



Off Menu – Ep 264 – Rukmini Iyer

Ed Gamble

Welcome to the Off Menu podcast, taking the crisp bacon of conversation, putting it on the buttered bread of the internet, adding the tomato ketchup of great times and then, why not? A fried egg of humour, James.

James Acaster

That is Ed Gamble. My name is-,

Ed Gamble

Ben's going to cut my cough, so-,

James Acaster

What?

Ed Gamble

You're going to sound incredibly weird.

James Acaster

No, he won't cut your cough.

Ed Gamble

He will. It was disgusting.

James Acaster

I didn't know we cut coughs on this podcast.

Ed Gamble

Yes, so my cough's been cut out.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And now-, but yours will still be in.

James Acaster

Mine was fake for the listeners.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you sound crazy.



James Acaster

That is Ed Gamble, my name is James Acaster, I'm crazy. This is the Off Menu podcast. We own a dream restaurant every single week, we invite in a guest, we ask them their favourite ever starter, main course, dessert, side dish and drink, not in that order, and this week our guest is Rukmini Iyer.

Ed Gamble

Rukmini Iyer. The author of the Roasting Tin series of cookbooks, which is hugely popular and got some fantastic recipes. Anne Gamble, my mum, big fan.

James Acaster

And Ben is a big fan, I think he said.

Ed Gamble

The great Benito.

James Acaster

Sorry, for the listeners, the great Benito.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

But a new book is out, the Green Cookbook, easy vegan and vegetarian dinners.

Ed Gamble

I'm already excited. We've been sent a copy of it, I've been having a look through it. I can't wait, James.

James Acaster

It's out now, so definitely get on that, and get the Roasting Tin books if you haven't had them.

Ed Gamble

Yes, do, and it's always fun having a chef on as well, James.

James Acaster

It is. It's nice to have a chef on. Different perspective on food, which you'd think that we'd have mainly chefs on, but like idiots, we have mainly comedians.

Ed Gamble

And idiots.

James Acaster

And idiots on, and it's nice to get someone who really knows their onions.



Ed Gamble

Absolutely.

James Acaster

Literally.

Ed Gamble

But, if Rukmini says the secret ingredient, which we have pre-agreed upon, we will unfortunately have to ask her to leave the restaurant, which would be embarrassing because I'm sure she's got plenty of interesting stuff to say.

James Acaster

Yes, if we kick a chef out, it's egg on our face.

Ed Gamble

It's egg on-, literally.

James Acaster

Literally.

Ed Gamble

And the secret ingredient this week is Beef jerky.

James Acaster

Beef jerky.

Ed Gamble

I don't know if it's going to come up, you know, we're going to be chatting about Rukmini's vegan and vegetarian cookbook.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

It would seem weird if beef jerky came up, but beef jerky is an acquired taste, James.

James Acaster

It's an acquired taste. I think we both like it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I like it. I don't really like-, some of the stuff you buy in the supermarket can be a bit gelatinous for me.



James Acaster

Yes. It has to be a good beef jerky. I can't just grab anything off the shelf and, like, it has to be something people say, 'Have you tried this? It's great.' If it comes recommended, I'll have the beef jerky, but I'm not just grabbing it willy-nilly.

Ed Gamble

No, you're not grabbing beef willy-nilly, are you?

James Acaster

I'm not grabbing beef willy-nilly, but I think that we can only really chuck a chef out with a clear conscience if they're promoting a green cookbook and they've chosen beef jerky.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Then we at least feel like we've got some solid ground to stand on.

Ed Gamble

Beef jerky has not appeared on any menus so far, as far as I'm aware.

James Acaster

No, it hasn't. I think maybe we've had biltong once.

Ed Gamble

Maybe, yes, biltong has come up.

James Acaster

It's a similar thing.

Ed Gamble

Similar sort of thing, yes. Dried beef.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

But, yes. Look, I'm not sure she's going to pick it, but if she does, we are correct to kick her out.

James Acaster

Yes, I think we'll feel alright about that.

Ed Gamble

So, let's find out. This is the Off Menu menu of Rukmini Iyer.



James Acaster

Rukmini Iyer.

Ed Gamble

Welcome, Rukmini, to the dream restaurant.

Rukmini Iyer

Thank you very much for having me.

James Acaster

Welcome Rukmini Iyer to the dream restaurant, we've been expecting you for some time.

Ed Gamble

Big one today.

James Acaster

Really happy response.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Very happy reaction to it.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. No, no. Happy to be out the house. I don't get out much, so this is really cool.

Ed Gamble

That's a new one. We rarely get that response to a genie, which is 'happy to be out the house', like, that's, you know, not the magic of the genie, not the excitement to see genie, just happy to be anywhere.

Rukmini Iyer

Anywhere, anywhere. Anywhere that's not the four walls of my house.

James Acaster

Happy to be out the lamp.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Good. You're the same.

James Acaster

Yes, I just got out.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

It's been a while.

Rukmini Iyer

And I'm stuck in here, a small room.

James Acaster

Yes. If I knew what the last episode was, because I-, you know, we record these randomly, but if I knew what the last episode that went out was, I could say, like, 'You know, I haven't seen anyone since that person.'

Rukmini Iyer

Insert here.

James Acaster

But, you know, I don't know.

Ed Gamble

Ben, will you edit? No, okay. He won't put it. No, he won't edit in the name.

Rukmini Iyer

Beep.

James Acaster

That's what my life must be like, actually.

Ed Gamble

What do you mean?

James Acaster

I just, like, come out of the lamp and I'll see a celeb, and then I'll go back in the lamp and then I'm out again, and it's just, like, a mad existence.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Sort of, what your life is in real life.

James Acaster

That's true, actually.



Ed Gamble

You're just in your house and then you come here, you meet our guest, and then you go home again.

James Acaster

That is true. I don't really do much besides that, and you say you don't get out of the house much. Why? What's going on?

Rukmini Iyer

Well, I feel like I do. It's just, I go to nursery and back, that's it, that's the highlight of the day. Walk the dog to the nursery, drop the child and come back.

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes. You go to the nursery to take a child there.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, yes. I don't just go randomly.

Ed Gamble

When you said it initially, you were, like, as if you attend nursery.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

I mean, it's tempting. There's hand painting, there's snacks every two hours, one-on-one attention with, like, a nice person.

Ed Gamble

That's good.

Rukmini Iyer

Well, not quite one-on-one, apparently one-to-four, one-to-five, but yes. It seems like a great environment. I would stay, actually.

Ed Gamble

What snacks are they having every two hours?

James Acaster

Yes, that's what I was going to ask.

Rukmini Iyer

They get nice stuff, like watermelon, breadsticks. Yes, like, good stuff for snacks.



Ed Gamble

I feel like breadsticks really drop off after the age of six, like, you get way more breadsticks and rusks.

Rukmini Iyer

Crisp things?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

I guess they're low salt, but I have a soft spot-, you know when you're on holiday in Europe and you sit at a table and you have some, like, bone dry breadsticks in the middle of the table and it's, like, 'Yes, I'll have them.'

James Acaster

Yes, you want some seasoning on them.

Rukmini Iyer

In a paper casing.

James Acaster

Yes, little paper casing.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I love that.

James Acaster

I want something on them, though. I want there to some, like, seasoning on there.

Rukmini Iyer

Dip.

James Acaster

Not even a-, yes, a dip maybe, but, like, I want there to be some salt or some-,

Rukmini Iyer

Like, little seeds or something.

James Acaster

Garlic salt or something on there. Yes, yes, don't just give me the bone dry, beige-, yes.

Rukmini Iyer

No. It's alright, I'll take it for the toddler.



Ed Gamble

They're doing that to make you drink more, right?

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, yes, yes. Dries your mouth, but then they need more salt, don't you? More salt though, the more you drink.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Oldest trick in the book.

Ed Gamble

I fall for it every time.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, me too.

Ed Gamble

Eat all the breadsticks, more beer please.

Rukmini Iyer

Have a free olive.

Ed Gamble

That's it. Olives, it's all a trick, isn't it?

Rukmini Iyer

It's a massive trick.

James Acaster

What if they have those snacks at nursery? Olives?

Rukmini Iyer

A lot of the kids do seem to eat olives.

James Acaster

Yes, it's a good thing.

Rukmini Iyer

My daughter and her little friends, I was like, 'You're literally two and a half. Why are you nailing all the olives?'



Ed Gamble

Wow.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, I know. Sophisticated tastes.

Ed Gamble

Because olives used to be, like, the mark of growing up, right? The first time you enjoy an olive, but now-,

Rukmini Iyer

No more, no more.

Ed Gamble

These kids.

James Acaster

Evolution, man.

Rukmini Iyer

I know, I know. She still enjoys buttered pasta though, so I'm not completely freaked out.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes.

James Acaster

Do you think it's the next step in evolution, is that children are going to eat olives?

Rukmini Iyer

Children are eating olives, yes. They'll be like, 'Can I have some anchovies with that please?' Yes, odd.

James Acaster

Are there any foods that your kids have, or that your kids won't eat?

Rukmini Iyer

It really varies from day to day. My eldest is having a-, like, she's been on mushrooms. Not, you know, the exciting kind.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Just, like, the regular chestnut, button mushrooms, chestnut mushrooms and, like, she just wants those and you try and give her a nice mushroom linguine or something and she's like, 'Just the mushrooms,'



and then she, sort of, just stabs and eats the mushrooms. So, at least it's vitamin D, right? Although, do you have to leave them out in the sun to make them vitamin D?

Ed Gamble

Mushrooms?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I'm not sure.

Rukmini Iyer

I don't know.

James Acaster

Hold on a sec, what? That's interesting. Will they absorb the sun?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, but only if you left them on a sunny windowsill for a little while, but I don't know how true that is. I shouldn't be offering medical advice on a podcast, should I?

Ed Gamble

That feels like a risk as well, just leaving mushrooms out.

Rukmini Iyer

Well, yes, because when they go off, they're really, really bad.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes.

Rukmini Iyer

So, I don't know. This should come with a disclaimer. I don't know.

James Acaster

Yes. Well, sometimes Benito Googles facts and this would be the earliest he's had to Google anything. It's true, he's already done it.

Rukmini Iyer

Wow. Amazing. Thank you very much.



James Acaster

It says, 'Exposing mushrooms to UV light, whether by design or unintentionally, causes measurable increases in the vitamin D2 content.' Now, I don't know if they needed to specify whether by design or unintentionally, because obviously-,

Rukmini Iyer

Well, I guess mushrooms like dark places, but if you're worried about-, you could put a UV sad lamp in your fridge.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's good.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And then, in winter, every time you open the fridge, it would cheer you up a bit.

Rukmini Iyer

Exactly.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

And then some tasty vitamin D mushrooms on top of it.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Why not?

Rukmini Iyer

I think we should market this.

Ed Gamble

Does it work if you leave a mushroom pizza out, do you reckon?

Rukmini Iyer

No.

Ed Gamble

Just leave that out in the sun.

Rukmini Iyer

That's disgusting.



James Acaster

He's asking because he's left a mushroom pizza out, he's just remembered.

Rukmini Iyer

A tasty snack for when you get home.

Ed Gamble

I've left it on the windowsill. I hope a cheeky little fat boy from the Beano doesn't grab it.

Rukmini Iyer

There's probably a fox.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Let's talk about the Green Cookbook, your new vegan and vegetarian dinners cookbook. It's very exciting.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. Thank you.

James Acaster

When did you start work on this, because these kind of things take ages, right?

Rukmini Iyer

Well, actually, my publisher has a big stick and they've, kind of, been, like, 'You will publish a book a year,' for the last six or seven years.

James Acaster

Do you want us to step in?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, that would be great.

James Acaster

That sounds bad.

Rukmini Iyer

Do you have another stick? Just, like, a stick fight in the middle of the office.

James Acaster

Breadsticks. Seasoned with loads of salt.

Ed Gamble

You can't bring a breadstick to a stick fight.

James Acaster

You're in big trouble. Unless they've just had a beer.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

They're like, 'That looks good.'

Rukmini Iyer

Maybe, like, a bamboo cane from the garden.

James Acaster

Yes. Fucking hell, you'd tear someone up with that. Absolutely.

Rukmini Iyer

Well, your tomatoes might suffer.

James Acaster

If you've still got the tomatoes wrapped round it.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. Tasty snack again. Breadsticks, tomatoes.

James Acaster

But they would be confused in the fight. They would be like, 'I'm bleeding.'

Ed Gamble

There would be splat everywhere.

James Acaster

Yes. You splatted everywhere.

Rukmini Iyer

It's took a dark turn, hasn't it?

James Acaster

No, no. We can get darker, I think.



Ed Gamble

We're just getting started.

James Acaster

We were going to talk about a cookbook, but we talked about a stick fight pretty early doors there.

Rukmini Iyer

Cook book? Yes. Well, it's not in a roasting tin, so all my previous books were pretty much, more or less, roasting tin books and that's really great, because it's so hands-free. You want something really nice to eat and you do not want to be standing and cooking in front of a hot stove. I mean, I love cooking. You guys love cooking, but it's seven o'clock and you came home, you've had a long day, and you just want something really tasty without all of the standing. So, the tin books were to fill that space, like, 'What can I chop it, chuck it in, have something delicious,' and this feels like a progression.

Because I've still got lots of one pots and one tins, which means less washing up, which is actually-, and goes down really well with the dad/bloke market, because they're like, 'Yes, no washing up at the end.' But you can be even quicker and more efficient if you're using the hob sometimes so, like, one of my favourite chapters is 'Quick Cook, Quick Carb', so your carb takes as long to cook as your sauce.

Ed Gamble

That's good.

Rukmini Iyer

And the best one, I think, should I give a best?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

People always ask with a cookbook, 'What's your favourite?' And it's like, 'Well, just have that. Never mind the rest of the book,' but the rest of the book is also good. It's the miso butter noodles with tomatoes and spring onions, and it literally just takes minutes to put together. Any old miso paste will do, like, white, red, whatever you've got, spring onions, garlic, ginger, tomatoes. Five minutes in pan, miso paste, splash of rice wine vinegar and then you just stir through those ready to cook udon noodles, and it's amazing. Actually, my daughter does eat that. 'What would you like for dinner?' 'Miso noodles.' It's quite cute.

Ed Gamble

That sounds so good.

Rukmini Iyer

It's really good, and it takes no time.



Ed Gamble

The problem is, I would do that for the first time and go, 'This is absolutely delicious,' then I'd have a jar of miso sat there and then I'm doing that every night for a week.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, yes. We get through the miso at home.

Ed Gamble

Every single night having that.

Rukmini Iyer

At least every week, we have that. It's really nice and then, obviously, if you want to protein it up, you could, like, add a bit of tofu and stuff, but it's just a really nice, 'I want dinner in ten minutes. I have no patience. It's 7:30.'

James Acaster

For a book like this, how many of the, like, recipes are stuff that you've already been, like, making with your family and how many are ones that you go, 'Okay, I've got to do a cookbook, so now I've got to think of some more recipes'?

Rukmini Iyer

This one has been a nice one, because it's been more organic. This has been things that I've just cooked at home more, it's worked, and then if I remember to write it down, or at least write down the headline of what it is. My recipe titles are always quite long. 'Miso butter noodles with spring onions and tomatoes', because I want you to know what it is.

Ed Gamble

That's the recipe.

Rukmini Iyer

That is the recipe, but I like that headline. You know, like, if you were at a restaurant and they were just like, 'Noodles,' you're like, 'Well, I don't know. I don't know what it is,' and the fancier the restaurant, they're like, 'Egg, ham, green,' and I'm like, 'Well, I still don't really know what I'm getting there.' It's irritating.

Ed Gamble

The fancy, more hipster restaurants are just like-,

Rukmini Iyer

The fancier, the fewer words.

Ed Gamble

Fewer words, no capitals at the beginning of the word. Just noodles.



Rukmini Iyer

Oh, yes. That's very fancy. Yes.

Ed Gamble

Noodles, twelve. The price will just be-,

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, just twelve. Twelve what? Twelve tiers?

Ed Gamble

Twelve noodles.

James Acaster

Those guys.

Ed Gamble

You love it.

Rukmini Iyer

So, I like it to be very obvious.

James Acaster

I love the food when it comes. I don't like looking at the menu.

Rukmini Iyer

You don't like looking at the bill at the end, I should imagine.

James Acaster

Hey, I'm rich. This podcast has made looking at the bill very easy. I'm not going to deny it.

Ed Gamble

All the chefs go, 'Do you know, you don't have to pay for that. Mention us on the podcast.'

James Acaster

Okay, suckers, see you later. See you later, you absolute suckers. That's what I say, I'll say it to their face.

Ed Gamble

I like washing up. I think next you should do a book for men who like washing up.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, like, the really complicated book of stuff that's going to take you all night to make and give you a tonne of washing up.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Well, that's basically any chef book, isn't it? Sorry, that's a bit mean, isn't it?

Ed Gamble

No, I always have a go at Tom Kerridge. I read one of his books, you need a blast chiller to do half the recipes.

James Acaster

Yes, Tom Kerridge is-, his books are rubbish. He's a rubbish cook.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. If you are going to do a cookbook for men who like washing up, Ed could be in all the photos and you would shift a lot of copies.

Rukmini Iyer

Man washing up. Yes, you're right.

James Acaster

A lot of ladies would love a series of pictures-,

Ed Gamble

Would they?

James Acaster

Of Ed washing up.

Ed Gamble

Covered in suds.

James Acaster

Elbow deep in suds. Nice little pinny on.

Rukmini Iyer

That sounds like a calendar.

James Acaster

Just smiling at the camera.



Rukmini Iyer

Sounds like you've given a lot of thought to this.

James Acaster

They will be flying off the shelves.

Rukmini Iyer

Is that selling on your website?

James Acaster

Yes, yes. Well, it would do. Ben's writing it down as an idea.

Ed Gamble

When are we going to do a calendar, actually?

James Acaster

Huh?

Rukmini Iyer

You should do a calendar.

Ed Gamble

When are we going to do a calendar?

Rukmini Iyer

You could do it with the dogs that come in, so either you go down the suds root or you go down the dogs that guests have brought in and toast.

James Acaster

Yes, we were listing some of the dogs beforehand that have come in here and there's quite a few people that have brought their pets in and Toast, of course.

Ed Gamble

Toast the cover.

James Acaster

Well, we always start with still or sparkling water.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

Do you have a preference?



Rukmini Iyer

I do, it is sparkling. I mean, I definitely thought that sparkling was totally grim for about 35 years of my life, and then I went on this spa day with my younger sister, who's much more sensible than me, and we were sitting down having a nice spa day. And she, in the nicest possible way, was like, 'You know, if you order sparkling water, you don't have to have wine every lunchtime.' I was like, 'Okay, yes, yes. Let's try it. It's going to be great,' and actually, she's right, because it does fill a spot when you're like, 'Oh, I, kind of, want something-, the taste of something, but maybe I don't actually want wine every lunch time.' And, it's great.

Ed Gamble

I absolutely love how sibling that is as well.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Just the most passive aggressive way of saying something.

Rukmini Iyer

Ever so slightly-, yes. She's sensible like that. But it worked.

Ed Gamble

We've been talking on the WhatsApp group actually, the one that you're not in, and you do have wine every lunch, don't you?

Rukmini Iyer

'She is a lush.' No, so yes, it's since then, I think, sparkling water hits that spot. And in lockdown, I had a real Sanpellegrino habit. A bottle a day.

James Acaster

Oh, wow.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. It was a lot. Didn't have to see a dentist, obviously, which was great as well, but yes. I do.

Ed Gamble

I think of all the habits you could have picked up in lockdown, having a bottle of San Pellegrino a day-,

Rukmini Iyer

Sparkling-,

Ed Gamble

Is fine.



James Acaster

I know quite a few people who, that was not their habit during lockdown.

Rukmini Iyer

Got to find something to fill your day.

James Acaster

Yes. I mean, do you find though, there are certain things that, like, now they just remind me of lockdown and, even though I actually had quite a nice little lockdown, but I still don't like being reminded of it. Like, I still feel weird when I walk down certain streets and go, 'Oh, this is where I used to walk every single day.' I don't like it. It reminds me of lockdown, it feels weird. Is San Pellegrino-,

Rukmini Iyer

I think Aperol Spritzs probably do.

James Acaster

Aperol Spritz? Here we go.

Rukmini Iyer

My friend and I we'd get-, well, we'd get a big-, like, a nice cool box, jam jars, like, Bonne Maman jam jars, because you don't want to drink out of a plastic cup, but I can't be arsed breaking glassware. Bonne Maman, hits the spot, and we'd just sit in the park and make up Aperol Spritzs with ice and everything and it was great, but not really done it since, like, maybe over Aperol Spritz. You have too much Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc in your twenties and you're like, 'No, no more.'

James Acaster

I had too much chorizo broccoli pasta.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, yes. I heard about that.

James Acaster

Yes, and now I can't eat it.

Rukmini Iyer

But what do you do with the head of the broccoli now? Found more things-,

James Acaster

Well, that's what we've got to figure out.

Rukmini Iyer

Actually, there's some recipes here that you could use.



James Acaster

The Green Cookbook might help me out.

Rukmini Iyer

There's a really good broccoli pesto you can do.

James Acaster

Lovely.

Rukmini Iyer

So, you just, like, stick it in your Magi, bit of garlic, like, bit of salt, and you use that instead of your basil and it's cheaper than using that much. Who has a broccoli amount size of basil? No one.

James Acaster

Great, so I can make my own pesto with the heads.

Rukmini Iyer

Well, it's just really quick and you can cook it while your pasta cooks, and it's super tasty.

James Acaster

This is a huge moment on the podcast. For ages we've been asking, 'What do we do with the heads?' And I'm going to make the broccoli pesto.

Rukmini Iyer

Make the broccoli pesto. It's delicious.

James Acaster

From the Green Cookbook.

Rukmini Iyer

And it doesn't actually taste very broccoli.

James Acaster

No.

Rukmini Iyer

Like, it just tastes delicious and green and really fresh and you're not cooking it, but because you blend it, it goes really bright green.

James Acaster

Oh, yes.

Rukmini Iyer

And it's really tasty. Pop some nuts on, as long as no one has got a nut allergy.



James Acaster

Pine nuts?

Rukmini Iyer

Probably pine nuts, but anything will do. I know a lot of recipes for pesto are like, 'It's got to be pine nuts,' like, 'Mate, once it's blended, you literally cannot tell.'

Ed Gamble

Walnuts are really-, I like walnuts in pesto.

Rukmini Iyer

Walnuts, yes, that's a-, yes, I think that one actually-, it might be a broccoli walnut, but you know my book better than I do. Yes, there you go. I might be and, if you're feeling particularly flexing, you could always use pistachios.

James Acaster

I've got a bunch of pistachios in the cupboard.

Rukmini Iyer

Pistachio flex.

James Acaster

Doing actually nothing.

Ed Gamble

Can a recipe be too green?

Rukmini Iyer

Well, no it can't. No it can't.

Ed Gamble

No?

Rukmini Iyer

I mean, they're good for you. Greens are great for you, and tasty. Actually, if you wanted to use up your pistachios, I could recommend a pistachio and spring onion pesto, that's in the book as well, which you do with marinated butter beans and it's in the cooking for your friends section, like, easy sharing platters. But it takes ten minutes to put together, so you just warm up some jarred butter beans, ideally jarred because they're so tasty, with a bit of lemon zest, bit of coriander seeds, warm them through with some nice cherry tomatoes. And, while that's warming in a pan for five, six minutes, you just blitz up the spring onions, pistachios, bit of oil, bit of lemon, few more coriander seeds and blob it on top. And it looks so pretty and it tastes like you've spent ages cooking and you're like, 'It literally took me 10 minutes.'



James Acaster

I should do it.

Rukmini Iyer

It's really good.

James Acaster

For two years, I've had a bag of pistachios in the cupboard.

Ed Gamble

Okay. Well, maybe get some new pistachios.

James Acaster

My dad gave it to us as a house-warming present.

Rukmini Iyer

That's a really good house-warming present.

Ed Gamble

It's odd though, isn't it?

Rukmini Iyer

It's odd, but nice. It's odd, but nice.

James Acaster

He does-, this is what happens when he visits without mum.

Rukmini Iyer

'I brought you some pistachios.'

James Acaster

Yes. When he comes on his own-, she was away, I can't remember why. We'd just moved into the house, he comes over, lovely man. He knew, 'I should bring them something as a house-warming.' Bag of pistachios, he went with.

Rukmini Iyer

Are they still in their shells?

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, no. That's a hassle.



James Acaster

Yes, so that's a hassle and my partner is allergic to nuts, but thanks dad.

Rukmini Iyer

Is he telling you something?

James Acaster

Yes, I don't know what-, 'Me and you should move in here. Bachelor pad.'

Ed Gamble

Couple of boys, a bag of nuts.

James Acaster

Crack open these.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

But they do remind me of my dad anyway, pistachios, because he used to eat them in front of the football or whatever, or the cricket.

Rukmini Iyer

Leaving a trail of shells.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes. Barefoot. I remember that as well, he would be barefoot while he was eating them.

Ed Gamble

Was he using his feet to crack the nuts open?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Is your dad a big monkey?

James Acaster

Yes, he's a big monkey. Poppadoms or bread? Poppadoms or bread, Rukmini Iyer? Poppadoms or bread?

Rukmini Iyer

It's definitely bread. I hate poppadoms, they're grim.



James Acaster

You hate them?

Ed Gamble

Rare to get hatred for one of them.

Rukmini Iyer

No. I really hate them. They're so nothing. It's like biting into just-, it doesn't taste of anything. It was your-, you wanted a flavoured breadstick. I don't want a flavoured poppadom, I just don't want a poppadom. They're just no. Very, very grim. They can go in the bin, but bread-

Ed Gamble

So, what are you doing then, because obviously you're saying you love a breadstick at the beginning of the meal? It's nice to get going with something.

Rukmini Iyer

I mean, if it's there.

Ed Gamble

If it's there?

Rukmini Iyer

If it's there on holiday.

Ed Gamble

But when the poppadoms are there and there's no other food knocking around?

Rukmini Iyer

No.

Ed Gamble

Are you dipping into the poppadoms?

Rukmini Iyer

I'm going to say, I'm going to avoid the curry house as well.

Ed Gamble

Are you? Just completely?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. If the poppadoms are there, it's like, 'God, I know I'm in here now and now I'm going to have to eat a restaurant curry,' and you probably get this with any Indian heritage chef who comes on but, you know, restaurant curries are just like not what you eat at home. It's always one sauce, it's very gloopy, like, my entire life went, 'Oh, should we go and get a curry?' And it's just like, 'Absolutely fucking not.' Or



if we have to, then I'm just sadly disappointed the entire meal and I don't drink beer either, and I think that goes well with a curry. I can see that they go together and-

Ed Gamble

It's the whole ritual of it.

Rukmini Iyer

So, yes. Poppadoms, they will herald a poor evening's dining for me, so that's probably why. Whereas bread, on the other hand, is great and then you get to have butter and, again, I, kind of, keep on thinking about European holidays. Probably because I'm so desperate to get out of the house and leave the country on holiday, but you go on holiday with your mates when you're a teenager and you sit down and they bring the bread. And then everyone's like, 'Oh, there's really nice extra virgin olive oil.' I'm just like, 'No, butter. British butter.' Yes, I don't want my bread to, kind of, taste of-, you know, olive oil, grassy notes. I'm like, 'I don't want my bread to taste like grass. I just want it to taste like butter, please.' Ideally salted.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I'm always butter over olive oil, but if there is nice olive oil, I still think, you know. Is it the really green olive oil as well? Are you against that?

James Acaster

You love green stuff.

Rukmini Iyer

I'm not against it. I think I don't have a specific-, yes, I know. Not grass. Not like a cat. I don't think I'd want to add it on. I get putting it in a salad dressing, but my palette is not sophisticated enough. Let's put it that way.

Ed Gamble

I don't think that's the reason at all.

James Acaster

You're very modest.

Rukmini Iyer

I like being smacked around the face with flavour, but not-, just not grass.

James Acaster

Any particular type of bread you'd like with the salted butter?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, I'd like two different types of bread, please. So, one of them, like, something like a really nice Pain de d'Épi. A, kind of, really crusty French-, you know that baguette, like, French baguette, but it's done like an ear of wheat, so it's super fluffy on the inside and really nice and crisp on the outside. I think I



made it, maybe, at cookery school and I was just like, 'This is great,' and I haven't made it since. But you can, kind of, get it out, especially in a bread basket in a magic restaurant. You can definitely get it out.

Ed Gamble

That's the thing with bread, isn't it? You can make it, but you can get it.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, I'm not a bread maker, so I would always rather someone else made it.

Ed Gamble

You can get it from a shop.

Rukmini Iyer

Revolutionary. Yes, not a sourdough, more that, kind of, fluffy bread. And then, moving around the world, you know Singapore chilli crab? When you order it, you get these little fluffy cube buns with it and they're, like, really soft on the inside, a bit like a brioche, and they maybe have been deep fried. But they're not crisp on the outside, they're still really soft and a little bit sweet. Have you had them before?

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

I'm not sure.

Ed Gamble

Singapore chilli crab is, like, really saucy, right?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. It's, like, a red sauce and bits of crab and they put a bib on you and a bib on the table, because it's so-, it's just so extra and messy, but then you get these little buns to mop up the sauce. But I could leave the crab for you guys and I could just have a bucket of that. You know, have the crab, I'll take the bread.

James Acaster

We just got some crab.

Ed Gamble

Free crab.

James Acaster

I told you this podcast would come in handy one day.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

We just got free crab.

Rukmini Iyer

And bibs. You need your bibs.

James Acaster

And some bibs.

Rukmini Iyer

Well, crab is just a bit-, it's a bit effort, you know, when you have to-, with the cracking and the claws. I'd rather just sit, maybe, and eat the bread and the crab can just-,

Ed Gamble

Again, I don't mind the effort. I think it goes back to the washing up thing.

Rukmini Iyer

You really are the max effort.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but me and my wife love, like, shellfish where you're cracking into all of the stuff. It was her birthday yesterday, so all she wanted to do was go and eat a pint of prawns.

Rukmini Iyer

Fair, and pull them out of their-,

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Does she eat their eyes and stuff as well?

Ed Gamble

No. See, I'm sucking the heads.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

But, no. I've seen her with lobster before where she's just extracting-, it's almost like surgery.



Rukmini Iyer

Surgical.

Ed Gamble

Every bit of meat is coming out of that and she's digging into the claws. She just loves that effort that goes into it.

Rukmini Iyer

Does she like doing, like, a bit of butchery as well?

Ed Gamble

No, she's never done that.

Rukmini Iyer

It's, kind of, interesting if you're into that. I say this as, like, someone with a vegetarian book who's largely a pescatarian chef, but at cookery school, I really enjoyed that precision. When you're like, 'Here is a rabbit. Would you like to very carefully dissect?' And I was like, 'This is kind of interesting.' I couldn't do it as a job, like, I'd be dreadful as a medic or a vet, but I was like, 'This is-, I can see the technical precision here.'

Ed Gamble

Well, I guess it is the opposite of-, being a butcher is the opposite of being a vet, right?

Rukmini Iyer

Well-,

James Acaster

You've got to think so.

Rukmini Iyer

Unless it's like a Sweeney Todd style operation.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

One's upstairs, one's downstairs and they send the rabbit down the chute.

Ed Gamble

I will only eat meat that thinks it was having a haircut.

Rukmini Iyer

Very, very niche.



James Acaster

There's very few animals-, you'd mainly be eating poodles and animals who are used to having their hair cut. A sheep, I guess. A sheep, that's easy. Absolutely easy.

Rukmini Iyer

Also a long tradition of eating sheep.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. That's fine.

Rukmini Iyer

I'm selling my veggie book really well, aren't I?

James Acaster

Yes, yes. No, no, this is going good I think, but we're tееing up the man washing up book, and you could also have some pictures of Ed eating shellfish without a bib on.

Rukmini Iyer

Shellfish with sheep.

Ed Gamble

You're really thirsty today.

James Acaster

Huh?

Ed Gamble

You're very thirsty today.

James Acaster

Catch me early in the morning.

Your dream starter?

Rukmini Iyer

Well, because my whole thing as a person who writes recipes for people which are easy, I like restaurant food to be something I wouldn't make at home, or wouldn't expect a mate to make for me. So, I would like all of my starter to be a deep fried platter please, because that's-, it's a hassle to do at home and deep fried food is delicious, and I want a, sort of, round the world platter of pakoras on one side, like, really nice ones. Cauliflower, aubergine, potato, for double carbs. Not onion bhajis, because they're grim.

James Acaster

Okay.



Rukmini Iyer

They're all floury and they can go with the poppadoms in the bin.

Ed Gamble

This is going back to your, sort of, dislike of going to a curry house, right?

James Acaster

Anglicized stuff.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. know, I know, but pakoras, my mum makes every year for my birthday, so I know they're great and I'll still have them as many times as possible. Then zucchini fries. I don't know why people call them zucchini, instead of courgettes. Is that what you call them?

James Acaster

Yes. Courgette fries? I'm trying to think if I've seen them on menus? Not really.

Ed Gamble

The zucchini is in America.

Rukmini Iyer

In America for-, yes.

Ed Gamble

But it just sounds fancier I think, because courgette fries versus zucchini frittes.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Sure.

Rukmini Iyer

Zucchini frittes, that's what I want.

James Acaster

And over here, people don't like courgette here, really, do they? Most people don't like courgette and then if you cover it up by saying-,

Rukmini Iyer

It's a zucchini.

James Acaster

Yes.



Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Zucchini frittes.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, delicious, but really, like, the shoestring ones. Not the-, sometimes you order them and they've given you fat chips, which are courgette. I'm like, 'I don't want a fat courgette,' just a really skinny one and then, if I'm in the mood, I am quite actually-, quite hungry, so I'm in the mood, some nice tempura prawns. So, I've got an around the world fried platter and then you could compare the different crunch levels with the different batters, I think that would be really interesting.

James Acaster

You like to compare crunch levels?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. You would be like, 'Look, we've got this gram flour batter on the pakoras and that's got a certain kind of crisp and then you've got the tempura batter with your sparkling, probably San Pel.' You know, be-, yes.

Ed Gamble

You're getting San Pellegrino in every single corner of this meal?

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, yes. Hashtag not sponsored, would like to be sponsored.

James Acaster

And would you score them? Score the crunch levels?

Rukmini Iyer

You could, you could or you could just stuff them in your face.

James Acaster

Yes, you could stuff them in your face.

Ed Gamble

With the zucchini, often not a crunch on those.

Rukmini Iyer

I think you'd have to have them, like, straight out of the fryer, because you're right, they steam.

Ed Gamble

They're a wet veg.



Rukmini Iyer

Well, a bit like cauliflower, like, can sometimes steam inside a pakora, so I think you need to-, maybe you could fry them at the table, like, a Crêpes Suzette.

James Acaster

Yes. It would be my pleasure.

Rukmini Iyer

Because it's really safe to do deep frying at the table.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, there should be more deep frying at the table.

Ed Gamble

That would be fun. That's an event, isn't it? If you went to a restaurant and they were like, 'Our thing-,

Rukmini Iyer

In the middle, like, your lazy Susan with a deep fat fryer in it.

Ed Gamble

And everyone has to wear goggles.

Rukmini Iyer

And rubber gloves and things.

James Acaster

Everything.

Ed Gamble

That would go well.

Rukmini Iyer

I'd do it.

James Acaster

You could rise up from the- beneath the table, so it goes back down again after the course has finished.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, yes.

James Acaster

And then it can come back up later on and it might be full of ice cream.

Rukmini Iyer

Fried ice cream.

James Acaster

That's a thing, right?

Rukmini Iyer

Fried ice cream?

James Acaster

I think people can do that.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, you can.

Ed Gamble

Me and James watch a lot of shows, normally on Netflix, about, sort of, American fairground food, and fried ice cream is a thing.

James Acaster

Yes. Deep Fried Masters.

Rukmini Iyer

Interesting.

James Acaster

Deep Fried Masters you might like, because of your starter, but they don't really do-, when you said a deep fried platter, because we've watched Deep Fried Masters so much, I thought, 'Wow, that's a trashy starter,' and then you explained what it was and I was like, 'Oh, yes. You don't get those on Deep Fried Masters, actually.'

Rukmini Iyer

I still feel like it's a slightly trashy starter.

James Acaster

No, I don't think so. Well, I immediately thought of, when I used to work in kitchens, we did the combo for two as the starter, which was all deep fried and that was, like-,

Rukmini Iyer

Mushrooms? Breaded mushrooms?

James Acaster

Deep fried breaded mushrooms.



Rukmini Iyer

I do really like those.

James Acaster

Are you trying to guess the rest of them? This is quite exciting actually. You've got one already. Well, what other ones do you think are on there? The combo for two.

Rukmini Iyer

Chicken tenders?

James Acaster

No, should have been.

Ed Gamble

What? That wasn't on there?

James Acaster

Didn't even have chicken tenders on there, no.

Ed Gamble

Onion rings.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

What about an onion flower? The blooming onion-,

James Acaster

No, this is not-, this is, like, a chain place that has a ball pool for kids and stuff. They're not doing onion flowers.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, no. Okay.

Ed Gamble

One of the balls got in there as well, so deep fried plastic ball.

James Acaster

Deep fried plastic ball.

Rukmini Iyer

Delicious.



James Acaster

Looks like an onion flower.

Ed Gamble

I do want to-, can we talk about the onion flower briefly, because I'm absolutely obsessed with blooming onions.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

And you don't see them here.

James Acaster

You can swear, Ed, on this podcast.

Ed Gamble

I Googled-, that is good stuff. I'll give you that. The other day-, genuinely the other day, I Googled 'blooming onion UK', because you don't find them.

Rukmini Iyer

Maybe that's part of your calendar as well.

Ed Gamble

Yes, me making a blooming onion.

Rukmini Iyer

You could pose with that as like a variation.

James Acaster

You're The Last of the Summer Wine character. Blooming onion.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, blooming onions.

Ed Gamble

My blooming onions aren't growing this year. Are you having any dips or anything with these deep fried things?

Rukmini Iyer

You could surprise me with the dips. Yes, I mean, I quite like a really good homemade coriander chutney, that would probably be good with the pakoras where it's a bit like-,



James Acaster

If you like that, then I don't think you should let us surprise you with the dips because that doesn't sound-

Ed Gamble

That's not what I was going to say.

Rukmini Iyer

They could be-, I don't know. I don't think tempura prawns really need a dip, definitely not sweet chilli.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, fuck sweet chilli. We've said that on this podcast before.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, absolutely.

James Acaster

We got a lot of grief for it. It's nice to have a professional chef back us on this, but sweet chilli is bullshit.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, you might as well dip it in jam.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Dip your strawberry jam.

Ed Gamble

Which you would do, James.

James Acaster

Yes, but that's-,

Rukmini Iyer

Prawns in strawberry jam?

James Acaster

I'd love to dip stuff in strawberry jam, but sweet chilli is just not good.



Rukmini Iyer

Yes, it's really poor. So, yes, not that and then I don't think you particularly need anything other than to be eaten immediately.

Ed Gamble

They often come with a mayo type dip.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, maybe. Maybe. Save it for the breadsticks.

James Acaster

Yes. Well, that sounds like a delicious starter.

Ed Gamble

Really good.

Rukmini Iyer

Thank you.

James Acaster

Are you sharing this with people or is it just you?

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, I could. You can share too.

James Acaster

You don't have to.

Rukmini Iyer

No, I don't mind. As long as I've got enough, yes.

James Acaster

Oh, of course.

Rukmini Iyer

And I think maybe there's a magic restaurant, I wouldn't be too full. I could maybe polish off the whole platter and I'd still have room, or extra stomachs like a cow.

James Acaster

Dream main course?

Rukmini Iyer

Dream main course. So, it's going to sound a bit basic. Salmon with hollandaise and asparagus, which is like, 'Yes, whatever, any chef can knock out a hollandaise, boring, boring. Asparagus season very



boring.' I mean, not boring, tasty but what I would like because it's a magic restaurant is for this to taste like the first time I had it when I was a teenager and this isn't one of those, 'Oh, I didn't grow up having.' Because my mum, she knocks up a good Béchamel, she knocks up decent homemade mayo and we probably did have asparagus at some point, but we went on holiday and there was this pasta thing on the menu and I just remember taking one forkfull and just going, 'What is this?' Like, I'd never had hollandaise before and I was just like, 'This is what?' And it was just like this amazing moment. I called the waiter, and I was going, 'What's in this sauce? This sauce is amazing.' And I actually asked the chef for the recipe. Like, 'Okay, here's your salmon and hollandaise, asparagus homemade pasta.' And he typed it out and sent me home with it, which is really nice. It was so sweet, and I've had hollandaise since. I think even at university, I was like, 'My first dinner party, I shall recreate this from this chef menu.' And it's never been quite the same because you didn't have that moment of like, 'I've never had anything this delicious before.' So, I would love that moment again.

James Acaster

I think hollandaise is a great example of that.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

Like, definitely the first time you have hollandaise is the best time you'll ever have it and then you definitely go through a phase of every time you see it on a menu, you order it every time and then you make yourself sick of it and then you don't really like it anymore.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, and then if you make it yourself, you're just like, 'I've used an entire pack of Lurpak here.' So, yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, when you see what goes into it.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. You don't want to see what goes into it.

James Acaster

Is it just loads of butter?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. So, you know, you put your egg yolk-, I mean, Nigella's got a cheat version of it. You basically warm your egg yolks in a bain-marie and add cubed-, with a little bit of vinegar, like cube after cube of butter and whisk continuously until it emulsifies and if you mess it up, you can actually start it again with a fresh egg yolk and then like drip your messed up mixture on top of the fresh egg and it can take a lot of eggs apparently, which is weird. You can always do it infinitely with the number of egg yolks at that same mess can take, but you need to keep it cold, so you can chuck in a cube of ice if you need too,



but it will be beautiful and delicious, but you just don't want to see it happen because it so much butter and there's no point doing a light version with less butter, just don't-

Ed Gamble

It's one of the only things and I love the idea of it, but you know when you're at bunch or something and there's like Eggs Benedict and all of that.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, eggs Royale.

Ed Gamble

I love the idea of it but every time I have it, it makes me feel ill.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I think it's eggs with that.

Rukmini Iyer

Eggs with eggs.

Ed Gamble

Eggs with eggs.

Rukmini Iyer

With the bacon or salmon, yes.

Ed Gamble

With butter and it just always makes me feel sick.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, it's a lot.

James Acaster

Yes, it's stupid.

Rukmini Iyer

It's a lot for breakfast.

James Acaster

Yes.



Rukmini Iyer

I think that's why it's nice with asparagus because that's quite a light dippy bit to have.

James Acaster

Yes, love asparagus. Asparagus and salmon with some hollandaise sounds delicious, yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, thank you, yes.

Ed Gamble

So, you say you want it to taste like the first time you had it.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Well, there's a couple of ways we can do that.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

We can either just create that taste or we can erase the memory of the first time you had it, so you think you're having it for the first time again.

Rukmini Iyer

I've never had it.

James Acaster

Men in Black.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, yes, I'll take that or what were those movies where someone's got-, Memento?

James Acaster

Memento, yes. Yes, for that, we have to kill your wife.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, no, don't. Don't do that. I'm really fond of her.



Ed Gamble

Hang on, so you want the memory erased but you want the tattoo to remind you that you have had it before?

Rukmini Iyer

How many times I've had my salmon and asparagus.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you've got a hollandaise tally chart going all the way down your arm.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, I have.

James Acaster

Just put an egg yolk in a bain-marie and add a cube of butter.

Ed Gamble

It could take a lot of eggs.

James Acaster

If you mess it up you can reuse it.

Rukmini Iyer

I wouldn't have full sentences, I'd just have eggs on inside of my elbow, 'Eggs, what about egg yolks'?

James Acaster

Yes, Nigella.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. I must find Nigella and ask her.

James Acaster

Have a Polaroid of Nigella with her name written on it. If we were to do the Men in Black pen at you and the red light, what other things would you like us to erase from your memory?

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, wow.

James Acaster

We can chuck other things in there.



Rukmini Iyer

Chuckling other things in there.

Ed Gamble

It could be meals. Like, meals you've had that you want to erase from your memory.

James Acaster

Oh, yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, I could erase poppadom's but then I might accidentally have them again.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you don't want to do that.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, you need that experience in your life. I don't think I've tasted many things that I really have disliked. I genuinely like most food. I'm not like my daughter who will take a home cooked meal and then spit it out being like blech. I'm like, 'Thanks, darling.'

James Acaster

I mean, we could erase but you can do that again with your friend.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, yes. Yes, maybe actually, Malborough Sauvignon Blanc, you could erase that, then I might enjoy it again rather than have too much. That would be a nice one but otherwise, no, I think my memory's pretty good. I've always quite liked stuff I've eaten. I think I just wouldn't eat it if I didn't want to. You know, like offal, people are like, 'Do you want to try some tripe?' I was like, 'I do not want to try tripe.'

James Acaster

He loves it.

Rukmini Iyer

Really?

Ed Gamble

Love it.

Rukmini Iyer

You really are the high effort guy.

James Acaster

Yes.



Ed Gamble

Tripe's delicious. I love the texture, I love that other people think it's disgusting, so I could be the tripe guy.

Rukmini Iyer

There's a kudos there, yes.

Ed Gamble

I like the slight taste of farmyard.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, that's what truffles for. Truffle will do that for me.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but everyone likes truffle.

Rukmini Iyer

Not everyone.

Ed Gamble

So, how am I going to seem like a big tough guy?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, that's true. That's true. Even pigs like truffle, man, yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, exactly.

James Acaster

You can tell him why you don't like tripe. Don't just take that from him. His little monologue.

Rukmini Iyer

I just think the concept of tripe, yes, just offal generally, although I was quite experimental when I got into food. So, I didn't always used to do food, I used to be a lawyer, and I hated my life, and I was like, 'Let's be experimental. Let's try and cook some lamb sweet breads.' You know, so I did try, and I was just like, 'It's just not as nice.' As the effort it was to make them.

James Acaster

Did we have someone else on the podcast who become a chef after studying law?

Rukmini Iyer

Neesha. She was a barrister.



Ed Gamble

Neesha was a solicitor or a barrister or something, yes.

James Acaster

Right, I knew it was someone, but I just never would have guessed it was her, she's mad.

Rukmini Iyer

I think I've definitely seen a meme about pastry chefs being like half of them are ex-lawyers who just decided to be a pastry chefs.

James Acaster

Interesting. Why do you think that is?

Rukmini Iyer

Because they hate their lives.

James Acaster

They hate their lives so much that they have to go into pastry.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, pretty much. The soothing piles of whipped cream, it's just very nice for the brain.

James Acaster

Wow. What was the biggest case you did as a lawyer?

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, God, I was only a baby lawyer. I finished like a training contract and then literally, instead of qualifying, I went to cookery school like straight off the bat.

James Acaster

I was hoping you'd be on a huge, OJ or something.

Rukmini Iyer

No, nothing that exciting, I'm afraid.

Ed Gamble

When you said baby lawyer, it gave me a great idea for a new cartoon.

Rukmini Iyer

Baby law. Boss Baby but- Yes.

James Acaster

'Baby lawyer, we need your expertise.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, similar to Boss Baby actually.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, basically that but the spin off version with lawyers, yes.

Ed Gamble

Boss Baby's lawyer.

James Acaster

That's good.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it's not a bad Idea.

James Acaster

Drama cartoon of a baby.

Rukmini Iyer

Most toddlers are like expert negotiators.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's true.

Rukmini Iyer

Mine like if we're trying to bribe her to do something, which my husband doesn't like me doing, it's like, 'If you get in the buggy, you can have a chocolate button.' She's like, 'Two chocolate buttons.' 'Okay.'

Ed Gamble

So, maybe like Judge Judy but Judge Baby.

James Acaster

Judge Baby.

Rukmini Iyer

Judge Baby.

Ed Gamble

With like kids, the cases are all kids.

James Acaster

Yes, the cases have got to be kids.



Ed Gamble

Yes, they stole my sweets or whatever and then the judge is a baby too.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, but the sentencing could be pretty harsh as well.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it could be, death.

James Acaster

Yes, every time.

Ed Gamble

'You are sentenced to death.'

James Acaster

Every time one of them has to die.

Rukmini Iyer

It could be worse, they could make you go to a soft play centre.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Oh, yes, with a deep fried ball.

Ed Gamble

By the way, the gavel is a squeaky hammer as well.

James Acaster

Oh, yes, got to be a squeaky gavel.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

Every time, makes a little squeaking noise.

Rukmini Iyer

A dog toy.



James Acaster

Yes, it softens it, doesn't it? If they're sentenced to death.

Your dream side dish.

Rukmini Iyer

Can I have two?

James Acaster

Yes, why not?

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, thank you very much. So, dauphinoise because I like to double carb because dauphinoise is really great. Actually, I used to make that. If I'd had a day in the office which I hated because I did hate my office life there. I'd come home, buy a load of potatoes and the cream on the way home and make myself a double-carb dinner of a tray of roast potatoes and a tray of dauphinoise, yes.

Ed Gamble

Wow.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

You love double carbs, you've shouted it out a few times.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, it's a very Indian thing actually double carbs, you know, having a potato curry and rice, or having potato pakoras, even bread pakoras my mum has been known to talk about. I don't see anything wrong in double carbing. But now, with my sophisticated palate, I would quite like some greens on the side as well. I've gone full circle from, like, never having anything green, I think at university, my friends would put broccoli on a plate and went, 'You don't have to eat your broccoli if you don't want to.' It's like, 'I am 22 years old.' But now I love it. I can't get enough. Like, tender stem, love it. Kale, kale's a funny one. So, I've got a weekly Guardian foods column and whenever I do a recipe with kale, which is quite often because I love it, I tend not to look at the comments section but if I do, about half of it's like, 'Kale again, I hate kale, I can't stand it.' It's like, 'Guys, grow up.'

Ed Gamble

It had a moment. Like, five years ago, Kale was everywhere, right?

James Acaster

Yes.



Ed Gamble

Everyone was getting annoyed with kale.

Rukmini Iyer

Do you think people overdid it? Maybe they need their memory erased again.

Ed Gamble

I think people overdid it or they don't do it properly and it's almost like, you know, the thick stems in it as well.

Rukmini Iyer

I think people don't trim the stems off enough.

Ed Gamble

People don't trim it properly and then it became connected, I think, with health vloggers and things like that, so it became like-,

Rukmini Iyer

Health stuff. Yes, like, you don't want it in a smoothie, that would be-, why would you do that?

Ed Gamble

No, and that's what people were doing. So, I think they connected kale with Californian health-

Rukmini Iyer

Health kicks.

Ed Gamble

And obviously, people hate those people.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, that's true.

Ed Gamble

I got really into kale, big time.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, it's delicious.

Ed Gamble

But covering it in oil, putting it in the oven and basically making kale crisps.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. Okay, that sounds a little bit healthy.



Ed Gamble

No. I mean, I was-,

Rukmini Iyer

A crisp is a crisp, but kale's not a crisp.

Ed Gamble

Yes, but you can put loads of seasoning on it and stuff, delicious, with crisps, I've eaten with crisps.

Rukmini Iyer

I was going to say double cream.

Ed Gamble

Nice.

Rukmini Iyer

So, you know, like if you soften it with garlic and chilli and a bit of lemon zest with your olive oil or butter actually, and then just a little bit of cream through it before you serve.

Ed Gamble

That does sound good.

Rukmini Iyer

Really, really nice.

James Acaster

Yes. Both of those sound nice, I like both of those, guys.

Rukmini Iyer

My daughter likes kale crisps, and I can pretend that it's a vegetable that she's eating, not just a piece of char.

James Acaster

The Guardian comment section is absolute fucking bin, by the way. An absolute bunch of idiots, all of them.

Ed Gamble

Well, comments section in general.

James Acaster

Yes.



Rukmini Iyer

Yes. I don't know, I never comment on anything. If I'm online and I read an article about something and it's very rare that I would write a comment. I don't think I've ever written a comment.

Ed Gamble

You might comment but you'll do it like a normal person in your own head.

Rukmini Iyer

Or bitch to my husband about it.

Ed Gamble

Yes, or talking to somebody next to you.

James Acaster

Yes, (talking over each other 41.42)-,

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, I don't know. I suppose it's always nice when people are like, 'Oh, no, I really like this.' You want enough people who like things to comment, it's just your negative Nancy's.

James Acaster

Yes, crazy if they complain like, 'What, kale again?' and it's like, 'Nobody's making you cook this every week you absolute-', you're on the internet. There are infinite recipes on the internet, so why don't you just find something else that isn't kale. You don't have to, 'Oh, I have to eat whatever's in The Guardian column every single week.'

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

All those right-wing people who hate The Guardian should just look in the comments and then they'll go, 'Oh, it's okay, people who read The Guardian are just like me.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, they're us.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, they hate The Guardian too.

James Acaster

Yes, they also hate it.

Ed Gamble

So, you've got the dauphinoise and what greens?



Rukmini Iyer

Dauphinoise, the kale and then maybe just some nice, buttered cabbage. Like, you know when it's not overcooked, just your bog-standard cabbage but it's still got a little bit of bite, butter and maybe some crushed Sichuan peppercorns makes it really nice, but not too many. You know, Sichuan peppercorns it's the, kind of, thing where you're like, 'Oh, I love them, so is more, more?' More is not more.

Ed Gamble

No, it's like two, put two peppercorns in there and that'll do it.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, if there's too many your mouth just goes numb for several hours. So, just a tiny bit.

Ed Gamble

Do you want the creamy kale?

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, no, you're right. Maybe we'll cut the cream, since we've got the dauphinoise. Let's be sensible.

Ed Gamble

And they're next to each other, you can always introduce a bit of the dauphinoise cream to the kale.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, exactly.

Ed Gamble

You can cook it on the table.

Rukmini Iyer

Exactly, on the table.

James Acaster

Yes, nobody's going to stop you.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Just mix it altogether, it'll be delicious, thank you.

James Acaster

It does sound good, and I think that goes with the salmon as well.



Rukmini Iyer

Yes, I suppose the dauphinoise is maybe a bit heavy to go with my handmade pasta and all the rest of it with the salmon, but you know, I've got infinite stomachs apparently in your restaurant.

James Acaster

Yes, congratulations.

Rukmini Iyer

Thank you.

James Acaster

Your dream drink.

Rukmini Iyer

Just a nice glass of white wine probably. Maybe sparkling, maybe-,

James Acaster

Yes, I love how you pretended like you hadn't really thought about that, and you landed on it, just in case your sisters listening to this episode.

Rukmini Iyer

I know, just in case, just in case she's listening.

Ed Gamble

'Some more sparkling water, I suppose'.

Rukmini Iyer

I've already got my sparkling water. Actually, sparkling water and red wine are a really nice combo. I have that a lot. Can I flex about my job before I was-,

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

So, I went into food, I did the law and then I was a food stylist or a home ec for quite a lot of years and that's how I got into cooking and had the idea for -

James Acaster

What's a food stylist?

Rukmini Iyer

Food stylist, so, you know whenever you see food on a billboard, in a cookbook, on telly or someone has cooked it and it's usually not Nigella or Jamie or anyone. You've got someone in who's cooked all the food, thinks about how it's going to look on the plate, maybe got a pair of tweezers if necessary to



make it look nice, but actually, it's generally just you've just made a really nice plate of food, put it in front of the camera and it's been shot really quickly. So, it's really different from back in the-, like, you know if you think about the Panasonic microwave cookery book from 1975? It's got this bronzed chicken that looks like it's been sitting for three days under a load of varnish like Ronseal, it had because you've got all the lights and it's really hot under the cameras and it's got to sit there, but nowadays everything's digital. So, we just shoot it, and David Loftus who does all the photos for my books. Like, everything looks so beautiful and fresh, like you could put your hand in and pick it up because you could when he took the photo and the fresher it looks, it's because it was, there's not a lot of magic. Unless you're in commercials, which is different, but I got a really random job, the designer on my books, Penny, she's amazing. She sent me a message like, 'Oh, I've got an offer for a job. It's in Morocco doing film. Do you want to come?' And I was like, 'Well, that sounds quite exciting.'

So, not the food, not catering but the food they would eat in a dinner party scene in the film, and I was like, 'Do you know what? There's one actor who would take me out to Morocco. If Ralph Fiennes is in it, I'll do it.' And he's like, 'He actually is.' And I was like, 'You're fucking joking.' Matt Smith's in it, Jessica Chastain was in it, and I found myself in Morocco in the dessert handing over a plate of food to Matt Smith, handing over a plate to Ralph Fiennes and it's nuts because it's film, you have to have as much food as you think-, you know, the director is not going to tell you how many takes, he doesn't know how many takes he's going to do and you have to magically, you want your genie lamp really, have as much as they're going to need for every single take, otherwise you're just-, and I think I handed over the food on my first time and my hands were actually shaking just being like, 'Don't mess it up, don't mess it up.' And then Ralph Fiennes straight in eye, Lord Voldemort and he was like, 'You're doing really well there.' 'Thank you so much.' Which helps because Jessica Chastain wouldn't eat any of my food.

James Acaster

No?

Rukmini Iyer

She was just like, 'Is this vegan?' And I was like, 'Oh, yes.' And she didn't trust me, but she got them to bring her some steamed broccoli from her trailer, but Matt Smith really liked the food. He was like, 'Why aren't we getting food like this in our hotel?' And I was like, 'Just eat the food.' I know.

James Acaster

Oh, sorry guys, I messed my lines up.

Rukmini Iyer

My (down time, my red wine and sparkling water thing was, we have a lot of free time when you're not on set and Penny and I would just sit in this amazing Riad courtyard, bottle of red, bottle of sparkling water and just be like, 'Is this real?'

Ed Gamble

So, do you want this as your dream drink then? The red wine and sparkling water?



Rukmini Iyer

I think it will remind me of that, yes, maybe. Maybe I'll take that together.

James Acaster

Yes, you can have it being there.

Rukmini Iyer

With courtyard sunshine.

James Acaster

Do you want Fiennes and Smith to join you? Not Chastain, she wouldn't eat the food.

Rukmini Iyer

I'm not sure. I think I'd probably be too nervous to talk to them.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

You know like that thing, I think I read it in Romantic Comedy, Curtis Sittenfeld's newish book. She writes it with famous people. People don't actually want to talk to them, they want to tell their friends that they've talked to them. So, if you have an encounter with a famous person, you're quite likely to be like, 'Oh, wow, selfie.' And then run away because then you can tell your mates because if you had to actually have a conversation, you'd probably say something really stupid.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

So, they can't come. I'd just get to maybe spy on them from another table like, 'Look, there's celebs at that table.'

James Acaster

Yes, so, you'd have Fiennes nearby.

Rukmini Iyer

Nearby.

James Acaster

Yes, fair enough. What's your favourite film with him in?

Rukmini Iyer

Well, The Menu was really good, it was really scary but I'm going to go classic old school English Patient.



James Acaster

Oh, yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. Oh, I changed my mind, The Grand Budapest Hotel because it's really funny.

James Acaster

Great. Great film.

Rukmini Iyer

It's much more funny.

James Acaster

I absolutely love it.

Rukmini Iyer

English Patient doesn't have a lot of laughs in it.

James Acaster

No, to be fair, it's not very funny, English Patient.

Rukmini Iyer

It's not very funny, it's quite intense.

James Acaster

What about this? Would it be better if the main character was a baby? Just like the baby lawyer, but the English baby.

Rukmini Iyer

The English baby crashing a plane in the dessert.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, maybe not.

James Acaster

Would crash it to be fair, that's believable.

Rukmini Iyer

Maybe he'd be a better pilot.



James Acaster

That baby would be a bad pilot, that's why he crashed in the dessert.

Ed Gamble

What about and how about this, The Grand Babypest Hotel.

Rukmini Iyer

I see a franchise opportunity here where you just replace actors with babies.

James Acaster

I think that works or just Fiennes every time.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

As a baby.

James Acaster

For no reason, Ralph Fiennes gets replaced by a baby every single time.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

Lord Voldemort as a baby.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Volde baby.

James Acaster

Yes, Volde baby. I mean, then that would be like, when people say if you go back in time and kill Hitler as a baby, would you do it? It's Voldemort. So, that's the answer to that question. You find Harry Potter in that situation going, 'Well, you tried to kill me as a baby.'

Rukmini Iyer

Done it.

James Acaster

Actually, yes, that's true.



Ed Gamble

That is true.

Rukmini Iyer

But then there's no more books, that's it, it's finished.

James Acaster

Voldemort tried to kill Harry Potter as a baby.

Rukmini Iyer

What comes around goes around.

Ed Gamble

Why don't you go back and kill Lord Voldemort as a baby?

Rukmini Iyer

Wait, no, but that's the cursed child, isn't it? But it all messes up.

Ed Gamble

I don't know, I've not seen it.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, I've got another red wine combo for you.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

Rukmini Iyer

So, when I went to see the Cursed Child with my mate, she bought this birthday present for me. We had Haribo Fangtastics and rubbish theatre red wine, and they go together so well.

Ed Gamble

That's cool.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

There's someone on Instagram who does-, oh, no, I've got mixed up. It's not wine, it's cheese combinations with weird things.

Rukmini Iyer

Because cheese and wine isn't weird.



Ed Gamble

I think they did Haribo as a cheese.

James Acaster

And can you remember what it was?

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

Ed, this is the worst thing you've ever brought up.

Rukmini Iyer

No, because if you think about Membrillo with a Manchego.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

I'm thinking you've got your jelly-,

James Acaster

No, it sounds great. Ed, has brought up something that was A, wrong, it wasn't even related to what you were saying and then he forgotten what it was as well.

Rukmini Iyer

Well, no, there was a Haribo link.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

He was like, 'Oh, no, it's not wine, it's cheese.' Can you remember what it was? No.

Ed Gamble

Sorry.

Rukmini Iyer

You got there in the end.

James Acaster

Not his finest hour.



Ed Gamble

I feel like an old man today.

James Acaster

He's a little old man, Ed. Opposite of a baby. You would be the baby's nemesis.

Ed Gamble

We should remake this episode with me as a baby.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

So, we're having the San Pellegrino and the red wine together?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

Do you also want the Tangfastics there?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, why not.

James Acaster

Yes, so, we'll have a little side of Tangfastics for you.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

I haven't had Tangfastics since I was in a train derailling.

Ed Gamble

Have you not?

Rukmini Iyer

Wow.

James Acaster

No, that's the last time I had them.

Rukmini Iyer

That is quite a memory.



James Acaster

Train came off the tracks and it was pretty full on, and we were there for like five hours and all the train staff did was sent one of their employees down all the aisles with a packet of Tangfastics. Asking people if they wanted a Tangfastics. By the time it got to me and Josh Widdicombe, we were at the back of the carriage, and they only had the rubbish ones left and we were absolutely gutted.

Rukmini Iyer

Wow.

Ed Gamble

So, have you avoided Tangfastics because it reminds you of a traumatic event?

James Acaster

I just think, 'What's the point?' I just get the bad ones.

Ed Gamble

Yes. So, we shall we delete your memory of the train crash? And then you can have Tangfastics again.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, or I don't know, it's quite a good memory because it makes me glad to be alive.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

But maybe remove the Tangfastics part because I would like to-,

Rukmini Iyer

And then you can still enjoy them.

James Acaster

Yes, and marble cake. I haven't had that since that because they said the buffet carriage was free, but they didn't man it, there was no one there.

Rukmini Iyer

So, it was just free for all with marble cake?

James Acaster

Well, again, by the time we got there, it was only marble cake left.



Rukmini Iyer

Wow.

James Acaster

And we still ate it but Benito's looking at me like, 'You've told this story before, I'm going to edit it out, so move on.'

Your dream dessert. We arrive at your dream dessert, which is exciting for me.

Rukmini Iyer

Well, it's a bit basic to always go for the chocolate option, you know, 'Oh, I love chocolate.' But I mean, I do quite like it and I will generally go for it, and I don't always have room. I'm more of a starter person. So, there's often not room for a chocolate dessert.

Ed Gamble

That's the correct way to be.

James Acaster

Well, not yes.

Rukmini Iyer

But since I've got my infinite stomachs, I want some, kind of, chocolate dessert. Maybe you can help me create it. It's got some chocolate cake and then some, kind of, chocolate mousse and then I really love raspberry and passion fruit with chocolate. I think it's the nicest combination and you don't see it enough on menus, in cookbooks, I can remedy that, but I really like it, and I want some, kind of, maybe like chocolate mousse cake that's a bit like a Sara Lee but nice and a raspberry layer, passion fruit layer, maybe some shaved chocolate on top, something like that?

James Acaster

Well, let's come up with something and then you can put it in your next cookbook.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

What, sort of, cake? A light cake? A brownie layer?

Rukmini Iyer

No, I'm not a brownie person.

Ed Gamble

So, like a sponge.



Rukmini Iyer

A sponge but more like a restaurant sponge. You know when it's like a little bit of a dense sponge, not like a nice homemade Victoria Sponge, like more of a denser, kind of, sponge that would stand up to being layered with your moussey layers.

Ed Gamble

And do you want super light mousse or a thick mousse?

Rukmini Iyer

Medium mousse.

James Acaster

Dark chocolate, milk chocolate?

Rukmini Iyer

Well, I guess there'd be the raspberry and the passion fruit ones.

James Acaster

What, the mousse as the raspberry?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

Okay.

Rukmini Iyer

They're like raspberry and passion fruit mousse.

James Acaster

And are you going, cake, mousse, cake, mousse?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, something like cake, mousse, cake, mousse.

James Acaster

How many times?

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, how tall can you go?

James Acaster

My favourite model is Cake Mousse.

Rukmini Iyer

Cake Mousse.

Ed Gamble

Cake Mousse.

James Acaster

Cake Mousse, great model. She used to go out with Pete Doherty.

Ed Gamble

Oh, no.

Rukmini Iyer

That's dreadful, but her brother does run a banh mi stand, goes around the markets in London.

Ed Gamble

Cake Mousse's brother?

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, he sells banh mi.

Ed Gamble

I didn't know that.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, he's got like a van with banh mi in it and sells it, obviously, just like 'mine'.

Ed Gamble

Have a look at this.

James Acaster

Well, good on him.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes. It's just quite random. He looks quite a lot like her as well.

Ed Gamble

Does he?

Rukmini Iyer

If you were doing a celeb thing like, 'Look, that looks a bit like Kate Moss.' And he's selling banh mi-, let not talk to him.



Ed Gamble

Cake Mousse.

Rukmini Iyer

Cake Mousse, sorry.

James Acaster

Cake Mousse is her name.

Ed Gamble

Yes, how many times? Because this is a dream restaurant, so we could do like 60.

James Acaster

Yes, you could do it as many times as you wanted.

Rukmini Iyer

I just think like a reasonable amount, so you can get a bit of each on your fork because I don't have an infinite fork with an infinite mouth, so just the right size.

James Acaster

We could give you an infinite fork.

Ed Gamble

An infinite fork would be a pain in the arse, man.

Rukmini Iyer

Infinite fork would be the longer fork, like a tiramisu spoon but wrong.

Ed Gamble

How are you getting anything on the end of the fork if it's infinity long?

James Acaster

Yes, that's hard.

Rukmini Iyer

No.

James Acaster

Everything would have to be infinite and then we end up-, I don't know if this world even makes sense.

Rukmini Iyer

No.



Ed Gamble

No.

Rukmini Iyer

No, it doesn't.

James Acaster

So, what? Four or five I'm guessing?

Rukmini Iyer

Four or five layers, yes.

James Acaster

And how thick are the layers?

Rukmini Iyer

A couple of centimetres. I think the cake has got to be one centimetre and then you've got two for the mousse and then one for the cake and two for the mousse, something like that.

James Acaster

Yes, two for the mousse, one for the cake.

Rukmini Iyer

And then maybe the lowest layer could be some, kind of, chocolate mousse as well. So, maybe there's three kinds of mousse, one cake, chocolate shavings on top.

James Acaster

Yes, okay. So, it sounds like you should have three layers of the mousse.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

So, down on the bottom and then that means you've got three layers of the cake.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

Because the mousse is on the top, is it?

Rukmini Iyer

I guess.



James Acaster

The top layers the mousse.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, the top layer could be some, kind of, mousse, yes.

James Acaster

And then are you covering all that in chocolate as well? Like, melted chocolate.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, like really nice shaved. So, it's quite shardy, again, with like the crispiness, yes, that's what I'm going for.

James Acaster

Sounds nice. What are we calling it? Cake Mousse.

Rukmini Iyer

Cake Mousse.

Ed Gamble

Yes, and just that, you don't want-, is there any cream or any drizzle going over it or anything like that?

Rukmini Iyer

No, you can keep it.

Ed Gamble

No, you don't need it. You've got all the moisture in the cake mousse.

James Acaster

So, it's the cake mousse dessert, which is your dessert and if anyone tries to steal it and put it in their cookbook, we can all sue them. Bring the baby lawyer to the-,

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, baby lawyers coming, it's my take.

James Acaster

To the court case.

Ed Gamble

Yes, baby judge as well.

James Acaster

So, the baby is there, the baby lawyer.



Ed Gamble

Yes, whoever steals the recipe is being sentenced to death.

James Acaster

Yes, they're all getting sentenced to death if they steal cake mousse from us.

Rukmini Iyer

Well, I will try and recreate it and then we can have a picture as well.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, me and you can do the picture of you making it and then Ed is washing up all the stuff you used to make it with.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rukmini Iyer

This does sound like quite high effort. You've got a lot of bowls for these mousse's and there will be a lot of washing up I'm afraid.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, we've already established this guy loves effort.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I love it. I love the washing up.

James Acaster

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

Rukmini Iyer

Okay.

James Acaster

You want San Pellegrino, sparkling water.



Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

You would like Pain d'Épi.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes.

James Acaster

A fluffy cube.

Rukmini Iyer

A fluffy cube.

Ed Gamble

Just like an Englishman in a (mw 55.52) trying to read the menu behind the person working there, 'Pain d'Épi.'

James Acaster

It's called a Pain d'Épi. You would like a deep-fried platter. You've got pakoras, zucchini fritti, tempura prawns, homemade coriander chutney. Main course, salmon with hollandaise and asparagus, like the first time you ever had it. Side dish, dauphinoise, kale and buttered cabbage with crushed Sichuan peppercorns, not too many. Drink, red wine and sparkling water like you had when you were doing The Forgiven and with a side of Haribo Tangfastics.

Rukmini Iyer

Yes, that's right.

James Acaster

Don't forget those, dessert, Cake Mousse.

Rukmini Iyer

Cake mousse.

Ed Gamble

Amazing.

Rukmini Iyer

Sounds great. I'm starving.

James Acaster

I mean, it does sound nice. Before, when you came in today, before we went in you said, 'Oh, I think my menu won't be very coherent.' But I think it is.

Ed Gamble

I think it's very coherent.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, thank you. Oh, thank you very much.

Ed Gamble

We have a lot worse.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, yes, I know. I know.

Ed Gamble

Yes, exactly. No, that's sounds absolutely delicious.

James Acaster

What cake mousse's nickname?

Ed Gamble

What?

James Acaster

Who was called the body.

Rukmini Iyer

That was just Gisele, I think. Wasn't Gisele the body?

James Acaster

Bonito, Google who was called the body. I know we're about to wrap it up, but it wasn't Cake Mousse, was it?

Ed Gamble

It might have been Gisele.

James Acaster

Elle Macpherson.

Rukmini Iyer

Oh, we all got it wrong, dammit.

Ed Gamble

Has that ruined a joke that you were going to do?



James Acaster

No.

Ed Gamble

Thank you so much for coming to the dream restaurant.

Rukmini Iyer

Thank you so much for having me on.

Ed Gamble

Thank you.

There we are, wonderful menu from Rukmini there.

James Acaster

Very nice menu, lovely stories. I loved to learn about food stylists and about the film that she worked on with all the celebs.

Ed Gamble

Yes, and a lot of silly business as well in that episode, James.

James Acaster

No, it's all very serious.

Ed Gamble

Oh, yes, very serious indeed.

James Acaster

They were serious ideas for TV shows.

Ed Gamble

Rukmini also did not say beef jerky, so she was allowed to complete her menu and that has also allowed us to plug her book again. The Green Cookbook is out now, and you've got a little insight into the, sorts of, recipes that are in there during that chat. It's just made me even more excited to cook from it.

James Acaster

I'm quite excited about the crispy roast tofu and aubergine with chilli peanut sauce as well. I love aubergine.

Ed Gamble

Yes, and your broccoli pesto you're going to make.

James Acaster

Yes, we found what we're going to do with the heads.



Ed Gamble

Finally, we did it. Now, I'd say we're back next week but we're actually going to replace ourselves with babies for next week.

James Acaster

It's the Off Menu baby edition next week.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Where they don't get kicked out the dream restaurant, they get sentenced to death.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Thank you very much for listening. We've been Ed Gamble and James Acaster on the Off Menu podcast.

James Acaster

Shout out to Kate Moss, Cake Mousse.

Ed Gamble

Oh, you messed that up.

James Acaster

Bye.

Ed Gamble

Bye.