



Off Menu – Ep 172: Stanley Tucci

Ed Gamble

Welcome to the Off Menu podcast, taking a big, thick slice of chat, toasting that up in the fire of humour, pouring over the beans of good times and tucking in. It's just beans on toast, a podcast of beans on toast.

James Acaster

That is the voice of Ed Gamble there, my name is James Acaster, we are in a dream restaurant and we invite a guest in every single week, 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 Stanley Tucci.

Ed Gamble

Stanley Tucci. Stanley Tucci, I mean, what is there left to say about Stanley Tucci? A wonderful actor, a wonderful food broadcaster, he's found a real niche in food as of late, James.

James Acaster

I think we're talking a global treasure here.

Ed Gamble

Glob treas.

James Acaster

Glob treas territory here, what an honour, very exciting. I mean, everyone's talking about Stanley's food shows these days. It really captured everyone's imagination and reinvigorated people's enthusiasm for food.

Ed Gamble

And that's the sort of person we like to come on the show, James. Yes, we have your comedians who come on here and they're a bit silly and, you know, they have a laugh, but what we also really enjoy is people who are genuinely enthusiastic about food.

James Acaster

Yes. If you haven't seen Inside Man, it is available on iPlayer now, by the way, highly recommend watching it, Stanley's amazing series.

Ed Gamble

And also, the paperback of his book Taste, My Life in Food is out now.

James Acaster

Now Ed, I'm very excited that we've got Stanley Tucci on, but as always, if he says the secret ingredient, and ingredient which we deem to be gross or unacceptable, then we will kick him out of the dream restaurant.

Ed Gamble

We will, we will.

James Acaster

And this week the secret ingredient is Dragon Soop.

Ed Gamble

Now, this has been suggested by a listener, apparently it's an energy drink. It's quite, sort of, alcoholic, 7.5%, very high in caffeine.



James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I'll put it as the secret ingredient, and I think it sounds horrible, but I'd absolutely smash a Dragon Soop.

James Acaster

Sounds like you would smash a Dragon Soop, it does sound horrible, Morgana requested it.

Ed Gamble

Dan Morgan I think is the name of the person who suggested it, not Morgana Robinson.

James Acaster

Okay, apologies, I thought it was Morgana.

Ed Gamble

No, no, it was Dan Morgan. I would.

James Acaster

Would you?

Ed Gamble

I mean, at a certain point of an evening.

James Acaster

Not me.

Ed Gamble

Okay. I was at a wedding this weekend, I think come eleven o'clock at a wedding, I'd neck a Dragon Soop.

James Acaster

Do you know what?

Ed Gamble

Or an Espresso Martini is a posh Dragon Soop, right?

James Acaster

Is it? I had my first ever Espresso Martini recently.

Ed Gamble

Well, that's bad news.

James Acaster

I'd never had one before. Luckily, the person who made it for me gave it to me, he went, 'I forgot the sugar syrup.' Or, so it's, like, some sugary ingredient that's meant to go in there. He went, 'I've forgot that.' So, I had it and it was nice, but I didn't go completely loopy and go, 'This is all I'm going to drink from now on.' So, I think I had a narrow escape.

Ed Gamble

I'll make you an Espresso Martini one day. Next time you come over.



James Acaster

I don't know.

Ed Gamble

You've got to come over, man.

James Acaster

Yes, I should come over, but you know, I think by the sound of things you're going to be high on Dragon Soop when I get over there.

Ed Gamble

I'll be smashing the Dragon Soop, baby.

James Acaster

You'll be drinking all the Dragon Soops, Morgana furious with you.

Ed Gamble

I would be surprised if Stanley Tucci picks the Dragon Soop. If he does, I mean, that's got to be, that's moment of the year at the British Podcast Awards.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Very exciting episode, looking forward to chatting to Stanley. You know what, I've got a lot of people in my family are big fans of Stanley, they're going to be very jealous that I'm doing this, and I might buy all my family Taste, My Life in Food for Christmas this year.

James Acaster

Is it fair to say that your fam are fans of Stan? You've got Stan fans in your fam?

Ed Gamble

Stan stans?

James Acaster

Stan stans, yes.

Ed Gamble

I've got Stan stans in my fam.

James Acaster

In your fam fams.

Ed Gamble

Look, we've all got Stan stans in our fam fams.

James Acaster

Yes. It was worth it. It was worth it to hear Ed sort it out. Ed sorted it out for me.

Ed Gamble

It's the last episode of the series, James, last episode of series eight, what a series it's been.

James Acaster

What a series it's been, twists and turns, so many wonderful guests, thank you to all the guests



who've come on the podcast this series, thank you to everyone who's been listening to this series as well. Never thought we'd do eight series.

Ed Gamble

No, yes, I did. Also of course, big thanks to everyone at Plosive, the great Benito, Naomi, Alice and Toast, the full team.

James Acaster

Yes, the dream team.

Ed Gamble

The dream team. One of them just runs around the office all day distracting everyone and wiggling their bum around, but then when he hits record he really calms down.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, saw that coming a mile off, the punchline, but still funny. Still funny. Really good.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it was a mile off, it was a mile off.

James Acaster

It was a mile off, but what a wonderful mile, I enjoyed that mile.

Ed Gamble

Worth it, worth it. This is the Off Menu menu of Stanley Tucci.

James Acaster

Stanley Tucci.

Ed Gamble

Welcome, Stanley, to the dream restaurant.

Stanley Tucci

Thank you.

James Acaster

Welcome, Stanley, Tucci, to the dream restaurant, we'd been expecting you for some time.

Ed Gamble

Here we are, the genie's here ready to take your order, Stanley.

Stanley Tucci

Okay.

Ed Gamble

Are you very impressed by the genie? You seem completely unfazed by the presence of a genie.

Stanley Tucci

No, it's just because I have a little cold, that's all. Yes, yes, it's just a little, yes.

James Acaster

You've seen magical things in films, a genie's not going to-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes, no.



James Acaster

A genie on a podcast isn't going to-

Stanley Tucci

No.

James Acaster

You've been in the MCU.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, there's nothing really visual here, it's just, it's sound, it's just sound, yes.

James Acaster

Yes, it's just sound. That's how we would describe, to people who don't know what podcasts are, that's what I'd say to them.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Just sound.

Stanley Tucci

Just sound, yes.

James Acaster

It's just sounds.

Ed Gamble

No visuals, yes. I also love the idea of you seeing a genie in real life and the genie going, 'Are you okay? You don't seem-.' 'Yes, I'm sorry, I have a little cold.'

Stanley Tucci

Yes, 'I'm under the weather, yes, sorry. Get back in the bottle.'

James Acaster

Has there been a film that you've done where, you know, you do some CGI, so you're acting with a tennis ball or whatever, and then you see it on the screen, what's the most amazing one where you've gone, 'Whoa, that looks like-.'

Stanley Tucci

I think those Transformers movies are, you know, they're incredible. You don't know what you're doing, you know, you have no idea what's happening, it's all happening so fast, and they're guys with tennis balls on big sticks. And you go, 'Look over there, look over there, look over there, be afraid, be afraid. Be angry, be angry, be sad, be sad. Run, run, run.' I never quite know what I'm doing, but you know, I just do what they say.

James Acaster

Has there ever been one where you've watched it back and gone, 'No, what did they put there? I can't believe they made me run away from that thing, it looks horrendous.'



Stanley Tucci

No, they were all pretty impressive, I have to say.

James Acaster

Yes?

Stanley Tucci

Yes. I mean, because somebody like Michael Bay, he has those images in his mind, he's been making those movies forever, they are pretty impressive when you just think about it. And he does it so quickly, a lot of people, it'll be quite a laborious process, you know, but he's like, 'Okay, just do it like this, put it in there, do that, do that, don't worry about it, I'll put it in later.' Everything is, 'I'll put it in later.'

Ed Gamble

The whole thing, yes.

Stanley Tucci

He'd put us in later probably, you know, that'll happen someday.

Ed Gamble

Yes, the whole film-making process is just three tennis balls all pointing towards each other.

Stanley Tucci

Well, eventually that's what it will be.

Ed Gamble

The only guys working are going to be the tennis ball guys, the ones holding the sticks.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, yes, that's what Roger Federer's going to do now.

Ed Gamble

He's just gone straight into the special effects.

Stanley Tucci

What's the ABBA thing that they do?

Ed Gamble

Yes, the holograms, they've got holograms in, yes, the venue in Stratford. Yes, so they just-, God knows how much money they're all making every night and they're not even there.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

I want that job.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

But they had to build the venue especially for it as well.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Really?

James Acaster

Yes, yes, so I was meant to go to that, I had tickets to go, but it was the day of the Queen's funeral.

Ed Gamble

So you had to go to that instead.

James Acaster

Yes, I had to go to that, yes. And not a lot of people know this, but that was a hologram too.

Stanley Tucci

What, for her entire career?

James Acaster

Yes, her whole career, she was never-, we just had a hologram running it.

Stanley Tucci

She's been dead for years, hasn't she?

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's a long time.

James Acaster

A very long time that we've been duped by a hologram. Normally at the start of the podcast we'd ask if someone is a foodie or not, but we already know that with you that you're a big time foodie.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

When did that start, your love affair with food?

Stanley Tucci

I think from birth, you know, my family, both sides are very interested and in love with food, and the way food was treated in our house was, it was a very precious thing, and that's something that is part of the Italian culture and heritage. My mum was an amazing cook, she's still alive at 86, my Dad is 92. You don't get to live that long without a really good diet, and it was great food so it always meant a great deal to me. But as I got older I realised that it was, kind of, everything for me, and it always found its way somehow into my life, and then eventually into my work.

James Acaster

And, like, how long were you thinking about, when you were acting for years, was there always a part of you thinking, 'I want to do a food show, I want to do something that maybe people wouldn't expect from me where I do a food travel show.'

Stanley Tucci

Well yes, I mean, I had the idea that, you know the CNN series that we're doing, right? Searching for Italy. And I had the idea about fifteen years ago or so, but I had already, sort of, entered into the food world having made this movie Big Night which was 27 years ago. It, sort of, ushered me in to



the food world and I got to know chefs and I would go on cooking shows or whatever, and I loved that. And I thought, 'Well, I really, really want to do something that nobody has done before with Italy, not just be in a studio and cook recipes from different regions, but to really break those regions down while you're there in them.' And the original idea was we would be creating, like, a dinner party. Each episode would be one, you'd situate yourself in a place, me and, like, a chef, and then we would go out and go shopping. We had them wake up, have a cup of coffee, it would be like a documentary, almost like a fly on the wall, sort of, thing. And then we'd have a cup of coffee, go over the menu and go our separate ways and we'd get whatever you needed for the thing, and come back. And I would be the conduit for the audience because the chef would be the one, and then I would just, sort of, help him or whatever, and then we'd throw a dinner party, and we'd have people arrive and blah blah blah. That was, sort of, but we'd do it in every region. It's an idea that could work one day, but anyway, we decided on this format for the show. That was the most incredibly long, boring-

James Acaster
Not boring at all.

Stanley Tucci
Wasn't it?

Ed Gamble
No, no, not at all.

James Acaster
I would love to see that show, I would love to see the dinner party in different regions, and you and a chef.

Stanley Tucci
It's tempting, yes.

James Acaster
I think everyone listening to that is just going to go, 'Yes, okay, cool, I'm looking forward to when that's a real show.'

Stanley Tucci
I want to do one maybe in the future where I'm just in my house and people come over, we go shopping, we talk about whatever, we cook and we eat.

James Acaster
That's all I want from a food show.

Stanley Tucci
Yes.

Ed Gamble
Yes, because people love that with food shows as well because it's about comfort a lot of the time, isn't it?

Stanley Tucci
Yes.

Ed Gamble
So, you want to feel like you're at someone's house, you want to feel like you're part of a social gathering, yes.



Stanley Tucci

Yes, that's what it is, I mean, and that's one of the main reasons why I love it is because it's about communing with people, it's about sharing with people and getting to know people. And you know, you have wine, you have whatever, and everybody gets a little relaxed and that's the way it should be.

James Acaster

Yes. I remember seeing you on, I think it was Saturday Kitchen making a whiskey cocktail.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, just a couple of weeks ago.

James Acaster

Yes, and talking about your dad would always, if anyone went round they'd always have-, he'd say, 'What can I get you to drink?'

Stanley Tucci

Yes, 'What can I get you to drink?' Yes, as soon as they-, if they ever have dinner parties on a Friday night, Saturday night or something. No, it was just so cool, you know, and everybody go dressed up and, not like nowadays when people show up in their fugly underwear. You're just like, 'Really? You didn't want to put a pair of pants on?' You know?

Ed Gamble

No, I like that, I like it when, yes, people put a bit of effort in, and then cocktails on arrival.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, love that, love that.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I was talking to a friend the other day who, he said the most dangerous skill he learnt was how to make good cocktails, because now it's just, like, it's dangerous.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, you do. I went to somebody's birthday party the other night and the friends through the school, through the kids, you know, really nice couple. And I walked in and her parents were there and other people were there, and her mother says, 'So, I hear that you make a very mean cocktail.' And I was like, 'Well, yes, you know.' I go, 'I'll make you one, what do you want?' And she said, 'I'll have a Negroni.' And of course they didn't have anything for a Negroni, so I go, 'I can't make you a Negroni, do you want a Martini?' 'Yes, I'd love a Martini.' And suddenly there were orders for seven Martinis, and so I spent the first, you know, 40 minutes just making-.

James Acaster

Working.

Ed Gamble

I mean, it is outstanding.

Stanley Tucci

I was like, 'It's not my house, I didn't invite you over.' You know?



Ed Gamble

Yes, you walk into someone else's house, then go, 'Here's what you can get me today.'

Stanley Tucci

Yes, right, like, I wanted to sit down and somebody give me a drink, you know?

Ed Gamble

It's so funny that she asked for a Negroni, but she knows what she has in her own house.

Stanley Tucci

And didn't have it, yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

'I'll have a Negroni please, Stanley.'

James Acaster

'You have none of those things.' 'Well, you won't be getting a tip with that attitude.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, I went through making Martinis at home during lockdown phase, which I had to end quite quickly because that was sitting in front of the TV with a Martini in a proper glass.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It doesn't feel right.

Stanley Tucci

No, it doesn't. No, it's meant to be-, it's, sort of, sad almost.

Ed Gamble

Yes, hugely sad.

Stanley Tucci

If you have a book, it's different.

Ed Gamble

Right, okay, yes, yes.

Stanley Tucci

I don't know why.

Ed Gamble

A book, yes, that's way better. It's the same with anything though, I think a book makes everything feel slightly more-, if you're drinking a glass of red wine alone, if you're reading a book.

Stanley Tucci

It does, even if you just keep reading the same page over and over, which inevitably happens.

James Acaster

I mean, the one attempt I had at making a cocktail in lockdown was when, I think I've talked about some of this on the podcast before, but when someone sent me a load of alcohol free beer, it was unwanted, I didn't want it. So, I started adding whiskey to it, and it tasted really delicious, and then I started adding, I, like, chuck in a bit of lime juice in there as well, and I was like, 'This is such a great



cocktail, I'm going to make it in a cocktail shaker.' So, I did that and obviously it's beer, so as soon as I shook it the whole thing exploded just all over me, because I didn't even think that far ahead. It was, like, two shakes and then boom.

Stanley Tucci

you didn't think that it was effervescent?

James Acaster

No.

Stanley Tucci

Yes. Wow.

Ed Gamble

That's sadder than the Martini thing, right?

Stanley Tucci

What?

Ed Gamble

That's sadder than the Martini thing?

James Acaster

Me covered in alcohol free beer.

Stanley Tucci

And, well, first of all adding alcohol to alcohol free beer is really funny. Did it really taste good though?

James Acaster

It tasted great because as soon as you add the-, it just tastes like a normal Boilermaker as soon as you added it.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, right.

James Acaster

Because, like, obviously alcohol free beer you get that aftertaste of, 'This isn't real beer.'

Stanley Tucci

No, it's weird, I know.

James Acaster

But as soon as you add alcohol to it, problem solved.

Ed Gamble

Turns out that was the issue with it all along.

James Acaster

Yes, so it's like, I called it a Boilerfaker, the cocktail, because it was alcohol free beer.

Stanley Tucci

That's funny, that's funny.



James Acaster

And it was delicious, and then later on, Guinness sent us some alcohol free Guinness and I added Prosecco to that and made a Black Velvet, and that was delicious.

Stanley Tucci

Ooh, I'd like to try that.

Ed Gamble

I have a Black Velvet the other night.

Stanley Tucci

Is that really a drink?

James Acaster

Black Velvet is a drink, yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, Black Velvet, Guinness and champagne, (talking over each other).

Stanley Tucci

Ooh, I didn't know that.

Ed Gamble

I went to Rules the other night and they serve it in pewter tankards. It's ice cold in a pewter tankard, Guinness and champagne. It's fantastic.

James Acaster

That's the only place I've had it as well, and I had it because I copied Clang, David Mitchell. So he ordered one and I was like, 'Well, I'm just going to copy him because (talking over each other) never had it before.'

Ed Gamble

Of course you went to Rules with David Mitchell.

James Acaster

Yes, of course, (talking over each other).

Stanley Tucci

You went with David Mitchell?

James Acaster

Yes, and Victoria and, yes, just copied the drinks order, loved it. Then, in lockdown, when I got the alcohol-free Guinness, I was like, 'I know exactly what I'm doing with this.'

Ed Gamble

Black Velvet.

Stanley Tucci

I do love Guinness. I was talking about it the other day with my son. He's six. No, my older son who's 22, and we were talking about Guinness and how much we love Guinness and how, like-, he said, 'You've got to go to the right place, you know, the certain pubs where they can't pull a pint.' You know, he's American but he's lived here for a long time so he talks like that. He said there was this one place, there's this one bar, I can't remember, in London some place, he goes, 'They pour the best Guinness.' I wasn't aware of that, that it changes. If I it sits too long in the thing, then it changes the enzymes or something. I don't know what it is.



Ed Gamble

I think there are so many variable and it's like how clean they're keeping the lines and all of that, but then how they're pouring it. Even people are specific about the glass. It has to be, like, the old-school Guinness glass.

Stanley Tucci

The one that went like this?

Ed Gamble

Yes, like that but not the one with, like-, there are, like, some that have got a recessed glass harp in them. Not that.

James Acaster

Don't go near that.

Ed Gamble

Then the stuff they wash the glass with, as well, because what people want is for the foam to stick to the side of the glass on the way down and if you wash them almost too thoroughly, it's just a clean glass all the way down.

Stanley Tucci

Ooh. So you want, kind of, a dirty glass?

Ed Gamble

Kind of a dirty glass, yes. I mean, this is another rabbit-hole I've gone down. I watch quite a lot of Guinness YouTube videos.

Stanley Tucci

You do? (Talking over each other)

James Acaster

I learn new things about them every year.

Ed Gamble

The Guinness Guru. Shout-out to the Guinness Guru, who goes round different pubs testing the Guinness.

Stanley Tucci

Has he found (talking over each other)?

James Acaster

Discover it's your son. Your son is the Guinness Guru.

Ed Gamble

I mean, I think all of the best places are in Ireland so you've got to get over there really for the best Guinness.

Stanley Tucci

I remember going to the Guinness factory. It's always weird to call it a factory but, you know, in Dublin. This is a long, long time ago. It was so much fun. I had the tour, like the weird tour they give you, and everything. Then you go down and you give your chits in, right, your little-, and you get two half-pints of Guinness, right? They don't give you a big one. They give you two small ones. I was like, 'Why?' To this day, I was like, 'That's a seven-course meal, I mean, that's like-, in a glass.' I mean, it was incredible. It tasted very different than other Guinness, I think.



Ed Gamble

Yes. When I was in Belfast last, it was to do Mastermind and there's a pub that everyone said, 'You've got to go there and get a Guinness.'

James Acaster

Crown?

Ed Gamble

Yes, and it was like, 'You've got to go there.' I managed to convince Phil Wang to come out for a seafood chowder with me, but he refused to stay out and have a Guinness because he wanted to go and revise for Mastermind. He was an absolute dweeb.

Stanley Tucci

No, that's no good.

Ed Gamble

It's bad stuff, right?

Stanley Tucci

Yes, it's awful.

Ed Gamble

He won but at what cost? Your paperwork, Taste my Life in Food, is out now. So that means, like, the hardback's already been a roaring success.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, it did really, really well. Just got a nice royalty cheque. Guinness on me. Yes.

Ed Gamble

What's the book about, for people who don't know?

Stanley Tucci

It's just basically my life through food, which is the title, sort of, sub-title of the book. It's from my childhood and then up to today and how food has influenced my life and my work. In fact, I realised, having been diagnosed with cancer about five years, throat cancer, that-, and when you can't eat and when you can't drink, you can't do anything, that I thought, 'Well, I don't really want to live anymore if I can't do those things.' Luckily, I can do those things now but it was really devastating. So that experience was, sort of, a key element for me in writing the book because everything led up to that. It's just, like, food on movie sets or food when you're travelling, stories about my family and all that sort of stuff, but everything is seen through the prism of food. There were some people who read the book and said, 'Oh, we want more Hollywood gossip, we want more film stuff.' It's like, 'Did you see the title of the book?' You know, gossip about what? 'So-and-so was a whatever on set.' You're like, 'It's fascinating, you know. Who cares?' Who cares?

Ed Gamble

Only if it's connected to food though, right? You could give a little bit of goss, if you like, around the craft service table.

Stanley Tucci

I could. I could. Yes, which is usually pretty awful.

James Acaster

I mean, I can't really imagine anyone coming out with like-, you know, an actor or a celebrity coming out with a book that's like My Life in Gossip.



Stanley Tucci

Yes, it's just ridiculous but it's, like, when you go on a press junket, there's a story in there about Meryl Streep and I eating lunch with other cast members and we were in France and we ordered an andouillette. Do you know what that is?

James Acaster

No.

Stanley Tucci

Do you know what it is?

James Acaster

Ed looked like he did know.

Ed Gamble

It's like a sausage but with horrid stuff in it, right?

Stanley Tucci

Yes, exactly. We didn't know that, so we ordered this thing and we thought, 'Oh, we love andouille sausage. Andouille sausages in the south.' In America, you get andouille sausage. It's like in New Orleans, it's really delicious, it's great. We thought, 'Great, so andouillette must be a smaller version of an andouille sausage.'

Ed Gamble

Everyone would assume that, surely?

Stanley Tucci

Everyone. Yes, anyone who has any, kind of-, something. So they bring this thing and basically it looks like a horse cock and I was like, 'What the fuck is that? What is that?' I look at Meryl and I go, 'What is that? That was not what I expected.' She goes, 'No.' We had all ordered it. We were like, 'Okay, well, give it a try.' We were thinking we were so worldly, like, 'Oh, andouillette.' Yes. Cut it, put it in your mouth, literally it didn't even get past my uvular and I spat it out. I was so (makes retching noise).

James Acaster

That sounds really French.

Stanley Tucci

Yes. It was so awful and I was like, 'Oh God, what is that? That just tastes like, you know, shit.' Meryl goes, 'Yes, well it does have a bit of the barnyard (talking over each other).' It was just awful and we just couldn't eat it and felt so badly because the people were so nice in the restaurant, which is unusual for France. The guy came over and he said, 'You are enjoying it?' We were like, 'Oh, yes, it's fantastic.' 'You like the andouillette?' I was like, 'Yes, no, it's really good. It's just really different from other andouillettes we've had.' You know, and he goes, 'Would you like something else?' 'Yes, can we have four omelettes, please?' You know.

James Acaster

Yes, I'm sure that happens multiple times a day at work.

Stanley Tucci

I'm sure, yes. It's prized by some people in that region and I think Leone too or something. You know, it's like this thing. They're devoted to it.



Ed Gamble

They're probably very proud of the fact that other people don't like it, as well, right?

Stanley Tucci

Yes, well I wrote in the book, I said, 'It's the reason the Germans love Normandy.' We were in Normandy and I said, 'It wasn't the allies invasion, it was the fucking andouillette.' It drove them away, you know.

James Acaster

Episode of Band of Brothers, (talking over each other).

Stanley Tucci

'This is awful.' Literally awful, yes.

James Acaster

We always start with still or sparkling water for your dream meal. Do you have a preference?

Stanley Tucci

I do like sparkling. I can't drink it as much as I used to simply because of the cancer stuff but now I can drink for the most part. Sparkling, let's say.

James Acaster

Yes, sparkling would be the go-to. How sparkling are you wanting it? When you get a glass of sparkling water, do you want it to be jumping, fizzy as possible? Do you want it nice and mellow?

Stanley Tucci

Mellow. Sort of settle your stomach and-,

James Acaster

Some of them are too bubbly, (talking over each other).

Stanley Tucci

They are too bubbly, some of them. It's not pleasant.

Ed Gamble

Yes, when you see the bubbles-,

Stanley Tucci

You get gas and it's like-,

Ed Gamble

When you see them leaping off the top, when you see the bubbles leaping around like fleas on the top, I'm not interested. Like little fleas dancing around, do you know what I mean?

James Acaster

Yes, fleas.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

You're the first person who's said a stomach-settler. A lot of people, when they come on the pod, and they talk about sparkling water, they focus on how it feels in the mouth, the bubbles in the mouth. No one has ever really said about the actual benefits of it, settling the stomach.



Stanley Tucci

It does, supposedly. That's what it does. That's why so much of the world drinks it.

James Acaster

See, it's taken a lot of episodes to get to that.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it has, but we finally got here.

James Acaster

It took a lot of episodes and-,

Ed Gamble

We can finally quit the pod.

James Acaster

So many people have come on who choose still water and go, 'Why would people ever drink sparkling water?' They hate it. They think it's just a thing to look fancy.

Ed Gamble

That's what a lot of people say is they picked sparkling water because it's, like, a fancy version of water.

Stanley Tucci

No.

Ed Gamble

No.

Stanley Tucci

No, it's good. It helps you digest and everything. It has minerals in it. You know. I mean, a lot of it is still-, in Italy, you know, in certain countries, a lot of that sparkling water is sulphurous water. You know, I remember even in a gym in a hotel in Italy, years and years ago, it had a big water cooler and I was working out and you're like, 'Ugh, so thirsty.' It was like sulphur water. It was like, 'Oh, fuck. What is that?' You know, it's just-,

Ed Gamble

Was it sparkling water in the-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes, it was sparkling, sulphur-y water and I was like, 'Who would do that?' You know? It's really good. The thing is, it's really good for you, you know.

James Acaster

Everyone burping in the gym. Was there a lot of burping going on?

Stanley Tucci

Burping and farting.

James Acaster

Eggy burps.

Stanley Tucci

The water smelled like farts.



James Acaster

Good old fart water.

Stanley Tucci

Fart water.

James Acaster

For your dream meal, you don't want the fart water?

Stanley Tucci

No, I don't want fart water.

James Acaster

No, you would like-,

Stanley Tucci

You could take a bath in it. That's good for you.

James Acaster

Oh, yes?

Stanley Tucci

Yes, like, sulphur springs.

James Acaster

You can fart in the bath and no one would know.

Stanley Tucci

No one would know, not even you.

James Acaster

Did I fart? Who knows? Don't know what's me and what's not (talking over each other).

Ed Gamble

Surrounded by eggy bubbles already.

Stanley Tucci

I don't know where I begin and the water ends, yes.

James Acaster

Is there a particular brand of water that you would go for if you're-,

Stanley Tucci

Well, yes, I have a deal with San Pellegrino so there you go.

James Acaster

You do?

Stanley Tucci

Yes, yes.

James Acaster

Oh you'll have to get into the deal with the-,



Stanley Tucci

No, I really do love it. They asked me to, you know, be their ambassador a couple of years ago and I was like, 'Yes, are you kidding?' I love it. It's great stuff, yes.

James Acaster

What does it entail? Do you have duties as the ambassador for San Pellegrino?

Stanley Tucci

I do. I just drink it on camera and then they give me money, you know. No, yes, you're just, sort of, doing promotional stuff. It's mostly, sort of, all on the internet and-, but it's actually really fun to shoot it. We shot up where they bottle the water, about a year-and-a-half ago. We filmed there and I'm going to film some stuff this week here. You know, there are just ads for it and stuff that'll come up on your browser or whatever that is. You know what I mean. It's really fun and it's a product that's, like, so easy to go, 'I really like this,' because I actually do really like it.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Hugely classy that you didn't bring up the deal until we really backed you into a corner.

James Acaster

Oh yes.

Stanley Tucci

Didn't bring up what?

Ed Gamble

The deal, until we backed you into a corner about it (talking over each other).

James Acaster

You could've said it straight away. We could've said, 'Still or sparkling water?' (Talking over each other 27.28) San Pellegrino. 'When my thirst needs quenching, I reach for a glass of San Pellegrino.' It could've been straight away.

Ed Gamble

Yes. We don't have a deal with any water companies yet, do we?

James Acaster

Not yet, which is like-, you'd think, you know, still or sparkling, we say it every episode.

Stanley Tucci

Lots of British water companies. Good spring water.

Ed Gamble

I hate Harrogate spring water though.

James Acaster

Yes, this has come up before. He has a real thing against the Harrogate spring.

Stanley Tucci

Why? What is it about it?

Ed Gamble

To me, it tastes like they've filled it up from the tap.



Stanley Tucci

Oh.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but that doesn't go down well if you tell people of Harrogate that. They're very proud of their water.

Stanley Tucci

I can imagine, yes.

Ed Gamble

There are a lot of things they don't like. They don't like it if you slag off tearooms in Harrogate either, so don't do that.

James Acaster

The tearooms are objectively nice but if you do stand-up comedy there and, for your own amusement, you tell them that the tearooms are shit, they really don't like it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, (talking over each other).

Stanley Tucci

What do you expect?

James Acaster

I've nothing to blame but myself and my bad gigs.

Ed Gamble

This is James's entire stand-up comedy career is saying things on stage that deliberately anger the audience.

James Acaster

Yes, but just petty things.

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes, not actual upsetting things.

James Acaster

Yes, I've done it at Sheffield. I know they like Henderson's relish, so I go on and say Hendo's is shit. They react like I've just, like, committed a crime. It's a lot of fun. I want to know more about where it's bottled before we continue on.

Ed Gamble

Please.

James Acaster

If I may. Is it Italy?

Stanley Tucci

It's in Italy, yes, around Bergamo. Northern Italy.

James Acaster

Did you get to, like, go through the factory?



Stanley Tucci

No, I didn't really get to go through the factory. I was really sad. We were just up in that town but, no, I didn't get to go in the factory.

Ed Gamble

It's not like the Guinness factory?

Stanley Tucci

No.

Ed Gamble

No. Give you the little tokens at the end and you have two tiny little-

Stanley Tucci

Two little tiny glasses of-, yes.

Ed Gamble

Two half-pints of San Pellegrino.

James Acaster

'Thanks, guys. It's a seven-course meal.' Poppadoms or bread, Stanley Tucci, poppadoms or bread?

Stanley Tucci

I'm sorry?

James Acaster

Poppadoms or bread?

Stanley Tucci

Bread. I do like a poppadom. I actually love them but bread, I think, is more versatile.

James Acaster

Sure.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

With Indian food, it makes perfect sense, a poppadom, yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, delicious. Is there any specific type of bread that is your go-to or the best bread you've ever had?

Stanley Tucci

See, it's really weird because, in Italy, you don't necessarily have great bread. I mean, particularly up north you have-, like, there's no salt in it, mostly, in Umbria and in Tuscany. You'll get bread the farther south you go, but then it also starts to become a little sweeter so it's, kind of, odd. The best bread is probably, like, the bread that people bake at home, like the bread my grandmother would make or my mom would make. It's just, like, incredible.

Ed Gamble

So I think from, like, the Italian food that makes it to the UK-, like, what everyone would describe as



Italian food. The bread feels like quite an important part of that because people would always be able to say focaccia or ciabatta or-

James Acaster

Yes. Dough balls. Yes.

Ed Gamble

Or dough-, Pizza Express dough balls.

James Acaster

Pizza Express dough balls, yes.

Stanley Tucci

Yes. My kids love that, yes.

Ed Gamble

It's good stuff.

Stanley Tucci

Yes. But, no. You're right. Focaccia, that's where-, yes. There are so many different iterations of it, right? So, focaccia, yes. Ciabatta, yes. I think ciabatta is a relatively new thing. I don't think that's, like, an old-,

Ed Gamble

Right, interesting.

Stanley Tucci

I mean, like, a real just simple country bread is what you want. But, personally, I mean, when you're in France, it just eclipses everything.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

France and Germany. Germany are the biggest bread eaters in the world.

Ed Gamble

You don't hear a lot about the German breads, though.

Stanley Tucci

No. There's a huge number of-,

James Acaster

Pretzels-,

Stanley Tucci

Variety of breads.

James Acaster

Is what I would think.

Ed Gamble

Pretzels.



James Acaster

If someone says German bread to me, I just think of a pretzel immediately.

Stanley Tucci

In the book, I wrote about shooting in Germany and they would serve this, you know, breakfast in the morning. Most incredible breakfast I'd ever seen. It was huge. Just all different kinds of meats and cheeses and 18,000 different kinds of bread.

Ed Gamble

Wow.

Stanley Tucci

Like, amazing breads.

James Acaster

A lot of, sort of, like, dark rye breads.

Stanley Tucci

Yes. Dark, ryes, pumpernickels, you know. Black bread. All that-

James Acaster

Yes, that's good stuff.

Stanley Tucci

And then, beautiful white rolls.

Ed Gamble

How do you deal with that at breakfast, though? Because, like, I would just go crazy. If it's, like, meats and cheeses and breads, next thing you know, I've had eight lunches-

Stanley Tucci

Yes, I know.

Ed Gamble

And, it's not even lunch yet.

Stanley Tucci

You, kind of, have to be careful. You know, because then you've got to go film all day. So, yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

But, like, filming here on one movie, I wrote about it, that there was a really good caterer and they would do a, again, like, a huge breakfast with sausages and eggs and all that, sort of, stuff. And, I had never had, like, a sausage and egg bap. Is that what you call it?

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Man, I was, like-, I literally, I thought-, it was a long shoot. It was a five-month shoot.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



Stanley Tucci

And, by, like, the sixth week, I was, like, I have got-, I'm going to have a stroke by the time I finish this movie. I mean, it's, like, I can't do this every day. It was so delicious.

Ed Gamble

Was it a sausage and egg bap every morning?

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Every morning. And, I thought, I'm not going to do it today. It was literally like that. It was, like, 'I'm not going to drink before twelve.' I'm not-, it's, like, you'd work out, you know, in the morning before you go to work, so we were all, sort of, like, starving and everything.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

And, you're, like, no, I'll just have, like, egg whites or something. And then, you're, like, 'Just give me the sausage bap, egg thing, please.' Alright guv, you know, and you're, like-,

Ed Gamble

Yes. It is mad, though, isn't it? Like, especially with English breakfasts, you just think, how is this breakfast? Because this just ruins a day, some of those breakfasts.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

But, it's obviously, like, it comes from a tradition where people were eating that and then doing heavy manual labour for the rest of the day.

Stanley Tucci

Exactly.

Ed Gamble

But now, that's massively changed. Like, most people aren't working-,

Stanley Tucci

They're doing what we're doing right now. Sitting down.

Ed Gamble

Yes, exactly. But, the breakfast, that's the same.

James Acaster

That's the same. It's got to be, it tastes nice.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, and then, like, hash browns with it or something. That's, like, how do you stop? How do you not eat it?

Ed Gamble

Yes.



James Acaster

Now, I've had the experience of going to America, ordering hash browns, and discovering they're different-,

Stanley Tucci

Totally.

James Acaster

To here.

Stanley Tucci

Yes. Unless you go to McDonald's.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Right? And then, they're, like, more-, like, they're a crispy thing in a little shape.

Ed Gamble

Sort of, encased, like-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

But, yes. Hash browns in America is potatoes chopped up with peppers-,

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

And, onions.

James Acaster

So, I think I still-, I would say that I prefer hash browns here, but maybe it's because I grew up here. What's your favourite hash browns of the two?

Stanley Tucci

The ones here.

James Acaster

The ones here.

Stanley Tucci

Oh, yes.

James Acaster

Oh, great.



Stanley Tucci

You know, they're, like-, you can make them, like, there's a chef I knew who taught me how to make them. And, the key thing is, like, you take-, you grate the potato and you grate some onion, and then you squeeze all the water. Like, you let it-, you salt it and let it just-, and then, squeeze it. Squeeze so there's no water left. Then, cook it in a pan with clarified butter, not regular butter because it will burn. You just cook it in clarified butter slowly and it gets that beautiful crunchy, crispy-, oh my god.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

My son, he goes completely crazy for them. I made them for him on his birthday.

James Acaster

I'm picturing him there with just, like, hash browns and Guinness, like, 'This is the best birthday-'

Stanley Tucci

There's a diet, yes.

James Acaster

Yes. Before we move onto your menu proper-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

I feel like we need to get more specific with the bread because there's a bunch of different breads. Your grandmother makes, your mother.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

The bread in France. The bread in Germany.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

At the big breakfast. For your dream meal, is there a specific bread from one of those that you would want to start the meal off?

Stanley Tucci

I think probably, like, a really, really good focaccia or schiacciata, which is what they make in Florence.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

How is that different to focaccia as we might know it?

Stanley Tucci

Focaccia here is a little bit fluffier, right, which to me, doesn't really work. In Florence, they have-, it's a focaccia, but it's really called a schiacciata, and it's thinner and it's pressed down quite a bit. But



also, in Liguria, they have a focaccia that is similar to that, with lots of salt. You know, they all have lots of salt and oil and it's just, like, the greatest thing. (Talking over each other) I mean, it's, like, just fat, so you don't really need anything else.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

So, you don't even need the oil around. You can just have it. Have it as that.

Stanley Tucci

Just the bread with olive oil and tonnes of salt.

Ed Gamble

Because, I guess, if it's thinner as well, the oil is distributed more evenly.

Stanley Tucci

Yes. Yes, I think so. And, it just has that nice crunch to it.

James Acaster

Great. Great stuff.

Ed Gamble

Amazing choice, yes.

James Acaster

So, your dream starter.

Stanley Tucci

It's a hard one. Almost just want to say oysters. Like, really, really good oysters.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

But, kind of, oysters, like, just with nothing. And then, maybe, like, a couple oysters Rockefeller.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Which, I only recently had. I hadn't had them for a long time and they were really good.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Because oysters are just-, they, kind of, give you energy. They give you, like, life, you know.

Ed Gamble

And, they don't spoil the main, really.

Stanley Tucci

No, exactly. They don't fill you up.



Ed Gamble

They're just getting the mouth ready-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And, yes.

James Acaster

I went to a restaurant recently in Stockholm-,

Stanley Tucci

Oh, wow.

James Acaster

And, I won't name it because I'm about to slag it off, but it would be pretty easy to figure it out based on what I'm about to say. But, the whole thing was-,

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes. This is mad.

James Acaster

We're not adding anything to anything. So, it was, like, we're just giving you it, like, one ingredient dishes and all this. Me and my friend were quite excited about this because on the menu, it was, like, we knew that there was-, the menu changes a lot, but there's, like, dishes that are just one ingredient, dishes that are two ingredients, and dishes that are three ingredients. And, you're, like, right, so this is going to be a place where we're assuming they get the best produce, so they just show you how good something can taste if you just, like-, if you, you know, cultivate it properly and you-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

And, it's stored in a certain way and here's this, the one thing, but it tastes incredible. Instead, it was just stuff that you would normally have-, so, oysters, for example, was one of the things, where you're, like, yes. Well, that's-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

Anywhere I go, that's what an oyster is.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

And then, you have it and go, well, that's not the best oyster I've had.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, right.



James Acaster

And, they're, like, yes, one ingredient, though. We're sticking to the rules. Oh, okay. And then, everything was that. Everything was just smoked salmon. It might as well be out of a packet from Marks and Spencer.

Ed Gamble

So weird.

James Acaster

And, you're, like, yes. I mean, I like smoked salmon, sure. But, I thought this was going to be the best smoked salmon of my life, but instead, you're just going, here's another raw thing. An apple. That was one of them.

Stanley Tucci

Oh, fuck off. Come on. That's so pretentious.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. It was annoying.

Stanley Tucci

An apple. I'm angry.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

No, really. You know, I remember going to this restaurant I had been to a few times. I'm not going to name it.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

And, it really heralded amazing. And, we're with my kids when they were younger, and they came over and the kids were, like, fucking starving, you know. And, we go, like, can we maybe get some bread? Just, like, a little bread, just to get-, the kids. They go, 'No, I'm sorry.' The chef does not like to serve bread for the meal because then you won't eat your meal properly. I'm just thinking, what is he, my mother? Do you know what I mean? It's, like, what? Okay, fine. Alright. So, and then, they were, like, 'We have a little appetiser coming.' And, we were, like, 'Okay.' And, little was really the right word for it because it came, they brought it out on a slate, which is annoying. And, you're, like, what, have you ran out of plates? You just get this from the roof. You just get, like, a tile. So, they bring it out and it was little radishes, little carrots, little cute-, but, tiny. Like, but almost, like-, you're, like, is that an experiment? Like, what is that? And, the kids are, like, 'I'm starving, I'm starving, I'm starving.' And, they bring this thing and it's just these little tiny things. It was very beautiful, but-,

James Acaster

Yes.



Stanley Tucci

And, I was, like, 'So, is that-, that's it?' And, they were, like, 'Yes, yes, yes.' And then, they said, 'Now, today, the chef, this is a vegetable-based day, our mains are vegetables today.' And, he's treating carrots as though they were meat. And, I was, like, 'What?' Was he milking them? What is he doing? I don't get it. Like, I don't get it. So, they brought out, like, a big fucking carrot, you know. Like, sliced and grilled or whatever, and you're, like, 'Okay.' And, you know, for \$8,000, we walked out of there starving, went home, and made dinner.

Ed Gamble

Yes, of course.

Stanley Tucci

You know, it was just so pretentious.

James Acaster

Yes. Ate all the bread you could when you got home.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I've spoken about this on the podcast before. In a positive light, though, actually. It was very tasty. I went to a restaurant, it was a vegan restaurant and they did carrot tartar. And, they do it table-side with, like, an old-school mincer.

Stanley Tucci

Oh, that's cool.

Ed Gamble

So, like, they're doing the carrot through there. So, they're treating carrots like meat, but it was a bit more fun. It was a bit more fun.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, that's playful.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's playful.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

See what you think about this, about the same restaurant as well. In the corner of the room is the toilet and you walk in there-,

Ed Gamble

Is this the one-ingredient place?



James Acaster

Yes, this is the one-ingredient place. And, you walk into the toilet and there is a massive mirror that fills the wall. But, it's only a mirror their side, so the diners are there. They've got a big mirror there. They can see their reflections. You in the toilet can see through to the whole of where people are eating and as someone who stands up to urinate, I felt like I was just getting it out in front of everyone.

Stanley Tucci

No. No way. That's so disconcerting.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

I don't think I could-, if you had to poo.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Do you know what I mean?

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

I couldn't do it.

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

Yes. There's no one pooing-,

Stanley Tucci

That is just weird.

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

But, they're weird people.

James Acaster

No one's shoving out a one-ingredient poo in that place.

Ed Gamble

You don't need to poo halfway through that meal.



James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Oh, man.

Ed Gamble

But, what's worse, though is I bet there's people who go in there and go, 'Oh, I like this.'

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

There's people who enjoy doing that-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I reckon.

Stanley Tucci

Yes. But, they're people who don't know food, right?

James Acaster

When my friend Henry went in there for a wee, when he came out, I told them that when you went in there, they flipped a switch and everyone could see. Everyone saw your dick. It was really fun for me to tell him that.

Ed Gamble

That is insane, though.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. It was a mad place. Also-,

Stanley Tucci

That's weird.

James Acaster

He's a vegetarian, but eats fish and he told them before-, because we said just, like, bring us out whatever. Just whatever you would recommend, just bring it out. And, he said, 'Oh, but, you know, I'm a vegetarian, but I do eat fish.' And, they brought the oysters out and he wasn't expecting that, and he was, like, 'I've never had an oyster before.' I was, like, 'They're brilliant, have one.' And, he literally, similar to you and the sausage earlier, it went in and then whilst still maintaining eye contact with me, he spat it back into the shell. And, I was, like, 'Thanks for that.'

Stanley Tucci

Oh, no.

James Acaster

That's, like, the start of our meal.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.



James Acaster

And, he left his oyster. So, he left that there. I ate all the other oysters and when they came to collect the plates, they went, 'No one's eaten this oyster.' And, he went, 'Oh, I don't really like oysters.' And, she went, 'Oh, okay, well, just so you know, oysters count as fish, so next time you might want to not tell people you eat fish.'

Stanley Tucci

What?

James Acaster

And then, walked away without it. He got properly told off.

Ed Gamble

Oh, man.

Stanley Tucci

Oh my god. What an awful place.

James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Stanley Tucci

It's like hell.

James Acaster

Yes. Also, the way that he, kind of, like, consoled himself was that they seemed very, you know, as they should be, very anti-waste there.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

So, I was, like, 'If it's any consolation, Henry, I'm pretty sure she's gone into that kitchen and eaten that oyster that you spat out.'

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

So, if it makes you feel better-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

I think you just, you know, did what we all worry the waitresses do to us-,

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

But, you reversed it.



Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

And, it's not even your fault. And, he went for a piss and everyone saw his dick.

Ed Gamble

So, not oysters from that place.

James Acaster

Not oysters from that place-

Stanley Tucci

No, not oysters from Stockholm-

James Acaster

Rockefeller oysters.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

With a couple of Rockefellers. Because, I was always quite-, I was, like, weird about cooked oysters because-

Stanley Tucci

Yes, me too.

Ed Gamble

The raw is so nice, right?

Stanley Tucci

I know, I know.

Ed Gamble

But then, I've had them recently where they've been amazing, even on-, we did our dream menus for our 100th episode-

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And, I'd buy, like, these meal kits from a place called Decatur who do New Orleans boils and also-

Stanley Tucci

Oh, wow. Yes, alright.

Ed Gamble

These oysters that you do, they send this amazing pecorino garlic butter that you put on them and then do them on the barbecue. And, that is just the best.

Stanley Tucci

Woah.



James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And, they're cooked just enough to still have a bite to them-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes, right.

Ed Gamble

And, the butter is just insane.

Stanley Tucci

Oh, that's amazing. But, it's, like-, even, like, a fried oyster, you know, there's a place. I remember this place in Vancouver. I can't remember the name of it now, but I used to go all the time when I was working there. So much stuff shoots there. And, I would just sit at the bar and they had these really cool things. They have them in Grand Central, too in the oyster bar. So, they had the big soup things that sit on a bar, do you know what I mean? And, they heat the soup up in it.

Ed Gamble

Right.

Stanley Tucci

Do you know what I'm talking about?

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think-, yes.

Stanley Tucci

And then, they tip it like that and they serve your soup from it. It's really cool. Like, they're right in front of you. And so, they have those and then they do raw oysters and then they do fried oysters. They were literally the best fried oysters I've ever had-,

Ed Gamble

Wow.

Stanley Tucci

In my life. Like, you could not stop eating them.

James Acaster

Do you want those as well in your oyster starter?

Stanley Tucci

Kind of, yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes. We'll chuck them onto your oyster starter as well-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes, for sure.



James Acaster

Yes, you can have a bunch of oysters.

Stanley Tucci

Thank you.

Ed Gamble

I was on honeymoon in May in California. We were driving the Pacific Coast highway-,

Stanley Tucci

Right.

Ed Gamble

And, stopped at a couple of places-,

Stanley Tucci

Congratulations.

Ed Gamble

Thank you very much. And, had, like, a big bowl of just fried seafood, and oysters and the clams in there, and just-, and by the sea.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It's amazing.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Like, up in Maine. Again, I wrote about it in the book. I'm really pushing this book. Sorry.

James Acaster

Push away.

Stanley Tucci

My late wife, her mother and her husband lived up in Maine. And, we would go up there in the summer and we would get mussels, like, just from the shore. You know, just gazillions of them and they were the most delicious mussels I've ever had. Ever, ever. And, you just, you know, you get them. You clean them. Eat them right there overlooking the waters, like wow. He used to go and get lobster just from a lobster man nearby, we used to go out to an island, cook the lobster, and he cooked it so perfectly, he'd just take the seawater, cook it, put it in a pot, put it over a fire that we built, and then put seaweed on top of the lobster, and then corn on top of that, and then seaweed. And then six minutes, seven minutes, done, and you're eating that with butter on the shore of this island, it's like the beautiful main water, it's always like a little-, actually the water is always freezing, just, like, magnificent.

Ed Gamble

Wow.



James Acaster

Oh that's it. My stomach was already going crazy, and as you were telling that story, I could feel it just going, 'I'm about to make some crazy noises right now.'

Stanley Tucci

Is that what that was?

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Was that you?

James Acaster

It's my actual stomach, people might think, you know, the great Benito is getting you some sound effects there for the podcast, a gurgle, 'A good food description, I'll put a little stomach gurgle in.'

Ed Gamble

(talking over each other) at a restaurant to be like a DJ.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

'Did everyone enjoy the starter?' Your dream main course.

Stanley Tucci

Again there's so many things that I love, I want to say a pasta but I also, kind of, want to say veal Milanese with chopped tomato and arugula, and a squeeze of lemon, like similar to basically a veal schnitzel right, it's the same thing, but when it's made properly and it's really thin and the veal is really good, that is just one of the greatest things in the world.

James Acaster

Wow.

Stanley Tucci

Or lasagne bolognese is probably, maybe, the most delicious pasta that's ever been made, that's if it's made properly.

Ed Gamble

That's the thing isn't it, I think we ask people their favourite main courses and their favourite foods, and I'm here, but in my mind I'm always thinking, 'But lasagne is the best food, so obviously everyone thinks that.'

Stanley Tucci

Yes it is amazing lasagne, I mean it's a pain in the ass to make but when it's made properly. I mean my Mum's lasagne bolognese is just one of the greatest things ever.

Ed Gamble

It takes a long time obviously to get the sauce right.

Stanley Tucci

Yes you make the sauce, you, kind of, slow cook the sauce, and then you béchamel it, and ideally you're using two different kinds of pasta, you're using spinach pasta and then just a regular wheat pasta, and you're cooking that pasta and layering it, layer after layer after layer after layer, and then



in the oven. It's substantial and people just devour it, you know, it's like eggplant parmigiana, you make it and then you're like it takes you fucking forever to make it, and you put it down and it's gone in a few minutes. My son made it a little while ago when he was at university, he goes, 'Dad I'm making eggplant,' I was like, 'Oh great, fantastic, great.' He called me the next day, he goes, 'Jesus Christ, I had no idea,' I go, 'I know, remember I told you? That's why I get so mad, god damn it who ate it all?'

Ed Gamble

You've almost got to, every time you make that, make a little extra one just to keep to the side for yourself.

Stanley Tucci

That's true.

James Acaster

You were showing me a photo of a schnitzel before Stanley arrived.

Ed Gamble

I was.

Stanley Tucci

That was no schnitzel.

James Acaster

Oh has he got me again?

Ed Gamble

I was in Copenhagen yesterday, I was in Copenhagen.

Stanley Tucci

Oh my god, look at you, so wordly, I love Copenhagen, I was there for half an hour once but I loved it.

Ed Gamble

It is amazing, it's an amazing place, we were there for a wedding on Saturday and then hung out there yesterday as well and I had a fantastic schnitzel at a restaurant called Bar, but it's like a brown butter sauce with capers in it, and then with these mushrooms on, and then lingonberries on top of it as well, it was absolutely phenomenal. Although I was wearing a new shirt because I thought I'd dress up and one of the lingonberries exploded.

James Acaster

Oh no.

Ed Gamble

So that was a bit of a drama.

Stanley Tucci

There's a lawsuit.

Ed Gamble

Yes exactly.

Stanley Tucci

I mean I didn't want to say anything.



James Acaster

The classic Ed Gamble story, a lingonberries exploded on his shirt.

Ed Gamble

And that upset me.

James Acaster

And he was upset.

Ed Gamble

My wife had to go and tell me how to get the stain out.

James Acaster

Had to Google it.

Ed Gamble

But it was worth it, they bring you this little pan of brown butter with, I think they were capers but they were quite dried capers almost, and you they put the brown butter on for you and then leave you with the pan of butter, which is a mistake because as soon as she turned her back, the pan went over.

Stanley Tucci

Were they dehydrated capers?

Ed Gamble

I think they might have been dehydrated capers yes, but we were hungover as well, so it was great hangover food.

Stanley Tucci

Yes that's perfect, that's perfect.

Ed Gamble

Really good.

Stanley Tucci

And sometimes you get schnitzel or veal Milanese, and because they cook it in clarified butter, right, but it's just to me too buttery, and sometimes too thick, too bready, too buttery. When I do it, I don't use flour, which I think is probably a sin, but I only use egg and breadcrumbs, I have it pounded really super thin, and then do half olive oil and half clarified butter. So you're still getting the butter taste but it's lighter.

Ed Gamble

I sort of feel the same about the way a lot of steak is cooked in restaurants, they hit it with so much butter at the end, especially the butter, and the rosemary, and the garlic, and stuff, when I do it at home, I'll use oil, like I use rapeseed oil or something, you still get the same char and you can eat the whole thing without feeling sick.

Stanley Tucci

Yes exactly, a little butter but you don't need-

Ed Gamble

The taste is good but you don't need it soaked.

James Acaster

So I watched a video the other day-



Ed Gamble

Oh good for you.

James Acaster

On YouTube, this is my version of your Guinness guy, or whatever, there's a guy who lives in Disney World, who goes to Disney World everyday.

Ed Gamble

He lives in Disney World?

James Acaster

Or he lives in Florida but, like, just on the outskirts of Disney World and spends everyday in Disney World, and recently he went to New York for the first time and made a video of that, and he went to Peter Luger because his whole life, he wanted to go there. So there's a video of him going to Peter Luger and having this steak, and absolutely having his mind blown by it because everything he eats anyway-, I mean this guy goes around Disney World eating food, and every time he eats some food, he goes, 'Oh wow, that is phenomenal.' So he always says that, 'Oh wow, that is phenomenal.'

Ed Gamble

About Disneyland food?

James Acaster

About Disney World food, yes, he'll like eat a Mickey beignet and go, 'Oh wow, that is phenomenal.' So he loves it.

Stanley Tucci

He's obviously insane, I mean come on.

James Acaster

This is his life, he went to New York, obviously he want to Times Square because that was where the Disney shop is, so he went there.

Stanley Tucci

Oh wow.

James Acaster

But he went to Peter Luger's, and he was like, 'I've been dreaming about this steak my entire life,' and he loved it, but he said that they broil it before they bring it out, they broil everything or something before they bring it out. They cook the steak, and then they broil it, and then they send it out, does that make any sense?

Stanley Tucci

Yes that makes sense.

James Acaster

Yes, he kept on saying that's the secret there for the Peter Luger stuff, he said they broiled the strudel as well, can you just broil everything?

Stanley Tucci

Oh really?

James Acaster

Yes, and I think it's put through the (talking over each other).



Stanley Tucci

And it's what you guys call grill, right?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

Right.

James Acaster

Well that makes sense now.

Ed Gamble

What did you think it was in your mind?

James Acaster

I thought he was putting it in a bain-marie or something, I thought he was boiling it.

Stanley Tucci

No, not boiling.

James Acaster

I thought they were sapping everything in boiling water.

Stanley Tucci

No.

Ed Gamble

A quick dip in boiling water.

Stanley Tucci

No a broiler is what you call a grill, right, so intense heat is coming from above, and there are a lot of steakhouses that do that, they just go under like that, and if you're going to do it, it makes an amazing steak.

James Acaster

Well he said it was the best steak of his life, he said he was going to be dreaming about that steak.

Stanley Tucci

Really?

James Acaster

Yes.

Stanley Tucci

I never went to Peter Luger's.

James Acaster

Me neither.

Stanley Tucci

I don't think I ever went there.



Ed Gamble

You can't book, so that's instantly a hurdle, and I think you have to pay in cash, it's like one of those proper old school places.

Stanley Tucci

And they're really mean to you.

Ed Gamble

They're really mean to you.

Stanley Tucci

That's what I've heard, like, they're just horrible.

James Acaster

I think if you're a vlogger and you're filming everything, they're nice to you by the looks of things because that guy had everyone be nice to him, probably because he was documenting it.

Ed Gamble

Yes if you were taking a sip of the water and going, 'Oh wow.'

James Acaster

'That is phenomenal.' They were like, 'Give him everything, he's going to promote us.' So what, of all those main courses, what are you settling on for the main?

Stanley Tucci

Let's go for the lasagne bolognese.

James Acaster

Made by your mother?

Stanley Tucci

Without question.

James Acaster

Your dream side dish?

Stanley Tucci

I think, honestly, charred spinach or something like that, really simple, olive oil with a little bit of garlic, but you cook it with the garlic, right, and then you just salt it, drizzle olive oil and a squeeze of lemon, that's it.

Ed Gamble

Now when Stanley said boiled there James-,

Stanley Tucci

I meant boiled.

Ed Gamble

He meant boiled.

James Acaster

Under the grill.

Ed Gamble

No.



James Acaster

That is phenomenal.

Stanley Tucci

Yes stupidly simple, but yes.

Ed Gamble

It's all you need sometimes, especially if there's a lasagne floating around.

Stanley Tucci

Yes sure.

James Acaster

It's a popular side that actually probably the first shout out for charred we've had, but the spinach and garlic, that's a popular side on the pod.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, and it goes with the-, because if you've had lasagne bolognese, you're not really going to have a side dish because it has everything in it, so you don't really have one, but if you have one, it should be, like, a leafy, green vegetable.

James Acaster

Has that been something that you've got into more as an adult? Because I mean if I saw a kid and there side dish of choice was some spinach with garlic, I'd be like, 'This is a sophisticated kid.'

Stanley Tucci

As you get older, it changes, I remember my kids not eating any of that stuff, and now in their twenties and, you know, they do, they love all that stuff.

James Acaster

Is that a fun thing? Because I don't have kids, I don't plan on having kids, but I think that must be a pretty fun part of being a parent, is food and getting them into different things as they're growing up, introducing them to new dishes, that must be quite nice?

Stanley Tucci

It is nice, it's hard when they're, like, the age that my little ones are now, seven and a half, four and a half, you know, everyday, you just don't know what you're going to get, 'Okay, do you want some sausages for dinner?' 'I don't like sausages,' and you're like, 'What do you mean you don't like them? What do you mean you don't like sausages?' 'No I don't,' you're like, 'Two days ago, you ate like 50 of them.' It's like it's ever changing, like, you just never know what's going to happen, so you're constantly having those arguments, 'Two more bites, one more bite, no big bite, big bite, that's not a big bite, why is on the floor now?' It's that. So it is really hard, but then once they start to really love something, then it starts to open their minds, and as they get older, now I love watching my older kids eat. My son Nicolo is going to go to culinary school, he is going to culinary school now after graduating with a degree in politics. So I'm really excited, he's a really great, natural cook, has always had a sophisticated pallet, ate an oyster when he was two.

Ed Gamble

Wow.

Stanley Tucci

I know.



Ed Gamble

That's when you know someone is going (talking over each other)-,

Stanley Tucci

Which I think is illegal, it's my fault.

James Acaster

Was he eating olives as well at that point?

Stanley Tucci

Yes, he, of all of them, had the most sophisticated pallet.

James Acaster

Wow.

Ed Gamble

I think you can tell early, can't you?

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

When someone is going to be adventurous with food, yes I remember being like that as a kid.

Stanley Tucci

You were adventurous?

Ed Gamble

Very adventurous, I think it was also because I like to be seen as being difficult.

Stanley Tucci

Right, well that's changed.

Ed Gamble

Exactly, yes it's gone, I've definitely regressed. Also I wanted to be more grown up than the other kids, and especially if adults were a bit like, 'Oh you won't like that, that's quite a grown up taste,' I was like, 'No, I will have that.'

Stanley Tucci

That's good.

Ed Gamble

Spinach was the only one they had to trick me to eat by saying it was like Popeye.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Popeye eats that, he's strong, that would be straight in.

James Acaster

That's why you got into pipes as well.

Stanley Tucci

And tattoos.



Ed Gamble

Speaking out the side of my mouth.

James Acaster

Of all of my friends, Ed is the one that if someone said to me, you could hang out with any of your mates as a kid, I would choose Ed.

Stanley Tucci

Really?

James Acaster

Yes, I'd stay the same age as I am now, but hang out with Ed when he was a little boy.

Stanley Tucci

When he was a kid, yes.

James Acaster

I think that would be a really fun day for me, I'd enjoy it a lot, out of all of my mates.

Stanley Tucci

That's nice.

Ed Gamble

It's a pretty creepy hypothetical scenario I would say.

Stanley Tucci

Yes, I didn't want to say anything.

James Acaster

Well I'm going to ask you the question, out of all of your friends, if you could spend the day with one of them and you stay the same age and they're five, who would you pick out of all of your mates?

Stanley Tucci

I don't know, that's a really funny question, it is such a weird question. Probably my friend Steve Buscemi.

James Acaster

Oh yes, I would love to just see what he would look like.

Stanley Tucci

I think he would look exactly the same.

James Acaster

I think he'd be the same, yes. Also he could say his catchphrase, 'How do you do, fellow kids?' And that would actually be true, have you seen that meme?

Stanley Tucci

No.

Ed Gamble

That's a huge meme.

James Acaster

Yes it's a meme of him in a film-,



Ed Gamble

No it's in 30 Rock.

James Acaster

In 30 Rock, and he's dressed as a teenager with a skateboard, and says, 'How do you do, fellow kids?'

Ed Gamble

Because he's playing a private investigator who goes undercover in a school, he's just a skateboard.

James Acaster

He could actually say that as a five year.

Ed Gamble

Yes, 'How are you doing, fellow kids?'

James Acaster

I would love to see him as a five year old.

Stanley Tucci

It would be funny.

James Acaster

It would be absolutely brilliant, I mean just so many of his characters, which I'd like to see a five year old play. That's what I'd like to do, if it was him, I'd like to him to, 'Right now, you have to do your character in Fargo, but you're five.'

Stanley Tucci

Yes that would be funny, and just really disturbing.

Ed Gamble

Con Air would be a weird one.

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, a few of them.

Stanley Tucci

But he's one of the funniest guys ever, he's so funny.

Ed Gamble

Is he a good food friend as well? Do you go and eat together?

Stanley Tucci

Yes he used to go out, because know I live here, he's in New York, and yes we used to go all the time and eat together, and we would visit them in Brooklyn, or they'd come up to our house, and we'd have weekends and stuff like that. We'd go to our friend Aidan Quinn and his wife Lizzi, the six of us, my late wife, this is terrible conversation, but my first wife died, Steve's wife died a number of years ago. And the six of us were really all very close, we spent thirteen New Year's Eves together, you know, and we were always cooking and eating and having the best time. Anyway, I killed that story didn't I.



James Acaster

I was about to say that my friend named their cat after Steve Buscemi.

Stanley Tucci

Really, is it called Steve Buscemi?

James Acaster

No just Buscemi.

Ed Gamble

That's the half that you want to pick to name it after.

James Acaster

But we didn't know how to pronounce it so it was just called Buscemi for the whole (talking over each other) something like that-, I mean that cat has also died, now I'm bringing the conversation down.

Stanley Tucci

I know a guy who named-, an actor, such a wonderful actor, Bruce Greenwood, and he told me a long time ago, he goes, 'Look we named our dog after you.' I was like, 'What do you mean, Stanley.' He goes, 'No, Stanley Tucci that's the name of the dog.'

Ed Gamble

You've always got to imagine when you name a dog what it's going to sound like when you call it across a park or something.

Stanley Tucci

I know.

Ed Gamble

And it goes, 'Stanley Tucci.'

Stanley Tucci

It's so weird.

James Acaster

Is that how you met, it's cos he shouted that and you were like, 'Yes.' For the listener the great Benito has just said that his fiend has a cat named Stanley Tucci.

Stanley Tucci

I'm very flattered. (talking over each other). That cat looks insane, that's a scary looking cat.

James Acaster

Yes that is a scary looking cat, I just caught a glimpse of that.

Stanley Tucci

I mean it's cute.

James Acaster

Yes that's Stanley Tucci.

Stanley Tucci

No, lovely, thank you, tell him thank you.



Ed Gamble

It is flattering I guess but also I would be asking myself why.

Stanley Tucci

Why, yes.

James Acaster

At no point when you waked in here today did I think, 'He's got the air of a domestic pet.'

Ed Gamble

We move onto your dream drink.

Stanley Tucci

I think at the beginning you'd have a martini, a vodka martini or a gin martini.

Ed Gamble

What's your preference?

Stanley Tucci

I go back and forth but, with the meal, I think you would have a really nice, not tannin, that's just my preference, soft, red.

Ed Gamble

Italian are we going Italian?

Stanley Tucci

It could be Italian, it could be French. Whatever, as long as it's good.

Ed Gamble

Do you have a, sort of, wine that you've had in the past that really stuck out as truly one of the great bottles or one of the great drink experiences?

Stanley Tucci

Well I think Tignanello is an amazing wine. It has more tannins than-, I just can't because of the radiation treatments, I can't-, anything tannin I can't drink, which is, kind of, irritating.

Ed Gamble

Because it's changed the taste or because it interacts in a way?

Stanley Tucci

It interacts in your mouth in a different way because your mouth has been so compromised. And I don't have enough saliva to-, you can tell, I keep sipping water and I keep-, the lack of saliva, it must do something with tannins. It helps you swallow them but, for me, if it's very tannin it's like someone has just taken a cloth and just wiping your (talking over each other).

Ed Gamble

It dries the mouth out.

Stanley Tucci

It's painful, you know, it's weird, it almost hurts sometimes. Whereas if it's a really soft red, like a Pinot Noir or something like that, it's like, 'Great, that's fine.' But there's a wonderful wine that's called Villa Spirina that we had at our wedding, it's a white wine. And it's a place that we actually went to and stayed and it's a really beautiful vineyard and they had this hotel and it's just gorgeous, in Piedmont. That white wine, not really crazy expensive or anything, but absolutely delicious.



James Acaster

Well maybe we could have these drinks at different parts of the meal then.

Stanley Tucci

I like that idea.

James Acaster

If you want a martini at the start.

Stanley Tucci

I would do the martini at the start, then I would have a glass of the white then I would have a glass of the red.

Ed Gamble

Oh yes, a glass of the white with the oysters, definitely you've got to do that. And then the red with the lasagne.

James Acaster

Would you raise a toast, are you a toast giver when you have a glass of wine, would you raise a glass?

Stanley Tucci

Yes.

James Acaster

What would you toast to?

Ed Gamble

This is a new question that James has decided to ask today.

Stanley Tucci

Oh really. What would I toast to, a happy long life to everybody, you know. I think, you know, after telling you the story about my wife and everything and friends, it's just-, I think when you get to my age too, I know I'm not ancient, I'll be 62, but you're like, you start losing people and people start falling apart, basically. So, all you want is for the people that you love to be around.

Ed Gamble

That's a lovely toast.

James Acaster

Yes, I think that's a good new question (talking over each other).

Ed Gamble

It's worked out well.

Stanley Tucci

It is a good question.

James Acaster

Yes, every time someone orders wine, I'll be like, 'Raise a toast and what to.' I think it's nice.

Ed Gamble

But Stanley is very thoughtful, we don't normally have such a thoughtful guest on, you know. We get a lot of comedians on, who just want to toast to, like, dicks or whatever.



Stanley Tucci

Oh, I was going to say that.

James Acaster

Most of them, most people to toast their dicks so far, so their dicks or a long life for everyone.

Stanley Tucci

A friend an I-, I saw him last night actually, we have a joke, we'll just pick up a glass and go, 'Go fuck yourself.'

James Acaster

We arrive at your dream dessert. Now before we started recording you did start saying to Ed that you don't really like sweet things very much. That started scaring me, I'm a big dessert boy. So I'm a little bit worried, but also I'm not too worried because I know you're a massive fan of food, you love food, I imagine there is a dessert that is sweet that would be-,

Stanley Tucci

Yes, there are definitely, yes-, blueberry pie, I love blueberry pie. Like, with blueberries from, like, the East Coast of the US, like Maine, I love that. Or apple, apple pie, delicious.

James Acaster

I think blueberry pie and, like, cherry pie, stuff, like, that we-, because apple pie we do a lot in the UK. But stuff like blueberry, we don't get as many blueberry pies. Cherry pies you can get a bit but there's not the way it's done in the States. So when we're over there, I think we've talked on the pod before about when we walked ages in New York to get a cherry pie, just following your Google Maps for ages and then the place was shut.

Ed Gamble

I was in a bad mood that day Stanley.

James Acaster

As soon as we thought-,

Stanley Tucci

That's cruel.

James Acaster

That's what we want, we just wanted to-, a blueberry pie is-, it sounds pretty delicious.

Ed Gamble

Because also the whole pie-, we don't have as much as a sweet pie culture here.

Stanley Tucci

No you're a savoury pie.

Ed Gamble

Yes so it's really-, the idea of blueberry pie and cherry pie is presented to us through American films and so on so it's such an American thing to us.

Stanley Tucci

Which is weird because you have incredible fruit in the UK. I mean you have an excess of it now because number one, there aren't enough people to pick it, number two, it's like-, I just heard recently, there's a friend of mine who has a company that does, they call it, rescue fruit. So the fruit that's, sort of, bruised or looks a little funny.



Ed Gamble

Yes, (talking over each other) fruit.

Stanley Tucci

Yes they take it and they make, like, fruit balls out of it and things for kids and jams and all this really great stuff. But somebody came to this guy, he's a huge fruit grower and seller, he came to him and said, 'I've 200 tons of blueberries that I can't get rid of.' The supermarkets were, like, 'We can't take it, we don't have,' and he's like, 'Can you take it and put it in your freezers.' And they say, 'We don't have the capacity and threw it out.' Can you imagine.

Ed Gamble

Oh it's devastating.

Stanley Tucci

There was just an article too about, something like that, that these people are just throwing the stuff away because there aren't enough pickers. Because after Brexit people started thinking, 'Oh fuck it, I'm not, you know, what's the point.'

James Acaster

I wish all those blueberries had gone into a pie, a huge pie.

Stanley Tucci

Can you imagine. I know, because you have amazing fruit here. But you do have incredible savoury pies. I mean a pasty, in a sense, being like that. I had one the other day, just, like, the greatest thing in the world.

James Acaster

It reminds me of being an open spot (inaudible). As a comedian just starting in comedy, the pasties, because I'd get the train to London from Kettering, where I'm from and then-

Stanley Tucci

Where are you from?

James Acaster

Kettering, in Northamptonshire, a little market town in East Midlands. About an hour on the train into Kings Cross, get there, do the gig, not have any time to eat in the thing. And, just before I got onto the train, I'd just get a pasty from the place and immediately sit down and burn my mouth.

Stanley Tucci

It's so hot, it's incredible, I know, but you're so hungry too, you just want to get at it.

James Acaster

I know, I really wanted to get at it. So I'd try a different one each time to give myself a little, 'Oh I'll try this one this time.' Beef and Stilton one was my favourite.

Stanley Tucci

Beef and Stilton, oh yes, yes.

James Acaster

Oh it's so good, I had to try and, sort of, slow myself down with them by just eating the bit round the edge, because that's not as hot.

Stanley Tucci

That's true.



James Acaster

And just wait and then maybe bite a little hole in the end to try and get some air into the pasty. And then it's party time.

Stanley Tucci

Yes we stopped the other day, I went down to Cornwall, and on the way back, we just stopped off and, like, a rest stop, whatever you call it, what do you call it?

James Acaster

A service station?

Stanley Tucci

Yes, there's always that company, the Cornish Pasty Company or whatever it is, in Cornwall, whatever it is. It's so good, classic pasty.

Ed Gamble

Every food culture, I think, certainly Western cultures all have a version of meat in pastry, little hand pies. We were at a wedding at the weekend. The bride is English but one half of her family is Italian and the groom is Argentinian and it was in Copenhagen so it was just, like, a mad guest list. And all of the food was a huge mix of everything. So when we were all dancing, so the cheese got cut, there was an incredible cheese platter and then they just brought out empanandas about an hour later. So I was dancing with two empanandas in my hand, it was just having the best night.

James Acaster

Shirt covered in berry juice. What are you putting on the pie, are you having ice cream with it, cream, or are you just having it on it's own?

Stanley Tucci

I'd have it on it's own but maybe a dollop of vanilla ice cream.

James Acaster

Proper vanilla bean ice cream?

Stanley Tucci

Yes, that's good, you get that hot and the cold mixing together.

James Acaster

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

Stanley Tucci

Alright.

James Acaster

You would like sparkling water, San Pellegrino to be precise.

Stanley Tucci

Without question.

James Acaster

Also a martini with that before the meal begins. Also focaccia and, I'm going to try and say, it looks like Benito's written sciatica, but I'm pretty sure that you don't want (talking over each other), you'd like sciatica.

Stanley Tucci

Schiacciata.



James Acaster

Schiacciata, with olive oil and lots of salt. For starter you would like oysters, plain and Rockefeller with the deep fried Vancouver oysters as well and the Villa Spirina white wine. Main course, mother's lasagne bolognese with soft red wine. Side dish of chard and spinach with garlic, olive oil, salt and lemon. The drink is also the red wine there. And dessert, blueberry pie with a dollop of vanilla ice cream. That sounds very good.

Stanley Tucci

I'm hungry now.

James Acaster

Yes, got to be.

Stanley Tucci

Very nicely described.

James Acaster

Thank you very much. Well, you know, that's all Benito is doing, he writes it down as the episode is going along. I think that's it. That is what you do. You do that and you find pictures of cats that are named after the guests. They are your two jobs.

Stanley Tucci

You say, that, you show that picture to every guest don't you?

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes. You got it. (talking over each other)

Stanley Tucci

'Oh look at my friend's cat he's named (inaudible).'

Ed Gamble

That is a good name for a cat as well.

James Acaster

Stanley thank you so much for coming to the dream restaurant.

Stanley Tucci

Thank you guys it's really been fun.

Ed Gamble

What a wonderful way to end the series James.

James Acaster

Delicious, a delicious menu and a wonderful man.

Ed Gamble

So true. Such a nice conversation, such a nice chat with the brilliant Stanley Tucci. Don't forget, it's Christmas coming up, why not buy Stanley's new book, his new paperback, Taste, My Life In Food. It's out now, it's good for presents, or a little present to yourself.

James Acaster

And make sure you get on iPlayer and watch Inside Man as well. I mean you've got to watch loads of TV over the Christmas season haven't you.



Ed Gamble

It's perfect.

James Acaster

The last episode of the series, we didn't chuck Stanley out, we didn't say Dragon Soop, thank you, sorry Morgana.

Ed Gamble

Sorry Morgana, no chuck outs this season.

James Acaster

No chuck outs at all, still the only person we've chucked out is Jade Adams on Strictly, (talking over each other). Well not on Strictly, Jade Adams is currently on Strictly.

Ed Gamble

Yes, we chucked her straight onto (talking over each other).

James Acaster

She's currently on Strictly at the time of recording. This is, like, at the time of recording there's been two episodes of Strictly have gone out, and Jade is still in it.

Ed Gamble

Strictly might be over.

James Acaster

This is the final episode of this series so I think safe to say, Jade has been voted off by now. Probably hit the dance floor, chosen to do a dance involving hundreds and thousands and immediately got kicked out by Tony (talking over each other).

Ed Gamble

Yes, she spins round, does a big spin at the end, and loads of hundreds and thousands fly out of her dress.

James Acaster

Yes, I just saw her do a dance recently on it where, it's based on Flash Dance, and she sits in the chair at the end and pulls this thing and loads of glitter falls on it, how good would it have been?

Ed Gamble

Oh my God.

James Acaster

If loads of hundreds and thousands-, hundreds and thousands straight in her face.

Ed Gamble

How baffled would most people have been.

James Acaster

What's with the hundreds and thousands at the end, because she love them. You know, I think a lot of the time, end of series chat, you know, it goes on for longer than needs be. People don't want to let go of their series.

Ed Gamble

Well look, they needn't worry because of course, we always do Christmas specials and this year will be no different. We've got two very exciting Christmas specials coming up for you. And also maybe another little surprise.



James Acaster

Yes maybe another little surprise.

Ed Gamble

Maybe, and we'll see some of you on December 20th at The Royal Festival Hall. That's all sold out now so apologies if you couldn't get tickets but I'm sure we'll do more live stuff in the future.

James Acaster

Yes, hopefully we will be able to, they are great fun and we would like to see more of you.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but we will not come outside of London unless it's Canada.

James Acaster

Yes, only Canada. Only London and Montreal.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

The only two places we will ever be.

Ed Gamble

LonMo.

James Acaster

LonMo that's what is says on our Twitter. Location, LonMo.

Ed Gamble

Thank you very much for listening to this series of Off Menu, keep on chomping and we will see you very soon.

James Acaster

Keep on stomping, keep on chomping.