day but not really noticing it, and then when we got there, just suddenly like, 'Woah.'

Sikisa

Ah, okay. Were you mixing your drinks?

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Okay, that's probably what happened.

James Acaster

Yes. It was like, 'This is my birthday. It's my birthday, so nothing counts. The rules don't apply.'

Sikisa

Oh no, wait, when you said that you had to leave, what time did you have to leave?

James Acaster

Pretty late. It was as they were shutting. We were kind of the only people there in the corner by that point, and there were quite a few of us, and I think we were all thinking, 'This is one place too many,' by the time we got there really.

Sikisa

Did you stay?

Ed Gamble

I stayed until the bitter end I think.



James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I remember my now wife, then girlfriend, came to meet us. She came and met us at Rum Kitchen.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

She saw us outside and she was like, 'You were fine when we were outside Rum Kitchen,' and then we went in and I went to the bar and turned around, and I was suddenly completely hammered. Like, from the walk outside into Rum Kitchen, I was like, 'Hey, oh, I'm so glad you could make it.'

Sikisa

Just the smell of rum.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

'Yes, let's go, we're going in here, we're going in here,' and then two seconds later I was just like, 'Who are you?'

Sikisa

Just the smell of rum just hitting your face and you were like, 'Oh my God, this is too much.'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes. There was a shift. There was a shift, but the macaroni pie, this sounds like a much happier time than our Rum Kitchen experience.

Sikisa

Oh, I love a macaroni pie, and it has to, for me personally, it has to be a home-made macaroni pie. It's not macaroni cheese, yes? No. It's macaroni pie, and there've been some banging macaroni pies I've had in my lifetime, including ones that I've made myself. It has to be a genuine, home-made macaroni pie, and it's got to involve onions, it's got to involve potentially sweet peppers in it all grated into it, it's got to be baked properly so the cheese just melts, so when you dip into it-, oh.

Ed Gamble

Now, correct me if I'm wrong, because I have had macaroni pie.

Sikisa

Oh, well done.

Ed Gamble

So, the difference between, like, a mac and cheese and macaroni pie, mac and cheese is quite saucy, it's quite liquid-y. Macaroni pie has so much cheese it it that it can just stand up by itself, right?

Sikisa

Yes, if you, like, threw a ball at it, it would just bounce off.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Oh, like a quiche?

Sikisa

No. When you bake a macaroni pie, or when you make a macaroni pie, you don't make it saucy saucy-,

Ed Gamble

But there's egg in it, right? There is egg in it, I think.

Sikisa

Yes, you can whack an egg in it in order to keep it stable. You don't have to. I don't put egg in mine, but I know people do, just to give it an extra texture into it, and so it bakes properly. You put so much grated cheese into it, what you really want is the top to be solid and then when you put your spoon into it, that how it's still got its shape, that you can cut into a perfect square, so on your plate it looks like the cheese is just about baked.

James Acaster

Just about baked?

Sikisa

Yes.

James Acaster

How many types of cheese are you putting in there? Just the one?

Sikisa

No. Me personally, so I've got this thing about cheese in general, because my mum suffers from migraines when she eats mature cheddar or, like, anything apart from mild cheese, so in my household, we never really had anything apart from mild cheese, but when I got older I experimented, but generally you should have mild cheese and then the yellow cheese in a macaroni pie.

James Acaster

Right, yes, bring them together.

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It's so good, yes.

Sikisa

I love it. It's the best thing ever. I could eat that all day every day, and I probably did for a while. Like, I've made, like, a big tray of macaroni pie just for myself.

James Acaster

Do you want your own home-made macaroni pie in your dream meal, or do you want someone else's home-made macaroni pie?

Sikisa

I feel like if I say my own, I feel like I'm being like, 'I make the best macaroni pie in the world.'



Ed Gamble

No, it's great.

James Acaster

Some people choose their own stuff on this pod.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Sikisa

No. It's very difficult for me to pick whose macaroni pie I would want to put in there, but I generally want someone's home-made macaroni pie. So, whenever I go to, like, a christening, or like a house party, or like a wedding, or funeral, and someone's got macaroni pie, that's coming home with me.

Ed Gamble

So, you would go to a funeral and take the macaroni pie from the wake?

Sikisa

Oh God.

James Acaster

Just to be clear.

Sikisa

Why did you get me on this podcast? You know what? I've had so many people being like, 'Oh, you're going on the podcast. Oh, that's amazing. I'm so looking forward to hearing it,' and now, like, I want to die.

Ed Gamble

Well, if you do, I'll be at the funeral with a big spoon.

Sikisa

With a macaroni pie and Tupperware.

James Acaster

Thank you. May she rest in peace. Goodbye.

Ed Gamble

I've got to go, guys.

James Acaster

Dream drink. Now, you've already hacked the water course, so I'm assuming that's because you're making way for-, you're maybe torn between a dream drink. You've had something early doors, but now we're onto the headliner.

Sikisa

I like a good cocktail. I've made several cocktails in my life, because I used to work in a pub, and would basically when I was bored just experiment with cocktails behind the bar. One of my favourites was what I called a Dr Pepper, which was half beer, a double shot of Disaronno, topped with Coke.

James Acaster

Wow, and is this a Sikisa original?



Sikisa

I think someone told me about it, because it was banging, and I remember having three of them and being wasted at my birthday party once. If you've never had it, try it, but what I would pick for my dream drink is what is called a June bug. It is a cocktail which has melon liqueur in it. TGI, when it was hip-

James Acaster

TGI Fridays?

Sikisa

TGI Fridays, yes.

Ed Gamble

I love this. We've spent, I'd say three-quarters of the podcast going, 'Don't go to the chains,' and then we get to your drink and you go, 'This drink at this place, TGI Fridays.'

James Acaster

When it was hip though.

Ed Gamble

Oh yes, which was never.

Sikisa

When it was hip.

James Acaster

Remember when TGIs was a swinging place?

Sikisa

No, don't lie to yourself.

Ed Gamble

Yes, when it was just them and Frankie & Benny's, the new kids on the block.

Sikisa

Don't lie to yourself. When you had to have, like, a party and a gathering, don't act like you didn't go to TGI Fridays.

James Acaster

Well honestly, hand on heart, I've only been once to a TGI Fridays, however it was my brother-in-law's stag do-

Sikisa

No, that's even worse.

James Acaster

Still to this day, I remember that they were some of the best fries I've ever had. I'm not joking. The fries blew my mind.

Ed Gamble

How have you only been once then?

James Acaster

I've just never had a reason to go again.



Ed Gamble

The fries?

James Acaster

The fries, yes, the best fries I've ever had, yes. 'Well, let's go in and just get the fries,' you know, but the seasoning on the fries was insane. At some point I turned to everyone and went, 'These fries are insane. Does everyone think these fries are brilliant?' Now I'm like, 'Oh God, don't talk to those guys, like the bride's brother.'

Ed Gamble

I think it's crazy to name a restaurant after one day, because you want to be open all week, right?

James Acaster

Yes, you'd think so. You would think in that business meeting they were like, 'Are we kind of sending out the message that from Saturday through to Thursday, this is not the place to be?'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Sikisa

Yes, it's all about Friday.

James Acaster

Yes, 'We're going to get everyone-,'

Ed Gamble

It'll seem packed on Fridays and just so quiet the rest of the week.

James Acaster

Yes, but you like to go there and get a June bug.

Sikisa

Well, I haven't been there in about eight years.

Ed Gamble

Because it's not hip anymore?

Sikisa

It's not hip anymore.

James Acaster

No, so melon liqueur's in there. What else have we got?

Sikisa

Yes. I have no idea.

James Acaster

No other flavours?

Sikisa

I have no idea.

Ed Gamble

Is it a long-,



Sikisa

There are other flavours in it.

James Acaster: I'm going to tell you now-,

Sikisa

Tell me now?

Ed Gamble

Benito's - he's going to start paying for it.

James Acaster

Melon liqueur is top of the list here, one part melon liqueur. Half a part coconut rum.

Sikisa

Yes.

James Acaster

Half a part banana liqueur.

Sikisa

Yes.

James Acaster

Two parts-, oh, so it's not actually top-, pineapple juice.

Sikisa

Yes.

James Acaster

One part lemon juice.

Sikisa

Oh sorry, it's tropical. You can't have it.

James Acaster

Uh oh.

Ed Gamble

Now, this is the sort of tropical flavour that I'm talking about. It's too sweet.

Sikisa

Oh, is it?

Ed Gamble

It's too sweet for me, I think.

Sikisa

Is it?

Ed Gamble

Yes. I think just-,

Sikisa

Oh yes, I'm a sweet kind of a person, and I can't-,



James Acaster

Good on you.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think it's the coconut and pineapple all mixed together, but-

James Acaster

What you looking at me like that for?

Ed Gamble

What I like from a drink is to have one and then immediately have another one. That sounds like the sort of thing that I would have one of and be like, 'I can't manage another one.'

Sikisa

No, you would love it?

Ed Gamble

No? Yes?

Sikisa

You would love it.

James Acaster

Yes, you would love it.

Ed Gamble

I want to try it.

Sikisa

When you have the Off Menu party, we'll make it.

James Acaster

That's what you'll bring.

Ed Gamble

Alright, yes.

James Acaster

The June bug from TGI Fridays.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you'll bring that.

Sikisa

Yes, I'll specifically get one of the bartenders from TGI Fridays.

James Acaster

Yes. While you're in there, get some fries.

Sikisa

Ooh, good shout.



Ed Gamble

Sikisa, if we have an Off Menu house party, you're not invited, because you're going to take all the food away with you, okay? We've established this.

James Acaster

Also, most the food at the house party, we'll have already got from your funeral the day before. It sounds like a delicious drink. I would love it.

Ed Gamble

You'd love it, yes.

Sikisa

Yes. I would prefer it without ice, because I don't like ice in drinks.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

Okay.

James Acaster

Yes, unless it's the flavour of the drink itself.

Sikisa: I don't need the ice. Too much. Normally when people make cocktails in bars, they love to whack a lot of ice in it because they want to dilute the drink, and I'm like, 'No,' and then you've got to have it with a plastic straw. I'm sorry, I know we're trying to save-

James Acaster

Wow.

Ed Gamble

That is-, okay, so quite a mix of firsts.

Sikisa

Or metal straw.

Ed Gamble

Quite a mix of firsts for the Off Menu podcast today. The first person to say they give food to homeless people, and there we go, you're up then. Morally, you're up.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

You've brought it crashing back down to Earth as the first person I've met who's demanded a plastic straw.

James Acaster

'It has to be a plastic straw,' and we're back to neutral again.

Sikisa

No, there's a reason why.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



Sikisa

Okay. So, there's a reason why.

James Acaster

It's going to have to be a pretty good reason.

Ed Gamble

Because you hate nature.

Sikisa

No, I don't hate nature.

James Acaster

It's going to have to be a pretty good reason, mate.

Sikisa

Look, I know that we've got to save the planet, and I do appreciate paper straws. I'm putting this hand on heart, I appreciate paper straws, however, unless you're giving me five of them-,

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, sure.

Sikisa

Just give me one plastic one, and I will recycle it.

Ed Gamble

Will you though? Will you?

James Acaster

Will you?

Sikisa

Yes, I will. Yes, I've got plastic straws in my house that I recycle.

Ed Gamble

How many have you got though?

James Acaster

You're going to have to tweet a photo of that, of your straw draw.

Sikisa

I will do.

Ed Gamble

Have you ever had a drink with a plastic straw and then used it again?

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Are you telling me the truth?



Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

How many plastic straws do you have at home?

James Acaster

Sikisa's looking you dead in the eyes here.

Sikisa

I've got two in my cutlery draw.

Ed Gamble

And you use them all the time?

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Do you take them out with you?

Sikisa

No, that's the one thing I don't do.

James Acaster

So you bring it back?

Ed Gamble

When you're out, do you demand a plastic straw?

Sikisa

No, because most places don't have plastic straws anymore.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's true.

James Acaster

Sure.

Sikisa

Unless you go and get bubble tea. They sometimes have-,

Ed Gamble

You need the big, the massive plastic straw, yes.

Sikisa

By the way, bubble tea, love it, apart from the bubbles.

James Acaster

Sure.

Ed Gamble

Okay. I'm going to blow your mind. Have you heard of tea?



James Acaster

We arrive at your dream desert. I'm relaxed, because you said you like sweet things.

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And slagged off cheese quite early doors at parties, so cheese boards I don't think are your thing, right?

Sikisa

I know that you love the cheese.

Ed Gamble

I love the cheese.

Sikisa

And you don't love the cheese.

James Acaster

Hate cheeseboards. My girlfriend's mum bought me a chocolate cheeseboard for Christmas.

Sikisa

Was it chocolate cheese?

James Acaster

No, it wasn't cheese at all, but it was like-

Sikisa

It was just chocolate?

James Acaster

So, I opened it and I thought she'd got me a cheeseboard, but actually, it was all made of chocolate and it was fine.

Ed Gamble

She's a brave person.

Sikisa

Were you like, 'What is she thinking?'

James Acaster

Yes, but because she's familiar with the podcast, so then I did do the reaction of going like, 'This is disgusting,' really yelling and stuff, but yes.

Sikisa

Okay. So, I hate when I go into a restaurant and I see on the menu that there's a cheeseboard as a starter and desert.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Sikisa

Why-, this time I'm getting really aggressive with the table. Why does there need to be both?



Ed Gamble

Do it.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

What they should do is see how many people are at the table, don't have it on the menu, just see, 'Oh, there's four of you at the table. Would you like a separate menu, which includes a cheeseboard, which you may enjoy if you are rubbish?'

Ed Gamble

Now, I don't think I've ever seen a menu where you can get a cheeseboard as a starter and as a desert, because if I had seen it, I would absolutely do that.

Sikisa

Oh mate, no.

James Acaster

Yes, you would, you'd do a bookended-

Sikisa

I thought we were going to be friends.

Ed Gamble

I'd bookend it. I'd bookend it.

Sikisa

No mate, why would you do that?

Ed Gamble

Cheese is great.

Sikisa

What is your favourite type of cheese?

Ed Gamble

Oh, it changes all the time.

James Acaster

Oh, here we go, Sikisa.

Sikisa

See, this is my problem, because why are there so many types of cheeses?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Well, why are there so many types of wine? Why are there so many types of anything? Because it's a skill, and you can get different flavours. Stilton, got a lovely bit of Stilton in the fridge. Can't wait to eat that.



James Acaster

Oh no, he's going to list cheese. Oh, he's going to list the cheeses.

Ed Gamble

Comté, Comté, aged-, you could age it for different amounts of months, 3 months, 6 months, 18 months, 24 months. It takes on a different flavour profile every single time.

James Acaster

Listen. Months now.

Sikisa

Are you going to a TED Talk about cheese?

Ed Gamble

I could do a TED Talk. I could do an Ed Talk.

James Acaster

Yes, I was going to say an Ed Talk. Oh Jesus, fuck my life.

Sikisa

Okay, we're going to have an Ed Talk. It should be one episode. Why has that not happened? You should have one episode where Ed just talks about cheese.

James Acaster

Yes, absolutely.

Ed Gamble

Yes, number one in the charts. Most successful episode ever.

James Acaster

I'll back that.

Sikisa

I've never understood the concept of why there are so many cheeses, and I asked people at work about this, and one woman walked in and went, 'What you talking about?' And then I went, 'Cheese,' and she went, 'Oh, what kind of cheese are we talking about? Are we talking about North cheese, South cheese, soft cheese, hard cheese?'

Ed Gamble

I love this lady.

James Acaster

North cheese and South cheese.

Sikisa

I was like, 'Oh my God, no. There's too much. Why?'

Ed Gamble

I love how quickly you stopped listening to that woman that you thought she said, 'North cheese and South cheese.'

Sikisa

She did.



Ed Gamble

No, she didn't.

Sikisa

She did.

Ed Gamble

She didn't, Sikisa.

Sikisa

She did.

Ed Gamble

You didn't like what she was saying, so you completely blocked her out and made it up.

James Acaster

She said, 'North cheese, South cheese, happy cheese, sad cheese.' Dream desert?

Sikisa

It will be an apple and blackberry pie.

James Acaster

Lovely.

Ed Gamble

I thought we were going down a crumble route there, and then we swung back around and hit pie.

Sikisa

I know, I gave you a little pause, didn't I?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Did you consider crumble?

Sikisa

No.

James Acaster

No. Why?

Sikisa

No, and it's got to be with, I'm going to say cream, I'm going to say double cream.

James Acaster

Double cream.

Sikisa

Yes.

James Acaster

Were you torn for a second between other stuff?



Sikisa

Custard, brandy custard though.

James Acaster

Oh yes?

Sikisa

But I really do love an apple and blackberry pie. I don't really like it if it's just go apple in it. I just think it's a bit too bland. I do make a banging pie, I will say, like apple and strawberry, sexy.

James Acaster

That's very sexy. You did a little wink to Ed there when you said, 'Sexy.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, sexy apple and strawberry pie.

James Acaster

It was like me and Benito weren't even in the room.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Well, you guys wouldn't understand how sexy an apple and strawberry pie is.

James Acaster

No.

Ed Gamble

Sikisa knows. I've fucked a pie.

James Acaster

That'd be-,

Sikisa

Why? Why have you got to ruin it? Oh, you've got to ruin it?

James Acaster

He fucked it. Is Jason Biggs all grown up now?

Ed Gamble

No. Listen to this. See if this ruins it for you.

James Acaster

It probably will.

Ed Gamble

You want custard or cream. You know, in some places-,

Sikisa

Don't do it.

Ed Gamble

It's traditional to have apple pie, just apple pie, with a bit of mature cheddar.

James Acaster

What?



Sikisa

How did we get cheese into this?

Ed Gamble

There are places in the North where there's an old phrase, and this is true, I've not made this up, 'Apple pie without cheese is like a kiss without a squeeze.'

James Acaster

What the hell?

Sikisa

So, let's talk about Pokémon again.

James Acaster

Well, where have you heard that?

Ed Gamble

I once heard David Dickinson say it on Bargain Hunt.

James Acaster

Right okay.

Sikisa

Oh, okay.

James Acaster

Well, then it's not a saying.

Ed Gamble

'Apple pie without a cheese is like a kiss without a squeeze.'

James Acaster

That guy's saying anything. That guy's doolally, David Dickinson.

Sikisa

You can't have apple pie with cheese.

Ed Gamble

You can. Imagine the mature cheddar cuts through the sweet apple. Perfect combination. Apple and cheese is a wonderful combination.

Sikisa

Not apple pie and cheese.

Ed Gamble

Apple pie and cheese.

Sikisa

No.

James Acaster

I would try that once. I would try it just to see what it was like.

Sikisa

Don't do it to your life. I do also like an apple pie with ice cream.



James Acaster

Yes, great.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Sikisa

When I used to work in the Arndale Centre in Wandsworth, I used to go to McDonald's and get their apple pie, and then go across to KFC and get their ice cream, when they used to do Avalanches, because they had the best ice cream, and then eat that together. It was so sexy.

James Acaster

Yes?

Sikisa

Sexy.

Ed Gamble

That is the level of fast-food hacking that I appreciate, going to two separate places and combining their signature dishes. That's great.

James Acaster

Yes, I like that.

Sikisa

Mate, during lockdown I was ordering two-, someone from Uber Eats and someone from Deliveroo, and I would just see them just come together at the same time, and I was like, 'Oh God, they're going to meet each other. No.'

James Acaster

Imagine if they met each other and the drivers fell in love, and then they got married one day, and that was all because of you.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Sikisa

Oh, that'd be cute. Fast-food hacks is-, so, what you would do is, you would get the chips from McDonald's, get the chicken from KFC, you would go to Burger King and get their onion rings. That's what you would do.

Ed Gamble

Right, okay, nice.

James Acaster

Nice. Oh, you've done your dream fast-food meal. No-one's done that before, and the desert for the fast-food meal?

Sikisa

Yes, because, like-, the apple pie and ice cream, but KFC don't do their Avalanches anymore, which is such a shame, so it would just have to be the McFlurry, which is blah, just without any of the bits.

Ed Gamble

Did you just say you have a McFlurry without any bits?



Sikisa

Yes, is that a problem?

Ed Gamble

No, it's not a problem, I've just never heard it before, because there's no flurry element there really, is there?

Sikisa

Just the Mc.

James Acaster

Yes, it's just a Mc.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's the Mc.

Sikisa

It's the Mc. So, my nickname is Twix. My nickname is Twix.

James Acaster

See, I already knew that, but I knew that when you told Ed that he was going to absolutely love it.

Ed Gamble

I love it. I don't know how we've only just got to this.

James Acaster

As soon as you said, 'Mc-,'

Sikisa

You did not warn him.

Ed Gamble

You're doing a food podcast, and your nickname's Twix.

James Acaster

As soon as you said, 'My nickname,' I was like, 'Oh, she's about to tell Ed her nickname was Twix.'

Ed Gamble

Where did that come from?

Sikisa

I got it in law school. So, me and two of my other friends-

Ed Gamble

Twirl and Flake?

Sikisa

Stop it. Actually-,

James Acaster

Yes, stop it, Ed.

Sikisa

Two of my other friends are also called chocolate stuff.



James Acaster

They are? So, that's that joke you made, was that cool?

Sikisa

Don't start. So, basically we've got a chocolate family.

James Acaster

Why not?

Sikisa

They've got chocolate babies now.

Ed Gamble

Do the babies have nicknames now as well?

Sikisa

One of them has, one of them doesn't, not yet. We haven't named the second one yet.

James Acaster

Well, we're going to have to hear all these nicknames.

Sikisa

No. The thing is, basically we used to bring chocolates quite a lot into law school, and our tutor said to us, 'Why don't you just call yourself The Chocolate Girls?' So we named ourselves after a chocolate that represents us, not necessarily that we like, but represents us. Because I was nicknamed Twix and used it quite a lot when I started out in comedy, a lot of people call me Twix.

Ed Gamble

So, why did you pick Twix? Why does the Twix represent you?

Sikisa

Because I'm a Gemini.

James Acaster

Twins.

Ed Gamble

Okay. Keep talking, because I still don't know-

James Acaster

Twins.

Sikisa

Twins.

Ed Gamble

Oh, of course.

James Acaster

The twins.

Sikisa

Yes, twins, the Gemini.



Ed Gamble

That's good. Is that it?

Sikisa

Well, it's although that skin-colour-wise, chocolate with a hint of caramel.

Ed Gamble

Okay, nice.

James Acaster

Love it. I mean, the Gemini thing is, like, way more-, I was like, 'Let's hear how Sikisa explains this away, which she's like a Twix,' and then Gemini is like, 'You guys really thought about your nicknames.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, perfect.

James Acaster

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

Sikisa

Okay.

James Acaster

You would like, water course, Ribena. Poppadoms or bread, tortilla chips with a mild, spicy salsa, and guac, home-made. Starter, scallops and dim sum. Main course, pudding and souse with breadfruit. Side dish, macaroni pie, brackets home-made. Drink, June bug from TGI Fridays when it was hip, with a plastic straw. You've also put here that you would like to see a seal clubbed to death in front of you. I don't know what that's about, and desert, you would like an apple and blackberry pie with double cream.

Sikisa

Yes, please.

James Acaster

Sound good?

Sikisa

Sounds amazing. I will also say, I will apologise to all the white people that may have been offended.

Ed Gamble

Never, but what you must understand, Sikisa, is when you say that at white parties, we have cocktail sausages and quiches, we don't find that offensive. That sounds delicious.

Sikisa

We need to liven up your lives, just a little sprinkle. You know what it needs? A little bit of seasoning.

James Acaster

Yes.

Sikisa

A little bit of seasoning in your life, just a little bit of seasoning, just maybe some tropical stuff.



Ed Gamble

Yes. I also want to address the tropical comment at the top. I was talking about synthetic tropical flavour added to sweets.

James Acaster

Yes, and I would like to say that all the way through, I've known what both of you mean by all your comments, and I've been stirring the pot.

Sikisa

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Well, there we are. Thank you very much to Sikisa for coming in, and for that menu. Very, very enjoyable.

James Acaster

Thank you. Delicious menu. Thank you so much.

Ed Gamble

I want macaroni pie so much, James.

James Acaster

I would really like macaroni pie now, yes. That's what I've been thinking about the most as well, since we stopped recording that.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

You should go see Sikisa at the Edinburgh Festival of course, if you're a party animal.

Ed Gamble

Yes, if you're a party animal. I don't think that's the name of the show, but it's a good name if you're listening, Sikisa. Do go and see Sikisa at the Edinburgh Fringe. Sikisacomedy on Twitter?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And I believe, James, her Instagram is twix_choc87.

James Acaster

Brilliant.

Ed Gamble

I've just found that out, because obviously I was unaware of the Twix nickname.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Sikisa didn't say 'margarine'.

James Acaster

A huge relief, because once you go margarine, you can't go bargarine.



Ed Gamble

So, go and see Sikisa. If I'm still on tour, it will be obvious from my website, edgamble.co.uk. Go and buy tickets for me.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I think we're doing some more shows in the autumn potentially, and we probably need to see some tickets, so go and buy them.

James Acaster

Yes, and of course, I will be touring Scandinavia for a week in September.

Ed Gamble

Yes, idiot.

James Acaster

Oslo, Copenhagen, I think.

Ed Gamble

Don't all look at me, but yes, Gothenburg.

James Acaster

Gothenburg, Lund.

Ed Gamble

What I really like is you've not done stand-up in three years.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Your persona has changed, and now your persona is an absolute thicko.

James Acaster

Yes. Yes, an idiot who doesn't understand anything, let alone stand-up, in a country that he's not from and doesn't have any reference points when he's there, anything like that, doesn't know what it's like to live there.

Ed Gamble

It's going to be like an alien doing a show.

James Acaster

Yes, just beaming down, but like an alien talking for the first time as well, who's never talked before, somehow trying to make it work.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

But, like, you know, that's live comedy. That's the experience of live comedy.

Ed Gamble



Off Menu – Ep 147: Sikisa:

No. Thanks very much for listening. We'll see you again some time soon. Goodbye.

James Acaster

Goodbye.