



Off Menu – Ep 252 – Jason Mantzoukas

Ed Gamble

Hello, and welcome to the Off Menu podcast. Taking the raw steak of friendship, adding in the mustard of humour, the chopped gherkin of two buddies, the raw onion-, red onion of having a nice chat with your friends, and capers-, and capers as well. Steak tartare-, podcast tartare, James.

James Acaster

Oh, that is lovely, Ed. I didn't know what that was to begin with.

Ed Gamble

Did you not? Was raw steak not a clue?

James Acaster

I thought it was going to get cooked. I thought it was about to get cooked. I thought you were going to sizzle it on the pan of friendship or something.

Ed Gamble

Yes. It was the steak of friendship, so you can't use the pan of friendship for that.

James Acaster

This is the Off Menu podcast. That is Ed Gamble, my name is James Acaster. Together, we own a dream restaurant. Every single week, we invite in a guest and we ask them their favourite ever starter, main course, dessert, side dish and drink. Not in that order. This week, our guest is Jason Mantzoukas.

Ed Gamble

Jason Mantzoukas. He's been in everything that you like, I'd say.

James Acaster

Yes. Brooklyn Nine Nine.

Ed Gamble

Yes. That's the only thing you like, isn't it?

James Acaster

Yes, that's all I like. That's all I want to watch, ever.

Ed Gamble

He is what I would describe-,

James Acaster

The League.



Ed Gamble

He's in The League. He's in Parks and Recreation. He's in Percy Jackson and The Lightning Thief. He also has a fantastic podcast called How Did This Get Made? Him and Paul Scheer and June Diane Raphael, and it's absolutely amazing. They talk about films that you might not consider to be good necessarily, but they talk about them in a very, very funny way.

James Acaster

Yes. We've already had Paul Scheer on the podcast, so I think we should go for the hat trick, now that we've had Jason on.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Absolutely, we should go for the hat trick. But, today is the second goal. It's Jason Mantzoukas. Very excited to have Jason on. Just to let you know, we are recording this intro over the Internet. But, the episode itself is in the studio.

James Acaster

Yes, it might be confusing for you, for the listeners. But, what we do is we record the intro in our homes, and then we race to the studio to record the episode. Then, it is going to be, just for a bit of fun, a race back to our homes for the outro.

Ed Gamble

Yes. That's exactly what's happening. But, we do have a secret ingredient, James, that if Jason says it, he will be kicked out of the dream restaurant.

James Acaster

Yes. Today, the secret ingredient is pimento.

Ed Gamble

Pimento, because his character in Brooklyn Nine Nine is called Adrian Pimento. We're very clever boys for coming up with that, well done us. Also, I should say, James, this is the last episode of the series.

James Acaster

Man. Series four, done and dusted.

Ed Gamble

No. Series four is done and dusted. It was done and dusted seven series ago. This has been series eleven.

James Acaster

What?

Ed Gamble

And what a series it's been.



James Acaster

What a series it has been. We've talked about so much food, we've met so many people. We've made some new friends along the way. Benito grew a goatee at one point and then shaved it off, and the listeners didn't know that.

Ed Gamble

Yes, they didn't know that at all. But, let me tell you, it got a lot more hot and heavy and sexual in the studio.

James Acaster

It certainly did. Also, we had all the fruit salads. We had everything in the fruit salad.

Ed Gamble

I don't know where we got to with the fruit salad, because look, I'll be honest with you, I really lost my way with the fruit salad. I think I said there'd be five ingredients, I think we did more and I never truly finished the fruit salad. We did it to make Benito's life difficult.

James Acaster

It's my favourite thing we've ever done, the fruit salad.

Ed Gamble

It is the one thing guaranteed to make James laugh every time, is the fruit salad.

James Acaster

It's because you say, 'And put that in the fruit salad,' at the end. It's really funny.

Ed Gamble

Yes. I forgot to say about the steak tartare. Put that in the fruit salad.

James Acaster

That's good stuff.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Shall we get on with the episode, James? Because, it's the final episode of the series and we've got a wonderful guest coming up, so we shouldn't dilly dally.

James Acaster

Let's not dilly dally. Let's-, what's the opposite of dilly dally? Speed up.

Ed Gamble

Willy wally?

James Acaster

Let's willy wally.



Ed Gamble

This is the Off Menu menu of Jason Mantzoukas.

Welcome, Jason, to the dream restaurant.

Jason Mantzoukas

Thrilled to be here, gentlemen. Woah.

James Acaster

Welcome, Jason Mantzoukas, to the dream restaurant. We've been expecting you for some time.

Jason Mantzoukas

I could not be more excited to be here. Look at this. What a beautiful place.

James Acaster

What are you seeing?

Ed Gamble

What are you imagining?

James Acaster

Seeing as it is the dream restaurant, it's whatever you have in your-,

Jason Mantzoukas

I was referring to Plosive Studios. I love it. I think it's gorgeous.

James Acaster

If your dream restaurant is in Plosive Studios, we're not going to stop you.

Ed Gamble

A lot of people say why don't we film the whole thing and release it, because we just release clips. Then, someone else-, I don't know if you saw this, Benito. Someone commented on our clip saying that our footage looks like interview footage from a police interrogation room.

Jason Mantzoukas

It does feel-, when we walked into the studio, it was small. I was like, 'Am I in trouble? Have I been-,'. We went from a beautiful room outside, into a very cramped room.

Ed Gamble

Yes. We like to make you feel uncomfortable.

Jason Mantzoukas

You know, that's smart. I will confess to anything.



James Acaster

Yes. By the end of this, we'll have you saying you ate foods you've never eaten.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, absolutely. Yes, foie gras, absolutely.

James Acaster

Are you much of a foodie, Jason?

Jason Mantzoukas

I'm not much of a foodie. I'm much more of a repetitive eater. I eat the same things over and over again. I'm adventurous in the sense of I'll eat plenty of stuff, but I am not, like, pursuing-, I have a very antagonistic relationship to food. I have a catastrophic food allergy, which makes me mistrust food inherently. So, as a result, I'm very cagey with, like, new stuff. So, even like this trip here, I've been in London for a week. I've eaten in almost all the same restaurants that I ate in in 2019, when I was here last.

Ed Gamble

Right. Because you trust them?

Jason Mantzoukas

Just because I trust them, and I thought they were great. I was like, 'I'll go back there,' and I have. There are new restaurants, I'm certain, here. I have not explored them yet.

James Acaster

What's your food allergy?

Jason Mantzoukas

Eggs. I can't eat anything that uses egg in the preparation at all. So, you know, pastas, breads, sauces, all sorts of stuff.

Ed Gamble

That's a tricky one, isn't it?

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. It's in a lot.

Ed Gamble

Egg does pop up more than you expect.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. No, it's quite pervasive. And, it's not always obvious. You know, it can be quite subtle. It can be just a part of a component of-, you know, here's this dish, and you don't think of it. But, like, in order to



candy the walnuts that are on top of it, they have to use egg whites or something. It can be minuscule like that, and it'll get me.

Ed Gamble

How will it get you?

Jason Mantzoukas

Anaphylaxis. I go in-, like, anaphylactic shock. So, I carry an EpiPen with me, you know, the whole-, it's catastrophic. But, it's manageable. But, it's a whole production. I have to give, like, a very strongly worded speech to every person, every server that begins with-, because they're always so, 'Welcome, thank you so much for coming to this restaurant,' just like you guys just were. Then, I'm like, 'Hi. This is going to be a nightmare. Just, get ready.' Then, I just start going through and listing all of the ways in which, 'Please don't poison me.' Then, if I feel like they're not quite taking it seriously, like there was a guy at a restaurant the other night who went like, 'I think you'll be fine. There's not many eggs in our food.' I did a cursory glance at the menu. It was full of, like, mayo, aioli, all these words that I was like, 'These are definitely full of eggs.' He was just so dismissive that the next time he came around, I gave him the backup speech, which is, 'Boy, wouldn't it be just awful if I died in this restaurant? Oh no, wouldn't that be terrible for your restaurant, if it became synonymous with my death.'

James Acaster

Also, I don't know when this episode is going to go out. But, as of the time of recording, Easter is round the corner.

Jason Mantzoukas

No, thank you. I'm a hard pass on Easter. It's too dangerous. I'm wondering here-, on Halloween in America, kids throw eggs at people. That's a big thing. I got hit with an egg once, and had to immediately go home. Halloween over.

Ed Gamble

Skin contact?

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. Not as much. I won't have, like, anaphylaxis from skin contact. But, I'll get, like, swelling and hives and a whole thing. It was all over my arm, you know? But, yes.

James Acaster

With the assailant, when they threw the egg, did you say to them, 'Do you know what?'

Jason Mantzoukas

I wish I could have. They drove by in a truck. They were just driving around, throwing eggs at kids on the street. Teenagers.

Ed Gamble

Also, they would have been probably delighted, that they found someone who got hives.



Jason Mantzoukas

They would have been thrilled that they found the weakest link in the kid group.

Ed Gamble

That's why they're driving round. They're going, 'We're going to get one. We're going to finally find someone.'

Jason Mantzoukas

The worst was that with the kids I was walking around with, I was the only one that got hit. Everybody else, they missed everybody else. I was the only one that got hit and had to go home.

James Acaster

You see, I've just now realised that you were a kid in this story.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. Sorry, James.

James Acaster

I was imagining you as an adult.

Jason Mantzoukas

You were picturing a full grown man?

James Acaster

You were a grown man, you were walking around-,

Ed Gamble

You were walking around with some kids.

James Acaster

On Halloween and some kids egged you, and you had to go home.

Jason Mantzoukas

By the way, I love that. And, they would have been in the right. For an adult man to be walking around on Halloween like that, with all those kids around. A childless man. I agree. You know, that is who should get hit with the egg. Get him out of here.

James Acaster

Egg the weirdo.

Jason Mantzoukas

No, I was a kid. I was, like, I don't remember what I was dressed as. But, I was a little kid.



James Acaster

My next question was, what were you dressed as?

Jason Mantzoukas

I don't remember. I was just trying to remember. I have no recollection. But, in all likelihood, simply because there was so many years in which I was someone from Star Wars, I was most likely either a stormtrooper or Darth Vader. Both of which were costumes my mom made for me that were incredible and that I wore multiple years.

Ed Gamble

But, quite a lot of coverage on those costumes, right? Quite a lot of, sort of, armour.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, yes. Yes.

Ed Gamble

You would have thought the egg's not getting through that.

Jason Mantzoukas

No. That arm, exposed enough to get hit.

Ed Gamble

If you were dressed as, like, a big target or something, then you can't really blame those guys.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. It was just blinking lights with arrows pointed at me.

James Acaster

One of my favourite Halloween outfits that you're a part of, you and Nish Kumar dressed as each other, one Halloween.

Jason Mantzoukas

We did, at a Halloween party here in London. We dressed as each other and had a lot of confused people. A lot of people-, it was very funny to be at the party together, and then separate and then come back together and be like, 'Who have you talked to, and how confused were they by what was going on?'

Ed Gamble

Because, if you're separate, that costume does not work.

Jason Mantzoukas

Not at all. It only works when you see the two of us and you're like, 'Oh, this is funny. This is very funny and very clever, because they do look alike.' But, just on our own, dressed as just what would appear to be normal people. Because, he was just wearing my uniform, a white shirt and jeans, and I was



wearing his uniform, which was a black blazer, black shirt and black pants. The only thing that made us unique was we had name tags on with each others name.

James Acaster

We always start with still or sparkling water. Do you have a preference, Jason?

Jason Mantzoukas

Still please, James.

James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

I would like still water. I don't like bubbles. It makes me gassy.

Ed Gamble

Do you not like bubbles across the board? We're talking soft drinks-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Not so much. I'm not a big soda guy either. I'm not a big soda guy, expect for the movies, I'll get a root beer. That's the treat.

James Acaster

That's, like, hardcore soda, I'd say. Like, you don't do soda, but then you-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Do you rank sodas in terms of how hardcore? What are other hardcore sodas for you, James?

Ed Gamble

Cream soda.

Jason Mantzoukas

Cream soda seems not hardcore.

Ed Gamble

To me, it's hardcore.

Jason Mantzoukas

Really?

Ed Gamble

I feel like that's hardcore. Well, I just wouldn't have it that often.



James Acaster

Strong flavour.

Jason Mantzoukas

Is that it?

Ed Gamble

Yes, strong flavour.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay.

James Acaster

Root beer is like Dr Pepper on steroids. That's full on.

Jason Mantzoukas

See, I think Dr Pepper is like root beer on steroids, because Dr Pepper is, like, some sort of a medicine or something. It feels like it's got, like-, in it's origins, I think, are an elixir of some sort. I don't know. I don't trust it, Dr Pepper. I don't like it.

James Acaster

But, you trust root beer?

Jason Mantzoukas

But, I'll trust root beer all day, everyday. Because, it comes from a root.

Ed Gamble

What root does it come from? Do we know?

Jason Mantzoukas

Route 66, I believe. Old route 66.

James Acaster

So, you don't trust the bubbles.

Jason Mantzoukas

I don't trust the bubbles. They give me gas. So, I'm still water all the way. It helps me hydrate more, also. I'll drink more water, which I always need to do, because I'm always not hydrated enough. So, if I'm-, the thing that I've started doing lately, after I saw a friend of mine, Katie Dippold, shout out to Katie Dippold, the great screenwriter. A very funny comedian. Orders a lemonade the minute she gets to the table, to start this process of being like, 'I'm excited to hydrate. I'm excited to drink something sweet and it gets you drinking something.' Then, you roll right into water and you start hydrating. So, I've started doing that now, which is very refreshing. A lemonade to start.



James Acaster

So, you do-, that's soft-core pop.

Ed Gamble

But, that's still in-, you're talking about still lemonade?

Jason Mantzoukas

I'm sorry. I forgot that. Yes, what I'm talking about is just, like, lemon water. You know, like, not a fizzy, not a bubbles, not a canned lemonade.

James Acaster

That seems crazy to me.

Jason Mantzoukas

What would that be called? What would lemonade be called here?

Ed Gamble

I mean, we would still call it lemonade. But, when you say lemonade here, the first thought everyone has is, like, Sprite or 7UP.

Jason Mantzoukas

That makes sense. Yes, no, that isn't what I'm talking about. Thank you.

James Acaster

So, what does ade mean? Because, I thought ade meant fizzy.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. I don't think so.

James Acaster

That's what I've always thought.

Ed Gamble

Like, infusion or flavoured liquid?

Jason Mantzoukas

Ade. Yes, it's true, because it's a suffix that's attached to quite a few things. None of them, in America, are bubbly though.

James Acaster

Yes. I feel like here, it's quite a lot of bubbly things. Limeade, cherryade.

Ed Gamble

Gingerade.



Jason Mantzoukas

I don't know if we can continue this. We just have such fundamental different understanding of things.

Ed Gamble

Benito, what does ade mean? Product made of, yes.

James Acaster

It means product made of?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Then, why is it only for drinks then?

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. Why can't we have chocolateade?

Ed Gamble

Sausageade.

James Acaster

Yes, that would be great. Live Aid, I guess.

Ed Gamble

That was made of live.

James Acaster

Can't get them on that. So, do you want an American lemonade as soon as you sit down at the table?

Jason Mantzoukas

I do. I do, actually.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you can have that for your water course. I think that's perfect.

Jason Mantzoukas

Great, I'd love that. That was my question, too. I'd like to have primary, and then if possible, alternate choices. I feel like, in a lot of ways, my dinner will look like a dinner that I would be thrilled to have with both of you tonight. But, there's a shadow dinner in my mind, that I would also have, that is a lot more like, 'This thing my mom made,' do you know what I mean? That is in the background.

Ed Gamble

The shadow dinner makes it sound quite, sort of, dark.



Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, it is.

Ed Gamble

Is it, like, evil goth food?

Jason Mantzoukas

It's terrifying. It's a terrifying dinner.

James Acaster

It's Halloween again.

Jason Mantzoukas

It's Halloween dinner. It's just eggs. It's all eggs. It's an omelet.

James Acaster

Poppadoms or bread? Poppadoms or bread, Jason Mantzoukas? Poppadoms or bread?

Jason Mantzoukas

I'll be honest, James. It's got to be bread, because-, what is the first thing you're saying?

James Acaster

Poppadoms.

Jason Mantzoukas

Poppadoms is a thing. Because, again, I've listened to enough episodes and realised in this moment when you say these things, I am never certain what you're saying first. Because, poppadoms is not a thing we have. Or, if we do, we call it something different and I've never bothered to look it up. But, I'm certain it has eggs in it. It's got to. Is it, like, a bready, kind of-,

Ed Gamble

No. It's, like, crispy. It's an Indian thing. You get it at the beginning of an Indian meal in the UK. I think that's less likely to have eggs in it than bread is.

Jason Mantzoukas

Interesting, okay.

James Acaster

It's a safer bet.

Jason Mantzoukas

Well, I'm going to go with bread. Although-, you know what, I'll try something new. If it's egg free, I'll have a poppadom.



Ed Gamble

Yes. Well, that can be the shadow choice.

Jason Mantzoukas

I love this. Poppadoms in the shadow dinner. Bread, eggless bread, like a sourdough or something safe in the regular dinner.

Ed Gamble

I mean, excuse me, I don't know what eggs are in what bread, you know?

James Acaster

No, I have no idea.

Ed Gamble

I never thought about it.

James Acaster

I don't know what eggs are in-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Sourdough, traditionally safe, you know. Like, a pretty-, you know, I wouldn't just start free styling sourdough if they put it down, I'd still ask. But, almost always, it's going to be safe.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

You know, there's a couple of breads that are pretty pretty safe, but I kind of steer clear of bread just because you never know when someone's going to be fancy and brush some egg on top.

Ed Gamble

Sure.

Jason Mantzoukas

So, it looks good or something like that, so.

Ed Gamble

What are the danger breads? What are the breads where you see them, and you're like, 'I'm going nowhere near them.'

Jason Mantzoukas

Challah. Challah, big huge, you know, brioche. These are, like, egg laden breads. These are, like, mostly eggs. And they're-, yes, they have that glaze on them, they're very-, super dangerous.



Ed Gamble

And restaurants are obsessed with brioche as well.

Jason Mantzoukas

They love it. And heartbreakingly, a bunch of years ago, everybody was like, 'Oh, for hamburgers now, brioche buns.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

No more, like, regular old buns that anybody can eat, like you, Jason Mantzoukas, no. Brioche fancy buns, everything's egg. Every-, at a certain point, it became-, everything had eggs in it. Even, like-, that was the big-, that was the absolutely devastating thing about the mixology craze was that suddenly there was egg foam in cocktails. And that was, like-, that was really wild to wrap my head around because why would you ever think that that would be a source of danger, like a cocktail? Like, I went on a date once with a woman to just a bar, no food. We had drinks, it was lovely, we kissed good night, and I was like, 'I have to go to the hospital.' But, I was so confused, I was like, 'I'm having an allergic reaction, but I haven't eaten anything.' And she was like, 'Well, what are you allergic to?' And I was like, 'Eggs.' She was like, 'Oh no, my drink had eggs in it,' and I was like, 'Why?' I was like, 'Why would you do that? That's disgusting.' First of all, why would you order a drink that has egg foam in it? That sounds rancid in every way.

Ed Gamble

Hang on, so she had an eggy drink.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

Ed Gamble

You kissed her good night.

Jason Mantzoukas

Correct.

Ed Gamble

And then you had to go to the hospital.

Jason Mantzoukas

Correct.

Ed Gamble

So, you kissed a lady and then you said, 'I have to go-,'



Jason Mantzoukas

I have to go. I had to stop kiss-, I had to stop the-, this was a successful date.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Do you know how hard it is to get to the point where I'm like, 'This has gone well.' This is well enough that we are now-, do the classic Los Angeles, 'Let me walk you to your car.' We are kissing at the car, this is going great, and then suddenly, I'm like, 'I guess I have to leave and go to the emergency room,' this is awful. Or take an Epipen, goodbye. But, she was like, 'Oh my God, I'm so sorry.' I was like, 'Why? You didn't know. Why would you? You did nothing wrong except choose an-, what sounds to me like a disgusting drink.'

James Acaster

And were you dressed as Darth Vader or-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, I was dressed as Emperor Palpatine.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes, yes. Yes. He looks like he's had an allergic reaction, to be fair to him.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh yes.

Ed Gamble

He does.

James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

That guy hates eggs.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

He should have said, 'I've got to go to the emergency room because you're too good at kissing.'

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. Oh, by the way, well done. That's a good punch up.



James Acaster

She can tell everyone that forever now. She can be like, 'I once kissed a guy so good he went to the emergency room.'

Well, let's get into your meal proper now, your dream starter.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, boy, oh, boy. You know what? I think, for me, a-, I was thinking about it, I always want, like, a Greek salad. But, also a shrimp cocktail is just a, for me, classic starter. You know, when I was thinking about this, I realised that a lot of the, to me, default classic dinner items that are baked into what I think of as a nice dinner that I want, is the menu at a steakhouse.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

And I'm sorry, James, I know that you shit your pants in a steakhouse. And I don't want to be giving you PTSD right now. But, that-, so-, and a shrimp cocktail to me is the-, you know, when I was a kid, that seemed like what you would get, that was a fancy thing that you would get at a steakhouse. And so there's still in a way in which I think of it as the quintessential starter. But-, and I also love it. It's a great starter. So, a shrimp cocktail.

Ed Gamble

Well, we're going to have to do the UK American division again, aren't we?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Because-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Why?

Ed Gamble

Prawn cocktail here.

Jason Mantzoukas

Go.

Ed Gamble

Is mayo and ketchup sort of mix, it's like Marie Rose sauce.



Jason Mantzoukas

Okay.

Ed Gamble

And that's in with the-

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

It's just all mixed in. But, shrimp cocktail in the States, like, the horseradish and tomato.

Jason Mantzoukas

Correct. It's-, exactly, it's a cocktail sauce with horseradish in it and just plain shrimp, yes. Oh wow, I didn't know that either, okay, wow. I'm learning so much.

Ed Gamble

I think I prefer the American one, like, whenever I've been to an American steakhouse, when there's loads of horseradish in it as well and it proper gets in your nose.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, it's got a little bit of a, yes, kick to it, it's very spicy. My favourite of that kind of steakhouse is Keens in New York. Next time you're in New York. It is like a turn of the last century smoking house that has pipes fixed to the ceiling. They've got pipes from like-, it's Albert Einstein's pipe, it's a wild place.

James Acaster

Oh, those pipes.

Jason Mantzoukas

It's crazy.

Ed Gamble

Is it really Albert Einstein's pipe?

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. Oh yes. All these ex-presidents, all these famous people, all the-, this is the pipe they used when they came to-, it's a whole thing. It's a nuts place, you know.

Ed Gamble

So, were they using the steakhouse's pipes or did they-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, sorry.



Ed Gamble

Did everyone accidentally leave their pipes there?

Jason Mantzoukas

No, that would be very funny. Sorry, you can't leave, Mr Einstein, until you've put your pipe down. We get to keep it. No, they're like these long-, it looks like Gandalf's pipe.

Ed Gamble

Right. Okay. Cool.

Jason Mantzoukas

They're kind of fragile, long white pipes and people sign them and they're all, like, lining the ceilings. It's an incredibly beautiful place. If you want to look it up, I can show you a thing.

James Acaster

Maybe that's what Oppenheimer said to him.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

James Acaster

'You left your pipe at Keens.'

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, exactly.

Ed Gamble

Oh wow, that's great.

Jason Mantzoukas

And it's a great, like, proper old school New York steakhouse.

Ed Gamble

Yes. I do like, yes, like-, fancy American steakhouses are great. We went to a mad one though in-, have you heard of the Madonna Inn?

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, in California?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.



Ed Gamble

They have a steakhouse there that's all pink and gold.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

Ed Gamble

With a mad carpet. And me and my wife, we were on honeymoon and arrived too early, got quite drunk at happy hour and then went to the boutique, and my wife bought a dress which was the same pattern as the carpet in the steakhouse.

Jason Mantzoukas

Incredible. That's amazing.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that was a good night. And we had shrimp cocktail that night as well.

Jason Mantzoukas

Home run.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

A lot of my dinner will be an homage to your honeymoon.

Ed Gamble

Thank you.

James Acaster

Jason's the same colour as the carpet.

Jason Mantzoukas

I think that's-, so did she ever put that dress on every once-, and be like, 'Remember this?'

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, yes. It doesn't quite work, I'd say, just in England when it's, like, bad weather and stuff, to put on a fancy dress the same colour as a carpet in California.

Jason Mantzoukas

It's really funny.

James Acaster

And your shadow choice is the Greek salad.



Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, I think so. I like a Greek salad. I like a-, part of my shadow meal is, like, a Greek salad, hummus and pita, is a much more Mediterranean meal.

Ed Gamble

Nice.

Jason Mantzoukas

Not a heavy steak-, you know, laden meal. But, like, a lighter meal.

Ed Gamble

Which doesn't feel like it should be in the shadows, you know.

Jason Mantzoukas

I agree.

Ed Gamble

If anything, it's not shadow anymore.

Jason Mantzoukas

Bring it out of the shadows, let it's light shine. You know, let us bask in it's vitamin D glow. Get that sun.

Ed Gamble

How do you-, I think we've talked about this on the podcast before. No, I talked to Richard Herring about it on his podcast. With a Greek salad-,

Ed Gamble

What? Hold on a second.

Jason Mantzoukas

Woah, woah, woah.

James Acaster

You've been talking about food on other podcasts?

Jason Mantzoukas

Woah, is that allowed?

Ed Gamble

He was interviewing me about my book.

James Acaster

What the hell?



Ed Gamble

He was interviewing me about my book.

James Acaster

With Herring of all people.

Ed Gamble

We were talking about feta.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And on a Greek salad-,

James Acaster

I can't believe I'm hearing this.

Ed Gamble

Do you prefer when they bring it and there's the whole block on top or do you prefer it cubed and dispersed throughout the salad?

James Acaster

Jesus Christ.

Jason Mantzoukas

I like-, by the way, Ed, great question.

Ed Gamble

Thank you.

Jason Mantzoukas

Great question. And my choice would be a block.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

My choice would be a block.

James Acaster

Wow.



Jason Mantzoukas

And my preference in Greek salad is a horiatiki salad which is Greek for, like, a village salad. And it would just be tomato, cucumber, some oil and just the cheese.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Like, that's it. None of the rest of the stuff that gets put into Greek salads a lot, I feel like messes it up.

Ed Gamble

No, like-,

Jason Mantzoukas

I like a super simple one.

Ed Gamble

No lettuce then?

Jason Mantzoukas

Nope.

Ed Gamble

No olives or anything like that?

Jason Mantzoukas

No. Olives, totally fine. I happen to not love olives. But, would be appropriate, yes.

Ed Gamble

I agree. I mean, it's all about the cheese for me anyway.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, you know, the cheese, the good tomatoes, cucumbers, that's about it. You know, that's a solid salad for me.

James Acaster

But, you're having the cheese as one block.

Jason Mantzoukas

But, I break it up.

James Acaster

But, you break it up yourself.



Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. I don't eat it as a block of cheese. I receive it as a block.

James Acaster

Yes. But, I'm just wondering about the ratios here.

Ed Gamble

It's received, but not taken.

James Acaster

Are you having the cucumbers-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Ed, so you think I'm just, what, grabbing it with my hand and just, like, gnawing on a block of cheese.

Ed Gamble

And you say, 'Yoink,' when you grab it as well.

James Acaster

Yes, you have to say, 'Yoink,' yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yoink. I think you should. I said, 'Zoinks,' on something the other day, and they were like, 'I think that's the first time anybody's ever said, 'Zoinks,' on this.

Ed Gamble

Did you say-, did you think, 'I'm going to say zoinks now,' or did you naturally say, 'zoinks?'

Jason Mantzoukas

No, I have somehow inserted zoinks back into the rotation for me. I think it started on my podcast as a way to talk about truly absurd movies that are-, that would be just, like, 'This is a real zoinks moment for me.' And now, I've just started using it, like, without noticing.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Hold on, you've been doing other podcasts as well.

Jason Mantzoukas

Here's the thing, hear me out, James.

James Acaster

I can't believe this.



Jason Mantzoukas

I've been doing my podcast for fourteen years, simply to get to be a guest on this podcast.

James Acaster

That's-, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

That was launching me towards Plosive Studios in this moment right now.

James Acaster

Yes, okay, I accept that.

Ed Gamble

You also say, 'bananas' a lot on your podcast.

Jason Mantzoukas

I do.

Ed Gamble

As well.

Jason Mantzoukas

And 'bonkers.'

Ed Gamble

From listening to your podcast, 'bonkers' and 'bananas' has become part of my rotation.

Jason Mantzoukas

Thank God.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

That makes me very happy.

James Acaster

Your dream main course, now, I'm looking forward to hearing-, both the shadow-, but we're out of the shadows with that now.

Jason Mantzoukas

Wait, so my question is this, gentleman, and here's my question.



James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

I think there needs to be an option for a middle course.

James Acaster

Okay.

Jason Mantzoukas

Like a pasta course, a secondi.

James Acaster

You can do that.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

I would like the pasta that Steve Coogan's daughter makes because listening to the episode where he described the pasta that she makes, that he wanted, I was like, 'Oh, I want that too.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

That sounds fantastic and light and clean, perfect for, like, a mid-meal plate.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

I want Steve Coogan's daughter's pasta. And I don't mean that in any gross way. So, don't come at me for this. It's the pasta from the episode. I want that pasta.

Ed Gamble

Is this the first time a guest has directly-,

James Acaster

It is.



Ed Gamble

Directly taken something from another guest's dream menu that they haven't heard?

James Acaster

Yes. It is, and I'm very happy that-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay, good, I'm glad.

Ed Gamble

I hadn't even considered this as a menu hack, but-,

James Acaster

It's quite exciting.

Ed Gamble

I'm delighted. I can't even remember what the pasta was.

Jason Mantzoukas

It was like a very-, like I said, it was a very light simple pasta that had-, I think he said broccoli or-, it was like, with greens in it. It was almost like an aglio e olio but with greens. It was not a heavy sauced pasta or anything like that. So, I was like, 'Oh, that sounds great.' And perfect for-, because I would like my main to be a steak. You know, and my main is going to be a steak, I want something light. I don't want a heavy meat sauce or some sort of real beefy pasta, I want something light. So, that's-, I thought that was a great pasta when he said it, so I'll take it.

Ed Gamble

Do you have a shadow secondi?

Jason Mantzoukas

Such a good question, of course I do, Ed. I feel like my shadow second would be, like-, because the other thing that I'm missing which I would love that is a little bit more of an appetiser is a charcuterie plate.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

The shadow meal is little bits, is more like pita, hummus, Greek salad, like, to me, charcuterie with some pickles and some-, you know, all that kind of-, that kind of a plate, I love. But, not so much cheese. I am not a big cheese person. Makes me quite gassy. So-,

Ed Gamble

Is it too close to egg in your mind maybe?



Jason Mantzoukas

No, because I used to be able to eat cheese. But, now, it just upsets my stomach, so I just have to steer clear of it. But, I love cheese, it's great, but it really is-, the older I get, the more my stomach is like, 'We'd really rather not. You know, this is not for us anymore. We don't do-, ' can't do dairy anymore, can't really do anything that really challenges my stomach very much.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

So, the charcuterie shadow secondi.

Jason Mantzoukas

I think so.

James Acaster

Can you say that really quick?

Jason Mantzoukas

The charcuterie shadow secondi.

James Acaster

That was good. You can tell this guy, he's-,

Jason Mantzoukas

I'm having a great time.

James Acaster

He's acted with the best of them.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

You give him a line.

Jason Mantzoukas

'Oh, I can do it, I can do it.' Secondi shadow-, wait, what was-, charcuterie shadow secondi.

James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Charcuterie shadow secondi.



Ed Gamble

Oh yes, you've got the full range.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh yes.

James Acaster

I'm really excited that you've taken something from another guest's menu. Especially because, like, I know that Steve's daughter will hear this podcast as well.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, great.

James Acaster

And it'll be a nice surprise.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, I hope so. And it sounds like you're making a wonderful pasta, so congrats.

James Acaster

Yes, congrats. So, your steak. Is that from a particular place, is it a particular cut? How do you want it done?

Jason Mantzoukas

You know, and this is going to be, I suspect, very controversial. But, it's not that it's necessarily from a place, although Keens would be a great one. And I'm controversial in the sense that anytime I order this steak with people, they're always like, 'Why are you getting the fillet? It's the blandest, most boringest, least flavourful, least fatty, least marbled,' all the things you're supposed to say about meat. It's not-, but for whatever reason, it's the one that in my mind, I'm like, 'That's a steak. That's what I get. I'm getting this fillet.' So, I would get a fillet. I would get a fillet, medium-rare, nothing really fancy about it, you know. I'm not a big sauce guy or any of that, kind of, stuff, so I'm pretty much good to go, salt and pepper, I'm ready. Let's do this.

Ed Gamble

Sort of caveman-style really.

Jason Mantzoukas

Caveman, yes. A lot of people think I'm, like, the Liver King of comedy. Do you know who that is?

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, yes, I'm aware-,

James Acaster

I don't know who the Liver King is?



Jason Mantzoukas

Can you look up Liver King?

Ed Gamble

Yes, show James a picture of the Liver King.

Jason Mantzoukas

Now we've really-, I think this really, for James, is really going to come home.

Ed Gamble

So, a bit of background to the Liver King, he's like a fitness guy, right?

Jason Mantzoukas

Like an influencer personality type fitness-,

James Acaster

What the hell?

Ed Gamble

So, that's him with a big bit of liver.

Jason Mantzoukas

He's like a proper caveman guy who said-, and all he eats is raw meat.

James Acaster

What?

Jason Mantzoukas

And it's just him eating raw meat and eating raw meat, and his whole thing is he's always in his shorts. And then they-, everybody kept saying, like, 'Well, you're clearly on steroids.' And he'd be like, 'No, no, no. This is achievable through just eating raw meat and exercise.' And of course, at a certain point, he had to come out and be like, 'Of course, I'm taking steroids as well. I'm not just eating bone marrow-, ' because his videos were just him slurping down bone marrow and all this other just absolutely nuts disgusting stuff.

Ed Gamble

Yes, really gross.

Jason Mantzoukas

And then people were like, 'Of course not. That's not how this works,' and he had to be like, 'Yes, yes, yes, of course I'm shooting up insane amounts of steroids in order to look like this.'

Ed Gamble

He gave a really sad apology as well.



Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, he had to do, I think, multiple sad apologies.

Ed Gamble

'I let you all down.'

Jason Mantzoukas

It's a very good Liver King.

James Acaster

He's just an influencer. So, this is the guy who started posting videos.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

James Acaster

And he ends up with doing an apology.

Jason Mantzoukas

But, takes off. But, like, hugely takes off in that kind of space on YouTube, maybe, TikTok or something, that is people looking to hack their bodies basically. How to unlock-, you know, all these guys are trying to figure out immortality or some such nonsense, and it's all about-, you know, oh, just eating raw meat or all this kind of nonsense. All these boondoggles that are meant to be like, 'No, you want the answer to long life and happiness? This is it.' Like, £10,000 a week of performance-enhancing drugs.

James Acaster

Well, that's insane, so. And that's who you are?

Jason Mantzoukas

That's who I am. I'm very caveman in the sense of, like-, yes I'm like the Liver King of comic. So, you know, that's how I think of myself.

James Acaster

Do you get tired of having to explain-, like, justify your steak choice to your dining companions when they pick you up on it?

Jason Mantzoukas

No, I'm not tired of it, I'm just like-, 'I'm just doing this, I'm not-, ' you know. Because they will-, I don't care enough, you know. That's the thing, like, I feel like I grew up mistrusting food so much that I have no-, I'm not, like, pursuant of like, 'Oh, the best version of it.' Now, I'm scratching nostalgic itches almost or something like that. Like, these things are just, like-, they occupy, they are Proust's Madeleines. So, they are provoking a memory or a, you know, eliciting some sort of nostalgia from me. More so than I'm like, 'Oh, I can't wait for that first bite of the ba, ba, ba. You know. Whatever, I don't fetishise the food as much as to me the experience.



Ed Gamble

Can I just say, how highbrow you've come across by saying Proust's Madeleines rather than Ratatouille ratatouille.

James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

But, I did talk about Liver Kings, so I got to recover.

James Acaster

I didn't hear anything you said after Proust's Madeleines, I'm here thinking, 'Now, what is that again?'

Jason Mantzoukas

Of course, because you were lost in a reverie.

James Acaster

'What's that? Oh, yes, it's, like-, ' And then I literally arrived at, 'Oh, yes, it's like the Ratatouille in Ratatouille.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. It is, yes.

James Acaster

That's literally what happened in my head and when I rejoined the conversation Ed was saying Ratatouille Ratatouille, and I was like, 'Okay, yes, I think I'm up to speed.'

Jason Mantzoukas

And by the way we're now all on the same page.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, yes.

James Acaster

Yes. Well, I know that now.

Jason Mantzoukas

I liked watching you drift off into a reverie.

James Acaster

Yes, yes.



Ed Gamble

Unfortunately and James knows this, I'd be the guy at the steak house going, 'Why aren't you having a rib-eye?'

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. Oh, and I believe you.

Ed Gamble

Well, I don't like that about myself, but I-

Jason Mantzoukas

I don't like it about you either.

Ed Gamble

No, thank you.

Jason Mantzoukas

And it's why frankly you weren't invited.

James Acaster

Yes. I think in the past I probably would have been that person as well, but since-, I have four cats.

Jason Mantzoukas

Such a cool flex.

James Acaster

Yes. And-,

Ed Gamble

Also, I don't know where this is going.

James Acaster

Well, every time I tell people I've got four cats I get the same response from people, like most people will just be like, 'What? That's too many cats.' And it's not and I'm sick of it now.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, yes, of course.

James Acaster

I'm sick of having the same basic opinion thrown in my face about my own life and how I choose to live it. And I'm just bored of it. Like, complete strangers and pets will come up as a conversation, they go, 'Do you have any pets?' I'll be like, 'Yes, I've got cats.' They'll be, 'How many?' I'll be, 'Here we fucking go.'



Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

James Acaster

I'll say, 'Four.' And then they'll probably be like, 'Woah, what? No. You can't have four cats that's crazy, that's like you've gone over the crazy line now, that's a crazy amount of cats.' I've got to have that fucking conversation again.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, I'm listening.

James Acaster

So, now I would never say to anyone, 'Are you only ordering a fillet? What you doing?'

Ed Gamble

Well, it's the opposite thought isn't it because people are having a go at Jason because they think you're doing, like, the most boring thing, right?

Jason Mantzoukas

Correct, yes.

James Acaster

Right, sure, yes.

Ed Gamble

And for you you're doing the craziest thing.

James Acaster

Sure.

Ed Gamble

Four cats is not fillet steak.

James Acaster

I still think it's-,

Ed Gamble

Four cats is Liver King.

James Acaster

Well, if you phrase it like that.

Jason Mantzoukas

This maths is-, this is hard maths for me.



James Acaster

Am I going to end up having to do an apology on social media about my cats?

Ed Gamble

Four cats is Liver King.

Jason Mantzoukas

Did you get four cats at once or have you over time accumulated? 'Oh, this year I got another cat.' Or?

James Acaster

Well, within a year and a half we got four cats.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. So, we got one given to us for free, got him a buddy a month after.

Jason Mantzoukas

Makes sense.

Ed Gamble

James is a cat influencer, so he gets cats gifted.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes. And they're not on steroids.

Jason Mantzoukas

So, smart, so smart. People love the podcast, they give you a cat.

James Acaster

Yes. And then, like, eight months later I was like, 'Lets get another cat.' So, we looked for cats, we found two we really liked, we were like, 'Right, it's one of these two.' And I went, 'Yes, yes, both of them.'

Jason Mantzoukas

Both of them.

James Acaster

So, we got both.

Jason Mantzoukas

It makes total sense.



James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

When you put it like that it makes total sense.

James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

When you said, 'Four.'. I will say my initial reaction was, 'That's entirely too many cats.'

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Especially for someone who I'm assuming is on the road quite a bit.

James Acaster

Oh, yes. Yes, yes, yes. Yes, you know, they just man the house by themselves.

Jason Mantzoukas

Smart.

James Acaster

Yes, my girlfriend moved out ages ago, it's just the four of them.

Ed Gamble

She hates cats.

James Acaster

She hates cats.

Jason Mantzoukas

That is very aggressive of you to get four.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

They all look very different though.



Jason Mantzoukas

That's a conversation you are clearly not wanting to have. If you are with someone who doesn't like cats and you just keep getting more cats.

James Acaster

Yes. Yes.

Ed Gamble

They come back and there are two more cats.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. 'What are you trying to tell me?'

Ed Gamble

'I think I'm going to leave'. They all look so different though that it makes sense when you see them, right?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Because if three of them were there I'd be like, 'This gang is incomplete.' You know, you need a big guy in a gang, you need a little guy, you need, like, the-,

Jason Mantzoukas

The weapons expert, the tech guy, the explosives guy, the sniper.

Ed Gamble

They're a heist hang gang, yes, yes.

James Acaster

Ed did say when we'd completed the set, Ed was like, 'It's like cats in a cartoon.' Where they're all a different breed and they've all got different roles.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, my God.

James Acaster

And that's what we've done essentially.

Jason Mantzoukas

And now you're ready to pull off a heist.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I think we are ready to pull off a heist in, like some sort of-

Jason Mantzoukas

It's a real Oceans Eleven over there.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Which sounds like a cat food brand.

Jason Mantzoukas

It does actually.

Ed Gamble

So, that'd be perfect.

James Acaster

Watched that again the other day, Oceans Eleven, what a film.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I don't what I was expecting there.

Jason Mantzoukas

Wow what a wow.

James Acaster

What a film.

Jason Mantzoukas

Full endorsement.

James Acaster

I think I watch it once a year.

Jason Mantzoukas

Really? Wow. What are your other movies that you'll watch once a year?



James Acaster

Zodiac.

Jason Mantzoukas

Great. Home run.

James Acaster

Dark Knight.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay.

James Acaster

I'd watch once a year, I love it. There you have it.

Jason Mantzoukas

Great. By the way, unimpeachably great list. Home run.

Ed Gamble

Good.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. Those three I find very re-watchable.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, I agree completely. I'll throw the Big Lebowski in there.

James Acaster

Oh, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Very-,

Ed Gamble

Ghost Busters Frozen Empire.

James Acaster

Yes, well I've watched that three times in the last two weeks.

Jason Mantzoukas

Congratulations my friend.

James Acaster

I like it.



Ed Gamble

'That's going to be my new one.'

James Acaster

Yes, yes, I have to watch it once a year.

Ed Gamble

Every Christmas when I want to feel cosy I'm going to watch Ghost Busters Frozen Empire.

James Acaster

Your dream side dish, Jason?

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay. So, I think of sides as a vegetable and a starch.

James Acaster

Which one is me and which one's Ed?

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. Oh, well, that's interesting.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's a good question.

Jason Mantzoukas

yes, hmm. I think of-, yes, boy, that's a tough one. Which one of you is the vegetable and which one of you is the starch?

Ed Gamble

I see myself as the starch.

James Acaster

Do you?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

That's interesting.

Jason Mantzoukas

James, do you think of yourself as a vegetable?



James Acaster

I don't know.

Jason Mantzoukas

I think maybe, yes. Ed, maybe you're the starch and James, maybe you're the vegetable.

Ed Gamble

I'm the starch. Yes, yes.

James Acaster

Ah, that's fun. I was expecting it the other way around.

Ed Gamble

Were you?

James Acaster

Yes, you're a very healthy boy.

Ed Gamble

Well, so are you.

James Acaster

Not as healthy as this guy.

Jason Mantzoukas

I feel like and this is maybe really opening a can of worms, but while I'm just, like, eating all of this food and you guys are here, are you not eating at all? You never talk about what you guys have ordering.

James Acaster

Yes, it's true.

Jason Mantzoukas

Which I find to be rude.

Ed Gamble

Well, I think we let you order for the table, we let the guest order for the table, right?

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, I like that. Conceptually I think that's smart. Do you think that you're excited about what I've ordered? Are you interested in this meal? Because I want to keep you guys happy as well.

James Acaster

I like your meal. I mean I wouldn't want to eat every guest's meal who's come on this podcast.



Ed Gamble

Well, we're not always invited to the dream meal. Sometimes people say they want other people there.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, I'm not interested in other people, I want only you guys.

Ed Gamble

Okay, perfect.

Jason Mantzoukas

My goal is I'd like to sit with you both, have a meal, chat, talk about comedy. I enjoyed both of your seasons of Taskmaster quite a bit.

James Acaster

Thank you very much.

Jason Mantzoukas

I'd love to talk about that.

James Acaster

I want-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes? What?

James Acaster

I won my-,

Ed Gamble

Jason's seen it, so.

Jason Mantzoukas

Hmm, you won.

James Acaster

Oh, you have seen it.

Jason Mantzoukas

I have seen it, yes. I'm sorry, did you need me to say congratulations James?

James Acaster

Well, I won.

Ed Gamble

You didn't win.

Jason Mantzoukas

No? Did you win?

Ed Gamble

I did, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, nice.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, yes.

James Acaster

Yes, he did. He won. He won Taskmaster.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Then came bottom in Champion of Champions, thank you.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, I haven't seen that.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I came bottom, so I've spoilt that for you. I had a meltdown.

Jason Mantzoukas

That's okay. Oh, did you really?

Ed Gamble

Yes, it went really badly.

Jason Mantzoukas

A proper meltdown on camera or off-camera meltdown?

Ed Gamble

On camera during one of the tasks. It was only one episode, we just filmed for one day doing the and we had to get a duck from the top of the garden into a pond that they put in at the bottom of the garden.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay.



Ed Gamble

Without coming out from behind the line and we couldn't move the line, so they shutdown everything basically and I ended up trying to get all pipes together and set a tap and run it down there. And other people did it in, like, twelve minutes and I took 97 minutes and I didn't get the duck in and I chopped the ducks head off.

Jason Mantzoukas

By the way, it sounds like you did it right.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think that-,

James Acaster

I'd have done the pipes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. But, you had like, 'A meltdown'?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Wow. As bad as James' on Bake Off?

Ed Gamble

Oh, no, no, no.

Jason Mantzoukas

I would like-, can somebody put both together?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, yes. That would be good, in real-time.

Ed Gamble

Mine was I was always, sort of, present in my head going, 'I think this will probably be funny.' I was genuinely frustrated, but I was always thinking, 'Oh, it's Taskmaster of course this was going to happen.' I was never having a genuine physical and emotional breakdown.

Jason Mantzoukas

Sure. But, you were annoyed?



Ed Gamble

Oh, yes, big time.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Big time, yes.

James Acaster

So, I imagine if I did it again which I should of because I was champion, but, like, if you go back and do it again-, but surely I would think that you would be-, you would have all the things that you were like the first time around, you were like, 'Oh, I should have done that.'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

In your head. So, then if you do it again aren't you thinking-, like, because I had to do a similar task when I did it with a golf ball, and realised afterwards I should have used pipes. So, if I was in your position I would have done that because I'd have been like, 'Ah-ha, learning from my mistakes.' But, then that would have been wrong.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Is that what was in your head Ed?

Ed Gamble

No, what was in my head was, 'It's going to be so cool to see that duck going down the little pipe.'

James Acaster

Ah, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

And that's the mistake you made.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

The mistake you made was visualising success.



Ed Gamble

Yes, yes. I was doing the edit in my head.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. You were like, 'Oh, and then we're going to cut back into the studio and people are going to put me on their shoulders. And they're going to be blown away at how effortlessly the duck just swam down that. Ducks belong on water. My whole thing incorporates their natural environment.'

Ed Gamble

I was genuinely thinking that. I mean, like, I want the duck to be happy.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, well, of course. And then for me personal glory.

James Acaster

So, yes, we'll eat the same thing as you.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, great.

James Acaster

We'll have the starter and the veggies.

Ed Gamble

We didn't-, we'll just quickly loop back, I don't think we got a shadow main.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, yes, good question.

Ed Gamble

Because we just had the-,

James Acaster

Oh, yes, you've got the fillet.

Ed Gamble

The fillet.

James Acaster

Yes, fillet.

Ed Gamble

You don't have to have one you know.

James Acaster

Stay Mediterranean for it?

Jason Mantzoukas

Ed, I'm going to have it.

Ed Gamble

Okay, well I'm glad to hear it.

Jason Mantzoukas

There is a Greek restaurant in New York called, Pylos, that makes a pork shoulder, pork shank main that is fantastic.

Ed Gamble

Wow.

Jason Mantzoukas

And would go so beautifully with the shadow meal that I've already setup that I'm going to plug that in.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay?

James Acaster

Now, because we're dining with you-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Go for it.

James Acaster

Do we get options to just hopscotch from the shadow and the-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. You can cherry-pick whichever you'd like.

James Acaster

Yes, great.

Ed Gamble

And can I just say that so far and don't take this the wrong way, I'm 100% shadow.

Jason Mantzoukas

You know what, on many nights I am as well.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

I don't want the heavy steak meal. And most nights I want the lighter meal, I want the lighter more Mediterranean, more, you know, hummus salad something like.

Ed Gamble

I love it.

James Acaster

I think I've only hopped over to the shadow for the pork, for the pork shoulder.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay.

Ed Gamble

Have you?

James Acaster

But, up until now I've been prawn cocktail, the secondi, I'm going for the pasta, the Steve Coogan's daughter's pasta. And then I'm going-

Jason Mantzoukas

You know what, I'd like to remove the charcuterie. I would like Steve Coogan's daughter's pasta to be both present in-, to be the secondi on both main-line and shadow.

Ed Gamble

Yes, okay. I'm happy with that.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay. And then so for me, sides wise, back to sides, my grandmother's lemon potatoes which are just, like, a truly, a thing that I have memory of that I have never been able to find again, even though it is common-, you know, in a Greek restaurant or, like, even my sisters tried to make them or stuff, but I can't get the what I think of it as, the taste back. I have been chasing those lemon potatoes forever. And



then there is Greek stuffing that my mother makes for American Thanksgiving, which is also very much for me a nostalgia pick that really hits a kind of-, that to me is a flavour, it's about, like, the food of-, it's comfort, it's like the food of my childhood, but it's only, you know, it's for the holiday but it is-, you know, there's something very sweet about it and it is a little sweet tasting, it's like ground beef and rice and chestnuts and _ a bunch of other stuff, it's delicious. Anyway, that stuffing I would have as well.

Ed Gamble

This is good. I mean I can see why you eat for nostalgia because growing up you had really nice Greek food.

Jason Mantzoukas

Not all the time, but yes. Yes, absolutely.

Ed Gamble

That makes total sense.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, absolutely. And very repetitive stuff, very, you know, the same kind of ingredients recontextualised into this dish or into this dish you know. So, it was a lot of similar stuff.

James Acaster

And what are the-, I've never had lemon potatoes before, so what kind of potatoes are they?

Jason Mantzoukas

You know what that's a great question, I don't know what kind of potatoes they are. But, they're just sliced into wedges and they're, you know, roasted with lemon and oil and super simple. But, it's a good question, I don't know what exact potato they are. I watched a TV show last night here, in your country.

James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Called-, get ready for it, Celebrity Mastermind.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

And I genuinely sat in the room confounded because I was like, 'This must be a comedy show. There's absolutely no way shape or form that this is a real television show.' Because the people seemed to be able to choose the category that they would be asked questions about.

Ed Gamble

Yes, they have a specialist subject.



Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And then there's a general knowledge round.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay. One of the contestants was Ivo-

James Acaster

Ivo Graham.

Jason Mantzoukas

Graham. His topic was Philip Seymour Hoffman's movies. The other contestant's category was potatoes and she was just asked-, she was, like, a celebrity chef was my understanding. All of her questions were just potato-based and I was like, 'None of these are questions that I would even-, ' And she had a knowledge that I was genuinely shocked, so much so James, when you just said, 'What kind of potatoes?' I was like, 'Oh, no. Just like that woman last night I have to remember, like, the names and types of different potatoes?' And so I don't know what kind of potatoes they are. But, this Celebrity Mastermind I was flummoxed by because it appeared to be taking place on, like, the most ramshackle of stages.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

It was bizarre.

Ed Gamble

I mean Mastermind has been a show in the UK for decades, and I believe the guy who came up with the format used to work in the army or the police or something and it is based on interrogation techniques.

James Acaster

He was captured.

Jason Mantzoukas

Really?

James Acaster

He was captured by the enemy forces and they interrogated him and-,



Jason Mantzoukas

Only about things he knew quite a bit about?

James Acaster

He got to choose a specialist subject.

Ed Gamble

Yes, his specialist subject was secrets of the British government.

Jason Mantzoukas

'We have you captured, we're going to ask you only questions about Star Was The Original Trilogy.' Which was one of the categories last night. I was like, 'What?'

James Acaster

But, he says that's what gave him the idea for the show is that how-, because it's very intense when you go on, we've both done it.

Jason Mantzoukas

Really?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

How did you do? What were your topics? I need to know.

James Acaster

Please have just, like, some quick guess about what our specialist subjects might have been.

Ed Gamble

What our specialist subjects were.

James Acaster

Clue, Ed's is a TV show, mine is food based.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh boy.

Ed Gamble

And it's not potatoes.



Jason Mantzoukas

No, I'm assuming not.

James Acaster

Potatoes was already taken

Jason Mantzoukas

It's not-, okay, yours is a TV show, is it Taskmaster?

Ed Gamble

No.

Jason Mantzoukas

Is it a how I would know?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, is it an American show?

Ed Gamble

It's an American show.

Jason Mantzoukas

Is it, like, The Sopranos?

Ed Gamble

No it's a comedy show.

Jason Mantzoukas

Comedy show.

Ed Gamble

I picked something that revising it would be-,

James Acaster

Jason been on it?

Ed Gamble

Oh?

James Acaster

Jason been on it



Ed Gamble

I don't know, it feels like the sort of thing I should know really, because I'm an expert.

Jason Mantzoukas

No, it's a more recent show?

Ed Gamble

Yes. No it feels like the sort of show you could have been on but I don't think you've been on it.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay, The Office?

Ed Gamble

No.

Jason Mantzoukas

No, that's I guess British in origin. 30 Rock?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Got it.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

I was not on it, I auditioned to play Jonathan, Alec Baldwin's assistant.

Ed Gamble

Assistant, yes.

James Acaster

Oh, I'd have liked to see that.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, love that show, fantastic show.

Ed Gamble

Yes, amazing and fun to revise as well and so many fun questions.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes great, I will say have you been watching Girls5eva?



Ed Gamble

I've not watched the most recent season yet but I'm really excited, I think it's outstanding.

Jason Mantzoukas

It is very funny.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Joke dense. One of the last remaining, like, true comedy-machine joke-machine shows where they are just piling jokes on top of jokes in a very satisfying way. I think that show is dynamite.

James Acaster

Yes, I failed to meet the lead character the other day. I was in New York and we were doing the same show together and I really wanted to say hello to her but she left as soon as she'd done her interview and I was very sad.

Jason Mantzoukas

What show did you do?

James Acaster

Seth Meyers' show.

Jason Mantzoukas

Lovely.

James Acaster

And I was like 'Uh?' And I really wanted to go out and see her, but then I was like no you've got to go on the show next.

Ed Gamble

It's probably the wrong energy to meet someone as well.

James Acaster

I've got to go meet that person. Panicking, that's wrong, isn't it?

Jason Mantzoukas

You're all-, you're way up in your head before you go on. After you come off you're like I'll meet anybody. Does anybody want to meet me? I want to talk to them now. Paula Pell on that show I think is pound-for-pound the funniest person in the world.

Ed Gamble

She's outstanding.



Jason Mantzoukas

It is absolutely insane how funny she is. Anyway-, and then James-,

Ed Gamble

So, that would be your specialist subject?

Jason Mantzoukas

No, that wouldn't-, Paula Pell, boy I would love-,

James Acaster

Mine was ice cream, the history of ice cream.

Jason Mantzoukas

The history of ice cream?

James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Did you know previous quite a bit of the history of ice cream?

James Acaster

No I didn't know anything about it, I didn't revise it either.

Ed Gamble

He was really panicking because he went into it being like 'Yes I'm just going to fuck around' and then I got loads of texts going 'I'm in the dressing room, I don't know what to do'.

James Acaster

Really panicking.

Jason Mantzoukas

Well that was the thing is, like, when people would eat shit, you really are just-, it's a single on them, while they are just struggling to-,

Ed Gamble

The camera gets closer and closer.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, while they are struggling to recall a thing you know they don't have. So, now you're just watching them tick down, because it's not even, like, when you're failing, you know, one of the things that's very fun about watching Taskmaster is you are watching a show about failure. You are watching people fail and it is how well are they able to cover their frustration Ed, and maintain their comedic point of view, their persona or whatever. However, they are engaging comedically with Alex or whatever. But,



Mastermind, they've got nobody, you know. There are a couple of moments, I'd say-, the craziest thing was there was like one guy-, I'm sorry, this is Britain's number one Celebrity Mastermind recap show. One of the guy's topics was, like I said, the original Star Wars trilogy, and every question I knew the answer to. Every single-, I was, like, 'Boom, boom,' in my hotel room, 'Boom,' I'm answering all of them.

Ed Gamble

Which bit of Darth Vader's outfit has a gap in it?

Jason Mantzoukas

For real, yes, has a loose arm hole. And then Ivo was the films Philip Seymour Hoffman, he crushed by the way. There was the woman who did potatoes, whose name I now have remembered is Poppy O'Toole. I want to give her her credit.

James Acaster

Oh yes, I've met Poppy.

Ed Gamble

She hosts Junior Masterchef.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh nice. And then the other man whose name I'm not going to remember, and this is how much-, because I was like I knew all the Philip Seymour Hoffman's, the potatoes I was like this is impressive, I have no idea. The guy who went last must be a sportscaster and I believe-, now this is how crazy it was, I believe his topic maybe was cricket. Every question and answer had so many to me hilarious specifics, words, names that sounded so-, and he was so sure of himself, you know, 'Kevin Summers' and I'd be like 'Who is that? What is that?' 23 and nine. And, like, all of the answers were just as absurd, it was like jokes. It felt to me like these are jokes, this is a joke character. And he was deadly serious and was doing very well. He was like eyes on the prize, he didn't have that I'm terrified James Acaster, I don't know enough about ice cream look.

James Acaster

Very scared. They had rejected my initial suggestion for my specialist subject which was the comedy of Nish Kumar, and they wouldn't let me do that, and then they wouldn't let me do the comedy of Ed Gamble.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh that would be very funny, is there just not enough trivia?

James Acaster

But, they have hard core viewers who want it to be serious, and they don't want it to be a joke.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, well that's too bad.



Ed Gamble

They wouldn't let me do Slipknot.

Jason Mantzoukas

Really?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh that's funny, because that to me would be the goal, although I guess that would make it a very different show. They want it to be, like, Jeopardy or something more akin to like a proper trivia show or something?

James Acaster

It has to be-,

Ed Gamble

It's very highbrow and quite serious, yes.

James Acaster

It is officially how smart this person is.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay, that's ridiculous. That's ridiculous, that's very funny though. Oh, I love it. I wish you'd been able to do the comedy of Nish Kumar.

James Acaster

Yes, I was very much looking forward to that. Oh those side dishes Benito wants to know which is shadow, which is-,

Ed Gamble

Imagine being a producer and having to say that.

Jason Mantzoukas

I mean, imagine having to corral this and be, like, 'We actually care. We're going to have to put it on the website, so we need to know.'

James Acaster

Our listeners are very similar to the Mastermind viewers. They want it to be proper and now we're making you choose between your grandmother and your mother.



Jason Mantzoukas

I know, isn't that terrible?

Ed Gamble

Who are you going to put in the shadow?

Jason Mantzoukas

Well here's the thing, I think that the stuffing is going to be with the shadow meal, and the lemon potatoes with the stick, I think it will go well that way.

Ed Gamble

Oh that will work, I think that's the best way.

Jason Mantzoukas

I think that will be the best way, and then-,

Ed Gamble

You said there's beef in the stuffing as well?

Jason Mantzoukas

There is, so that's why I'm thinking of-, but it's not much but I'm going to put it on. And then I'm going to sneak in, just because I really am looking at a very loose and weakly vegetable meal, a weak vegetable meal here, I'm going to just throw some broccoli in there. I need a green, I need some broccoli, some Brussels sprouts, some spinach, something that's, like, a cruciferous green please.

Ed Gamble

How are you having that prepared?

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, like, just dead simple, just like broccoli, grill it up for a couple of minutes, you know, like something very simple, roasted. Nothing fancy, just a grilled vegetable.

Ed Gamble

I always order broccoli in a restaurant, no matter what restaurant it is, if they have broccoli on the menu I'm ordering it. Sometimes it's very simple, just grilled or steamed or whatever and then I'm like great I'm so healthy. But, sometimes it comes-,

James Acaster

He says it out loud.

Ed Gamble

I say I shout it-, it comes and it's, like, covered in oil and garlic and stuff, and then I'm like, 'Ha.' I tricked the idiot I was ten minutes ago when I ordered it.



Jason Mantzoukas

That asshole didn't know he was about to get a treat. Ooo vegetable candy?

Ed Gamble

It's great, and now me wins.

James Acaster

You're happy either way.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh yes, all of those are winners.

James Acaster

Pretty good to be Ed Gamble.

Jason Mantzoukas

Everything's coming up Ed Gamble. Gamble on Ed.

Ed Gamble

Went to a restaurant in Glasgow, I know you're off to Glasgow.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, tell me is it good? Should I go?

Ed Gamble

Called Kapow which is excellent, it's like, sort of, Asian fusion cuisine. And they had hispi cabbage, so now I'm just going to order hispi cabbage everywhere.

Jason Mantzoukas

I don't even know what that is.

Ed Gamble

It's a type of cabbage and they get a wedge of it and they grill it, so it's like proper charred, but then with cashew nut butter.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, I just went to Rovi last night, one of the Ottolenghi restaurants and had a grilled cabbage tahini with it and it was fantastic.

Ed Gamble

Yes, so cabbage is my new go-to healthy order.



Jason Mantzoukas

I love that for you.

Ed Gamble

Thank you so much.

Jason Mantzoukas

Congrats.

Ed Gamble

Thank you.

James Acaster

I steer clear of cabbage, I told a story about-

Jason Mantzoukas

You're a cabbage sceptic?

James Acaster

Well actually I do love it food wise but I told a story about being sent loads of cabbages on a TV show here, and now often when I go on stage someone's put a cabbage on stage as a joke but I've just found that it doesn't work if I go on and then tell the story again, boring. So, the only funny thing I can do-, because if I ignore it everyone's going 'There's a cabbage there', so I have to do something. So, the only funny thing I can do is walk out on stage and immediately kick it into the wings.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay because I was going to say you can't kick it into the audience.

Ed Gamble

No because the person in the front row's definitely getting-

Jason Mantzoukas

Well yes, a friend of mine threw like a little orange into a crowd once and it, like, detached a guy's retina. Like truly, just like a tangerine-, what's a little orange? A mandarin. Just, was, like, boop and literally afterwards was like 'That guy, you hit a guy and he had to go to the hospital,' and, like, it's crazy. But, I will say you're getting at something, your absolute disdain for the audience, which we touched on earlier, maybe before we started recording, which I appreciate and share, and no doubt I will be dressing-down the London audiences in mere days. I have developed a very antagonistic relationship to the audience, partially because they think they're part of the show in a way that is, like, 'We've brought you a cabbage James, we know you'll like this.'

James Acaster

Sure, and they don't know that it hurts the show, they think it helps.



Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, that's a heckler's ethos. I was helping. They always hang around afterwards to be, like, 'That was me, I'm the one that shouted that thing, I was helping, I was part of the show. You're welcome.' And it's always like 'Are you fucking insane? Get the fuck out of here'. And people now-, it's only more and more that people are, like, from the audience, 'I need to be heard from. The people on stage need to hear from me immediately. Now is the time, I'm not even going to wait for the time when Paul comes into the audience and then it's appropriate, I'm just going to start talking now'.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you guys you do questions at the end of the podcast.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, there's a whole part of the podcast where you're encouraged to talk back to us and ask questions, but no, people aren't going to wait for that at all, they are just like 'I'm here, I have something to say and I'm saying it, and you're going to have to stop talking to those microphones if you want to hear me'.

James Acaster

Let's get onto these dream drinks.

Jason Mantzoukas

Let's do it.

James Acaster

The main one.

Jason Mantzoukas

I think a main drink, I'll have a glass of wine, even though-, well I'll say for the shadow it's going to be a white wine, a lighter wine. I'm not a big wine person but seems like, you know, I'd have a glass of wine with dinner. I know you're supposed to have red wine with red meat for the main, the main line dinner. Red wine now upsets my stomach. it's too acidic. so i guess a rose, I'll take a rose. Something leaning towards red but still light and easy, and then I'll keep drinking my still water, and yes that's it. Does that sound good for you guys?

Ed Gamble

Yes, I'll have that, for sure.

James Acaster

Yes I'll have that.

Ed Gamble

Greek wines?



Jason Mantzoukas

Sure, doesn't have to be though, doesn't have to be. Again I'm not very wine savvy, you know, so something not too sweet, not too fruit forward I guess, something-, I don't know, if there's something, I'm sure there's something Greek that fits in there.

Ed Gamble

Yes, a drier rose, one of the drier roses.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, great.

James Acaster

Phil Wang did the wines of New Zealand for his specialist subject in Mastermind.

Jason Mantzoukas

Smart I like that. Yes, so I will, I'll say Greek wine even though I don't know any.

Ed Gamble

Phil can recommend you some.

Jason Mantzoukas

You know what actually, I'd like Phil's better because it sounds like he knows about it. I would like Phil Wang's full flight of New Zealand wines. You know what, I wish I'd thought of it, because I thought of the Coogan's daughter's pasta which is the t-shirt.

James Acaster

The CDP.

Ed Gamble

The CDP, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, I wish I'd cobbled together a meal based entirely off of other guests' meals. That's an idea that if it has not been done somebody, that's the challenge.

Ed Gamble

Well Greg Davies had fillet steak, we know that.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay great.

Ed Gamble

But, he had it well-done because he's-



Jason Mantzoukas

What a fucking idiot.

Ed Gamble

See it's amazing how quickly you jump over to the other side.

Jason Mantzoukas

I've become one of those guys, I'm an Ed Gamble now. Chastising Greg who's not even here. But, for real that's absolutely absurd.

Ed Gamble

So, although someone said-, because we always have a go at Greg for having it well done, and apparently he didn't on the main episode. I think he might have said medium and then said 'Or I'll just have it well done'

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, he got bullied into it?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

No he didn't, he said it. He was doing it to wind you up as well,

Ed Gamble

Yes he was doing it to wind me up.

James Acaster

He was doing it to upset you.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh he was saying well done to wind you up.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

He skipped his starter, he had a well done rump steak,

Jason Mantzoukas

He's just trying to get a rise out of Ed.



Ed Gamble

Yes, it's very easy to do.

James Acaster

Just trolling you. What dish on your menu are you hoping another guest will steal for their menu in the future?

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, that's great.

James Acaster

I mean, those side dishes are pretty strong contenders.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, I mean listen, if someone wants to include my grandmother's potatoes that would be a true honour. So, yes, my hope would be that someone would choose-, or my mother's stuffing. Either way boy would I be delighted if they found those interesting or compelling although I don't think I described them as such.

Ed Gamble

Those are the two I want to try the most I think.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, I think those would be interesting.

James Acaster

Who would be the guest that you'd have-, a future guest that we might have who you would say Jason Mantzoukas' grandmother's potatoes please.

Ed Gamble

Yes absolutely, what would blow your mind?

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, it would blow my mind if Chris Morris said that, you know, I'm trying to think of someone in British comedy circles, you know, that I have no relationship to but feel a way about. You know what I mean? Like, you know, you've already had him on, I would have said Garth Marengi, just you know, of course as a fan and as a loyal reader, but since he's already been on. Has Chris Morris been on?

James Acaster

No yet.

Ed Gamble

No.



Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, so there it is.

Ed Gamble

I don't think he does too many podcasts.

Jason Mantzoukas

Doesn't seem like it.

James Acaster

We've met him.

Ed Gamble

I've not.

James Acaster

Yes?

Ed Gamble

No.

James Acaster

I've met him.

Jason Mantzoukas

And?

James Acaster

Nice guy.

Jason Mantzoukas

Did you ask him to do the pod?

James Acaster

No, no I know you've got build up to that with Morris. We could get Morris in the future I reckon.

Ed Gamble

Yes. I'd be happy to.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, what a conversation.

James Acaster

And we'll try and push it towards.



Jason Mantzoukas

Try and get him to order-, try to push him, nudge him towards my grandmother's potatoes.

Ed Gamble

He seems like a guy who's easily convinced.

Jason Mantzoukas

I would love it if you guys could give that as an option just in general, like, would you like to opt-in? You know, when they give you a thing, like a suggestion, like, other people have ordered with this, and then you can just click on-, 'Oh yes, jasmine rice let me add that.' If you could be, like, 'Would you like to include Jason Mantzoukas' yiayias potatoes?'

James Acaster

I would definitely be saying that, like the next episode we'll put that as an option.

Ed Gamble

So, chronologically we don't release them as we record them, so the next episode might come out before your one and then it's going to be very amusing.

Jason Mantzoukas

Perfect, please, let's confuse the audience as much as possible. I hope people take from this the desire to have a shadow meal, to build a second meal. And I want you guys to know, I made notes and the shadow meal was borne of me being like 'I don't want to choose between these things, so why don't I just do both?'. I took this very seriously.

Ed Gamble

I feel like if you're going to have the shadow meal we do need to add some element of danger every time you go into the shadow realm though.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, I do like that. I do feel like maybe-, hear me out-, the shadow meal is in darkness, it's shrouded in darkness. There was a restaurant in New York for a while that was pitch black.

Ed Gamble

We've got one here as well.

Jason Mantzoukas

Did you have one here as well? It was like a thing. I never went but yes, I was always like 'That seems absolutely like a terrible idea'.

James Acaster

Actually, before we move on from the dream course, when we had Paul on from your podcast-,



Ed Gamble

He had a separate menu as well, right?

James Acaster

Did he?

Ed Gamble

Yes, the healthy old man.

James Acaster

Oh, he had the healthy old man, yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh yes.

James Acaster

But-,

Jason Mantzoukas

I like that.

James Acaster

Something's always stuck in my head from that because it was the first time we'd met Paul.

Jason Mantzoukas

Sure.

James Acaster

And it was a lovely time. Really fun. But, we made a joke that I didn't know if he liked it, so I thought I'd check with you now.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay.

James Acaster

He said that he would want this, I think Sake from this place that he went to.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Nice sushi place that's shut now and they made him his own cup.



Jason Mantzoukas

Okay.

James Acaster

And they wrote on it in-,

Ed Gamble

In, like Kanji, in Japanese-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. Okay.

Ed Gamble

Symbols.

James Acaster

And he said-,

Ed Gamble

Wrote Paul in.

James Acaster

He said they wrote Paul something and we said-,

Jason Mantzoukas

I love that you are unpacking this joke, how many years later? Five years later?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

It's got to be.

James Acaster

2020. February 2020.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, okay. Four years later.

James Acaster

We said, 'How do you know they didn't write Paul Scheer drinks piss?

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.



Ed Gamble

Yes. And I think-,

Jason Mantzoukas

I would have said the same joke.

James Acaster

And he said, it was the first time he answered us with a straight face and he went, 'They didn't write that.'

Jason Mantzoukas

Wow.

Ed Gamble

I got the impression the Sake cup meant a lot to him.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, that's very funny though.

Ed Gamble

And, like, the place is shut now.

Jason Mantzoukas

That's exactly the joke I would have made.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I think it was quite a nice personal-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Because it absolutely says that.

James Acaster

If it meant a lot to him that he was given that.

Ed Gamble

So, I think he was telling a story that made him feel slightly vulnerable and he was, sort of, opening up to us a little bit about how much he loved this Japanese restaurant and then we said-,

Jason Mantzoukas

And James came in really hard.



Ed Gamble

Well it was that he drinks piss.

Jason Mantzoukas

He's talked about it a lot. He's, like, James, he's talked about it quite a bit actually and how much it hurt. You know, and how much it hurt. I said I was coming in to do this, he was like, 'Are you sure? James Acaster's a savage beast. He's so mean.'

Ed Gamble

I'm glad you brought that up because I worry about that too.

Jason Mantzoukas

Wait, I'm questioning now though whether that was a leading story. Is the secret ingredient for this episode somehow piss?

Ed Gamble

No.

Jason Mantzoukas

I'm like, are you trying to nudge me towards choosing piss as a thing? Because we are in the drinks section and, ew this is awkward.

James Acaster

It secretly is piss.

Jason Mantzoukas

Today's secret ingredient horse piss. Take it away to today's restaurant.

Ed Gamble

I actually call my piss shadow wine as well. So, you're-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Smart. Shadow wine.

James Acaster

Your dream dessert.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay. So, here's the thing. Dessert for me, very difficult because quite a lot of dessert's are just egg based in every way, shape or form. All the desserts that people like. I will say thought, in recent years, there has been a real boom in what I consider delicious but, like, vegan ice creams which, to me, ice cream is, like, the thing that as a kid, I couldn't really have that I very much wanted to have. You know, every once in a while there was, like, a cheap pre-made ice cream type of bar you would get off of a truck or something like that would be safe but I could never have a pint of, like, real nice ice cream and



now I feel like there's very good vegan ice creams so I would probably have some, sort of, vegan ice cream or maybe a sorbet or something like that is usually safe for me. So, one of those, kind of, things. A couple of scoops of an ice cream or a sorbet would be my preferred dessert.

Ed Gamble

Do you have a flavour that you gravitate towards or a place that you love to have the vegan ice cream?

Jason Mantzoukas

In a LA there's a couple of places. They're all chains now. So, you very well may have some of them here. Jeni's is one, Van Leeuwen is another. They're, kind of like, these American chains that are-, They have non vegan, they primarily are, you know, non vegan but they have now a list of vegan ice creams that are quite good. The one I get is just vanilla and chocolatey, kind of, swirl thing. There's one that's got, like, some peanut buttery stuff in it but I like just a plain vanilla scoop and a chocolate scoop. I'm good with that. Or, like, a sorbet. Like, a raspberry or something, a lemon sorbet or something like that. My focus is always the meal. Dessert I never could count on so I'm always, like, 'Oh, I just want a couple of bites of something sweet.'

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, it's a treat if you do actually get-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Always because it's almost never that I can. And I'm always then guilty of, and which I like quite a bit here is I will just get from a corner shop, like, candy. I'll get a candy bar or I'll get something that is, that I want to have as a sweet. Because I do want that sweet after dinner taste which I associate with chocolatey, kind of, stuff. So, I'll get a candy bar or something like that.

James Acaster

Do you have any favourite UK chocolate-

Jason Mantzoukas

I'm trying to think. There's a bunch of them that are great that I wish I'd thought to, like, take pictures of because I don't remember the names. You guys have quite a bit-,

James Acaster

Well, hey, describe them.

Ed Gamble

Describe them and we can tell you.



Jason Mantzoukas

So, a lot of the ones that I like have the appearance of a KitKat type of bar. It's wafers, it's hazelnut, it's chocolate, stacked and sometimes it's covered in, sometimes it's open. You know, there's one that's a square like this and they break into individual little pieces. There's one that looks like a big KitKat. Wafers, milk chocolate, covered in chocolate but also caramel inside.

James Acaster

I mean this all sounds like KitKats.

Ed Gamble

Would that be KitKat chunky?

Jason Mantzoukas

But, they're not KitKats. They're not branded KitKats but they are similar-,

James Acaster

Are you talking about a Tunnock's caramel wafer maybe?

Jason Mantzoukas

Maybe. Maybe.

James Acaster

That's from Scotland and we can get them here and absolutely-, I think the king of UK chocolate bars.

Jason Mantzoukas

An absolute beast of a chocolate bar.

Ed Gamble

I wouldn't describe it as a chocolate bar.

James Acaster

Come off it.

Jason Mantzoukas

What would you describe it as?

Ed Gamble

Well I'm putting that more in a biscuit realm.

Jason Mantzoukas

Interesting.

Ed Gamble

Because I would see it being brought through on, like, a tea tray.



Jason Mantzoukas

Oh.

Ed Gamble

You know, with biscuits.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, so it's fancier than, like, a KitKat or a Twix or something like that?

Ed Gamble

I'd say I'd have a Tunnock's and be, like, 'I've had a biscuit rather than I've had a whole chocolate bar.'

Jason Mantzoukas

Interesting.

Ed Gamble

It's a lighter option for me.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh. What I'm talking about is pretty heavy.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

James Acaster

All right.

Jason Mantzoukas

It's long, you know, and it's thick too. Like, I don't even know that I would eat a whole one.

Ed Gamble

A Lion bar?

Jason Mantzoukas

It's not a Lion bar. I have had a Lion bar though.

Ed Gamble

But, that's in that realm-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Like, a Bueno bar.

Ed Gamble

Kinder Bueno.



Jason Mantzoukas

Kinder Bueno, I've had one of those. Because those are good too but this thing I'm talking about-, I'm going to take a picture of it and send it to both of you because I've eaten a lot of them in the last week.

James Acaster

Time Out bar?

Jason Mantzoukas

Time Out bar. No. I don't know what that is.

Ed Gamble

Do they sell those any more?

James Acaster

Wafers and-, yes, maybe they don't even have them any more.

Jason Mantzoukas

I'll try it.

James Acaster

It's wafers covered in chocolate.

Jason Mantzoukas

I love that. I like a little bit of, like, a crispy, crunchy. In America there's a bar called a Take 5 bar which is a pretzel, chocolate, caramel. It's five ingredients and I'm forgetting what the rest of them are but it's, like, so much texture but also very salty and sweet which is great.

Ed Gamble

Yes, ideal.

James Acaster

Picnic bar. You'd like a Picnic bar.

Jason Mantzoukas

Okay.

James Acaster

You'd maybe even like a Starbar.

Ed Gamble

Oh, Starbar's a good shout actually.

Jason Mantzoukas

All right.



James Acaster

Yes, yes. I'm going to say-,

Jason Mantzoukas

I love these recommendations. I'm going to go straight to the candy shop after this.

James Acaster

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

Jason Mantzoukas

I'm not done. I'm so sorry.

James Acaster

Jason's not done.

Jason Mantzoukas

Because I don't know why but I feel like you are neglecting a huge component here which is I'm going to have a cup of coffee after dinner.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

You know, or a tea depending on the hour but a cup of coffee almost certainly after dinner, you know. With my dessert, perfect, that's it. That's what I want because my sincere hope is that I want a little bit of energy after a heavy meal because we're going to go and we're going to walk home or we going to walk, you know. One of the things I love about being in London is walking to dinner, walking home from dinner. Los Angeles, we don't get the-, it's very much reminiscent of when I lived in New York, you know, that ability to engage with the city on foot. You know, in Los Angeles you just don't have it, and I miss-,

Ed Gamble

You can't do it, right.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, no. I'm so much more focused on, where did I park the car? And I've got to drive home now and all that. It's just not the same thing so I want a cup of coffee to walk home.

Ed Gamble

I think it's amazing, like, you're talking about hydrating, a lot of people I know live in LA that talk about making sure they hydrate, but that combined with a city where you're constantly in your car-.



Jason Mantzoukas

God, when you say it like that, it sounds like I'm an insufferable Angelino and the point is taken. You've really-, right here at the end, you've really rocked me to my core.

Ed Gamble

That's why I didn't say it at the beginning man.

James Acaster

Jason Mantzoukas drinks piss.

Jason Mantzoukas

The secret ingredient.

Ed Gamble

But, do you not just need the toilet all the time in your car?

Jason Mantzoukas

I do. All the time and have had some very close calls. Very close calls and so much so that I've now had to, a number of times pull up into side streets to surreptitiously try and piss without somebody being, like, 'Hey. Adrian Pimento from Brooklyn 99. Big fan man.' While I'm just, like, 'Don't look at me.' You know, while they're walking their dog in their neighbourhood while a semi known person is just pissing.

Ed Gamble

Or one of those, like, celebrity tour buses drive past.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh my God, and there he is, once again, unable to make it all the way home from lunch. Jason Mantzoukas pissing on the side of the road.

Ed Gamble

He's here every day.

Jason Mantzoukas

And if we turn down here we might see-, oh, there he is. Jason Mantzoukas once again pissing, mere moments from his house. Because it's always, like, four minutes from home my body's, like, 'And now. Go.' Because something about, like, turning up my street makes me feel like I'm there and then it's just game over. So, the other thing is, I'm pissing in my own neighbourhood. Like, so, my neighbour, it's only a matter of time-, It's not like I'm on the other side of town being like, 'Whatever. It's whatever.' I'm just crouching in some bushes like an absolute maniac. No, I'm in the neighbourhood that I live in where my neighbours might walk by and be, like, 'Hey Jason, how are you?' And I'm going to have to be, like, 'Hey, what's going on. Couldn't make it home. I'm in my 50s, who knew?'



Ed Gamble

They're going to think you don't have a toilet. Like, you've not paid to put a toilet in your house or something.

Jason Mantzoukas

Well, I also have a bunch of smashed toilets out front of my house. I am very vocally anti-toilet. I think big toilet's trying to take us over. I will say, I just got one of those Japanese toilet seats.

James Acaster

Oh wow.

Jason Mantzoukas

Just the thing you put on and it does all the same stuff. Holy cow.

Ed Gamble

You look like Nish, you're like good timeline Nish where you're living his dreams.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh yes. Oh please.

Ed Gamble

Because me and Nish I'd say, you know, we talk most days. I'd say 50% of our conversations are about, 'Imagine if we had a Japanese toilet in our bathroom.'

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, I thought you were going to say 50% of your conversations are Nish saying, 'What if I could lead Jason Mantzoukas' life.'

James Acaster

Does the Japanese toilet have writing on the side that says, 'Jason Mantzoukas-,'

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes. Yes. Shits here.

Ed Gamble

Shits here.

Jason Mantzoukas

Pisses down the road.

James Acaster

Pisses.



Jason Mantzoukas

Pisses down the road, shits here.

Ed Gamble

This is Jason Mantzoukas' Saki cup.

James Acaster

Dwayne The Rock Johnson's bushes or whatever.

Jason Mantzoukas

I will say, the thing is a game changer. You know, the toilet itself I think is insanely expensive but the bidet seat, very affordable and incredible. I think, like, really good. Like, being here for a couple of weeks, I'm like, oh man I really miss it.

James Acaster

Yes, that's the main-, looking at photos of it on your phone.

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh yes. Oh, I'm texting it, it's not texting me back.

Ed Gamble

Do you feel really dirty?

Jason Mantzoukas

I feel filthy right now. I feel like I'm sitting in my own filth. You know, it's disgusting. It's disgusting. You feel clean afterwards in a way that you just can not from mashing paper around. Think about it. Why would we do this like this? We should all just shoot water at our ass holes and be done with it. It's absolutely absurd that we mush paper around and just smear the shit around.

Ed Gamble

You wouldn't do it to your plates.

James Acaster

It's horrible.

Jason Mantzoukas

Exactly. You wouldn't do it to your plates.

Ed Gamble

Imagine if you went to someone's house for dinner and they popped a plate down and it was clearly, like-,



Jason Mantzoukas

Yes, like, no, last night's dinner, we dry wiped it. We dry wiped last night's dinner off of the plates. It's fine. That's what you're doing. You're dry wiping your own shit all over. Is that what you people came to this podcast for?

Ed Gamble

They know that happens.

James Acaster

They were-, would be disappointed it's taken us this long to get there. Your dream meal, your main one, you want to arrive and immediately be given a lemonade and then have still water.

Jason Mantzoukas

Thank you.

James Acaster

Poppadoms for bread. You were like, poppadoms is your shadow, sourdough for your main. Shadow starter, Greek salad, main starter shrimp cocktail, shadow secondi and main secondi is the-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Steve Coogan's daughter's pasta.

James Acaster

The CDP.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.

James Acaster

Shadow main course, pork shoulder. Main, main course, fillet steak, medium rare. Shadow side dish, mother's Greek stuffing, main side dish-,

Jason Mantzoukas

Oh, people are so upset at home.

James Acaster

Mother's lemon potatoes. You would like greens either way with those. Most likely broccoli, most likely grilled. Your shadow drink, a white wine, your main drink, a rosé and dessert, on both counts you would like some vegan ice cream or a sorbet, most likely chocolate and vanilla and a coffee and then you're going to piss in the bushes on the way home.

Jason Mantzoukas

Yes.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

Jason Mantzoukas

That's it right there.

Ed Gamble

That's good that's two good menus.

Jason Mantzoukas

That's the whole deal. I mean, that's a home run. I'd be thrilled to share that with both of you.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Thank you so much for coming to the dream restaurant Jason.

Jason Mantzoukas

Thrilled to be here.

James Acaster

Thank you Jason.

Jason Mantzoukas

Thank you for having me.

Ed Gamble

Well there we are James. What a wonderful way to wrap up series eleven.

James Acaster

Wonderful menu, wonderful stories, wonderful man.

Ed Gamble

There we go. The hat trick. The hat trick of things that we like. Look, it's the final episode of the series, sure but we're going to be back with some more episodes I'd imagine. I'd imagine, if you keep an eye out, there's going to be all sorts of new episodes and then Christmas episodes, and then best of episodes. Who knows James.

James Acaster

Yes, so chill out mum.

Ed Gamble

Yes, chill out mum.



James Acaster

You don't need to text me every week where there's not an Off Menu saying how annoyed you are that it's not on.

Ed Gamble

Well, that's very supportive of your mum I think.

James Acaster

No, she's so angry every time. She said, 'What do you think you're playing at you lazy bastards. Where's Off Menu?'

Ed Gamble

Well maybe, if she doesn't have Off Menu in her life, she'll have a little bit more time to work on her cooking.

James Acaster

She doesn't need to. She's an excellent cook.

Ed Gamble

Mm yes. So, thank you very much for listening this series. You've all been wonderful as always.

James Acaster

Thank you Jason for not saying Pimento.

Ed Gamble

Yes, thank you very much Jason for not saying Pimento and thank you for being a wonderful guest.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Thank you to Benito and thank you to James. Two finer guys a man couldn't hope to meet.

James Acaster

And I would like to take this opportunity to thank Benito and thank Ed. A real couple of swells who I'm honoured to share a mic with. We all use one mic.

Ed Gamble

We all use one mic, that's why it sounds weird and the one thing I'd like to say. This might just seem a little bit too emotional but you guys, listening out there, I'm on tour still so come along to my tour. I'm doing the Hackney Empire June 25th to June 29th and then I'm also extending the tour into the autumn from late September right through to November. So, check out the details at edgamble.co.uk and also, why not buy the paperback of my book Glutton if you've not bought the book so far. But, I hope that's not too emotional.



James Acaster

Ed, I hope this isn't too emotional but can I come and see your show at Hackney Empire?

Ed Gamble

You are welcome to.

James Acaster

Thank you.

Ed Gamble

Thank you very much for listening. We'll see you again some time soon. Goodbye.

James Acaster

Goodbye.