



Off Menu – Ep 265 – Rick Astley

Ed Gamble

Welcome to the Off Menu podcast, taking the lasagne sheets of conversation, the bolognaise of humour.

James Acaster

You've done this one, surely.

Ed Gamble

Alright, well, just that then. Yes, see I've done that have I? I've not done lasagne without any of the bechamel or cheese.

James Acaster

No, you've not to be fair.

Ed Gamble

So, so, ha-ha. Just lasagne sheets and bolognaise and the lasagne sheets are raw, so enjoy that.

James Acaster

Enjoy that, that's Ed Gamble, my name is James Acaster. Together, we own a Dream Restaurant and every single week we invite the guests and ask them their favourite ever starter, main course, dessert, side dish and drink, not in that order. And this week, our guest is Rick Astley.

Ed Gamble

Rick Astley, of course it is.

James Acaster

Legendary singer.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Musical artist.

Ed Gamble

Yes, absolutely.



James Acaster

Everyone knows Rick Astley, I mean, obviously his massive hit, Never Gonna Give You Up. But, also a recent, like, lovely, like, collective memory of all the people who went to Glastonbury went to see Rick and Blossoms do a set where they covered Smiths songs.

Ed Gamble

Yes, he is well loved across the nation, James.

James Acaster

Extremely well loved.

Ed Gamble

He has also got one toe dipped in the world of food and drink as well, which might come up, so yes.

James Acaster

Is that so?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Also he has got his new book out on the 10th of the October.

Ed Gamble

Never. The Autobiography. That is published by McMillan, it is as it describes James, the autobiography of Rick Astley.

James Acaster

Yes, covers struggles with fame and everything in between.

Ed Gamble

Absolutely, looking forward to reading that, looking forward to meeting Rick. But, we will kick him out of the restaurant if he picks a secret ingredient that we have previously agreed upon, he will not be allowed to rick roll our podcast.

James Acaster

Yes, true.

Ed Gamble

And, the secret ingredient this week is 7Up. Because we're never going to give him 7Up.

James Acaster

We're never going to give you 7Up, Rick.



Ed Gamble

Is that good?

James Acaster

I think that's great.

Ed Gamble

I think it's good.

James Acaster

I think it's one of the best ones we've come up with ever.

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think so, yes.

James Acaster

Because if he says 7Up and we go, 'Never going to give you 7Up.'

Ed Gamble

He'll go, 'Oh, right.' And then we'll go, 'No, get out.'

James Acaster

Yes, no, really, we're never ever-,

Ed Gamble

Yes, we're never going-,

James Acaster

We pre-discussed it, you're out. I think that would be funny.

Ed Gamble

I personally don't mind 7Up or Sprite, you know, I don't have a preference between the two.

James Acaster

I do. 7Up.

Ed Gamble

7Up.

James Acaster

I think it's softer, I think Sprite is more aggressive with the bubbles.

Ed Gamble

Yes, and you've got a soft mouth.



James Acaster

I've got a soft mouth, and you've got to treat it softly.

Ed Gamble

Yes, you've got to baby your mouth, haven't you?

James Acaster

Yes, absolutely.

Ed Gamble

Little baby mouth.

James Acaster

Fido Dido.

Ed Gamble

Looking forward to meeting Rick, this is the Off Menu Menu of Rick Astley. Welcome Rick, to the Dream Restaurant.

Rick Astley

Thank you, it's nice to be here.

James Acaster

Welcome Rick Astley to the Dream Restaurant, we've been inspecting you for some time.

Rick Astley

Some time, okay.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rick Astley

Now is the right time, let's do it.

Ed Gamble

Now, it's always the right time when it happens, right?

Rick Astley

Exactly.

Ed Gamble

Sorry to get philosophical so quickly off the top.



James Acaster

No, I like seeing this deeper side of you.

Ed Gamble

Thank you very much.

James Acaster

It's the way of a philosophical-, 'it's always the right time when it happens', yes.

Rick Astley

I'll go with that, I'll go with that, it sounds like the title of an album, doesn't it?

James Acaster

Yes, we could do an album together.

Rick Astley

We could. You play drums don't you?

James Acaster

I play drums.

Rick Astley

Yes, yes, I've just thought of ya.

James Acaster

Ed plays the bassoon.

Ed Gamble

I'm grade two bassoon. So, if you-,

Rick Astley

Okay.

Ed Gamble

If you want that on there, do you think you could ever use a bassoon in your album?

Rick Astley

Bassoon is the long-, it's like the one where it's got the very thin mouthpiece hasn't it?

Ed Gamble

It's got the thin mouthpiece, it's like a massive oboe basically.

Rick Astley

Massive oboe.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

Wow. Massive oboe, that's another album title.

Ed Gamble

More experimental, Rick Astley's massive oboe album.

Rick Astley

Lovely.

James Acaster

You're in the Dream Restaurant. What does it look like to you, your dream restaurant?

Rick Astley

Well, it's actually on a beach. My family and I have spent quite a bit of time in Italy on holidays over the years. And I love, you know, anywhere to go on holiday to be honest, I'm just happy to be on holiday. But, when I think about holidays, we went to Sardinia a lot, for ten years straight kind of thing. My wife and I have been to Puglia quite a few times now, and there's something about Italy and being on a beach in Italy, and eating, that really makes me happy.

Ed Gamble

Nice.

Rick Astley

I think because also, I know it's a well trodden thing to say that you can eat well anywhere in Italy, but there is some truth to it. I've eaten badly in Italy as well by the way, over the years, but generally speaking you can go in like a petrol station on the motorway and eat well in Italy, you know? So yes, it's on a beach, and we're looking at-, it could be the Adriatic, it could be the Med, I don't mind. I'll go either way. And, yes, I think that gives me a real sense of lovely comfort and kind of, like, relaxation, I think is a good way of putting it as well.

Ed Gamble

So, is it like a restaurant set up on the beach? Or are you talking about eating directly-

Rick Astley

No, it's a restaurant yes, it's definitely a restaurant with tables and chairs and the whole thing. Yes, yes, for sure.

Ed Gamble

You're not sitting on the sand?



Rick Astley

No, it could even be in a little harbour actually. There's a little place that we've been to a couple of times down in Puglia and the food is just amazing. And, even though it's like this little, tiny bit touristy, but not-, you know, most of the time it is Italians in there. Again, that's the dream isn't it, you want to go where, you know-,

James Acaster

You want to feel like you've found the spot.

Rick Astley

Kind of, yes. And, it's totally unpretentious, but the food is amazing, and yes, I kind of feel that's my comfort zone I think, you know?

James Acaster

When you're on holiday on the beach reclining, you might want to read a book.

Rick Astley

Indeed, you might. I see what you did there.

Ed Gamble

Absolutely incredible James.

James Acaster

Yes? Pretty good.

Ed Gamble

You know, we're only, what, twelve series in, and I think you're getting the hang of this interviewing stuff.

James Acaster

I'm finally starting to understand segues and how promo works.

Ed Gamble

And, doesn't need to actually promote the thing that the person is here to promote.

James Acaster

Yes, often Rick, you have no idea how many times we'll be like-, I start going, 'So, still or sparkling water.' And then Ben will go, 'Excuse me, sorry.' Remember James, we have to-,

Rick Astley

I get it, I do get it, but it is also a weird thing I think, because the world of podcasts has changed things so much. You know, we're having a chat right now and obviously there's a focus to it because of the food side of it and everything. But, it's also, very often, I think I've kind of meandered through podcasts a few times where you think, 'What was that for? And why are we-, ' Do you know what I mean?



James Acaster

Yes.

Rick Astley

You're one stage removed from having a pint in the pub and chatting to people, and once in a blue moon you actually know the people as well. You know, you mentioned Rob Brydon before, and I've met Rob a bunch of times and stuff and I did his podcast and it was kind of a bit like, we should've just done it in a bar. Do you know what I mean?

James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

That would be weird if you were having a drink with your friend in a bar and he just pulled your book out and went, 'So, let's talk some more about this please Rick.'

Rick Astley

True, but I think it has taken some of the-, just the thing about when you do interviews for stuff, and you're basically selling something. You can dress it up any way you like, but you've got a new record, or you've done an autobiography, it's like, 'I'm here to sell it.' And it's like, it is a bit weird that, you know, on a human level that is a bit weird. And, I think that podcasts have sort of taken the edge of that a tiny bit, because you're talking about a lot of stuff and you're meandering, but I am here to sell a book, yes.

James Acaster

I remember as a kid getting disillusioned, just suddenly realising that everyone on Parkinson happened to be on there when they were about to sell something, I was like, 'Hold up a second, so the person last week starting talking about their new album as well.'

Rick Astley

Exactly.

James Acaster

And, what is this, I thought we just wanted to hear about them, they're interesting people.

Rick Astley

It is weird, but then again, like I say, it's a process I think. It's like, you've made a record, you want people to hear it. You know, I don't think anybody has ever walked out of a studio going, 'Great, I hope no one hears that.' Do you know what I mean? It's just not-, you know, and the only way of doing that is letting the wider world know.

James Acaster

Yes, and vice versa, if you're going on a chat show, you need something to talk about. You just rock up, 'How you've been?' 'Not doing much.' Just knocking about the house, you know?



Rick Astley

Exactly, yes, doing a bit of painting.

James Acaster

So, Never is the autobiography.

Rick Astley

Yes, it is, yes. I think the publishing world loves an autobiography with a one word title, there it is. And obviously, because of Never Gonna Give you Up, which is my biggest song, my first song, my blah-da-da-da. And it has got this place in my life that just totally dwarfs everything else really. It's a weird thing to-, not even admit that, because I can admit it easily. But it's just, I guess, to own it, that you've got this song that it's a bit of a kind of a-, I don't know, I don't want to be negative about it, because it has been amazing to me that song. But, it's kind of like, just overshadowed everything. So, I kind of-, and it was my idea to call it Never. I just, kind of, thought, you know, I say it was my idea. It could've been my wife's idea, actually. It was our idea, let's say that. Again, it has come up quite a few times about, 'Do you want to do a book?' And I've kind of said, 'Nope.' And, for years I've said no.

Ed Gamble

So, the title isn't want you used to respond to people-,

Rick Astley

Yes, well, yes, Never. No, but I have sort of shied away from it really, for a lot of reasons. I'm 58 now, and I have lived a bit, I've got a 32-year-old daughter who just got married and stuff. I kind of that it's not just a, 'I was in pop music for a few years, here's a book.' I feel like there's a bit more of a life to tell, kind of thing. I think a lot of it was partly doing, like, some of the things that happened last year when we played Glastonbury and stuff like that, that I kind of just walked away and thought, 'Wow, that was an amazing moment for me personally.' But also, I think in the space of a career and sort of go, 'You're 58, and they're now letting you play Glastonbury.' That's a weird-, I wouldn't say it's a bookend, because I'm not finished just yet, hopefully. But there are just a lot of weird things going on in the last few years I think, that have made me think, 'Wow, I bet people might actually have an interest to read my side of that, rather than just see it in The Daily Mail, or what-have-you.' You know?

James Acaster

Like, a couple of things there, for one the song. I don't want to hear someone who has just released that song do a book about what it was like to have a hit single like that. But, you must have had such a change in relationship to it.

Rick Astley

Totally.

James Acaster

Over those decades, that I do want to hear about that because I think that's a way more interesting thing to be told about and to learn about.



Rick Astley

Yes, I think obviously that song came out in 1987, and if we just think, there wasn't even the internet at that point. And, ironically, it has had another life on the internet, it has just made me think sometimes to own being grateful. And, also, and this might seem a bit pompous, I don't know, but to just, sort of, like try and enjoy life a bit more. Because, I think when it was happening, when I was young, 21 and what have you, and the first couple of records and stuff, you do-, not take it for granted, but you do take it a bit more in your stride, because you've got nothing to judge it against, so you just-, everything is normal, even though it's completely abnormal. Because, you don't know anything else. But, once you get some distance away from it, you can kind of go, 'My God, how lucky you were.' And, how amazing that certain people you met and certain situations you found yourself in, and where I am right now being 58, I'm pretty happy to be honest. I have my moments, obviously like everyone does, I'm only human. But, I'm kind of happy, I have to be grateful for that I think, you know?

Ed Gamble

There's something to be said though, for that attitude, when it's all based on this one big hit single that happened so early in your career. I think that has happened to a lot of other people who have really resisted that and have sort of almost thrown their toys out of the pram a little bit and gone, 'No, please stop. Please stop talking about that.' Whereas, you've taken it all in your stride and you have this attitude of gratefulness.

Rick Astley

Yes, but I think also partly because I had quite a long gap away from it all, and so I kind of packed it all in in my late twenties, my daughter had just been born. I don't know, I kind of-, to say I hated the music business is a bit strong, but I kind of hated the music business, really. Because it's a fucking business, you know, and I hadn't really started perhaps in the way that I really, truly wanted to.

James Acaster

You can get disillusioned when stuff has to happen, and maybe not want to be around it.

Rick Astley

Yes, and I just think the business itself, talking about selling stuff, Jesus Christ. I mean, I used to go to do a TV show in whatever country and it would usually be a different country every day, for months on end. On the one hand that sounds exciting, but you guys have been around stuff like that, it isn't. And, you can fool yourself and pretend it is, and you can smile in a Smash Hits photograph for so long, before you just want to kill someone. Do you know what I mean? I don't want that to come across as ungrateful, because I'm not, I'm extremely grateful, but I also think just on a human level, you know, some people are more cut out-, I'm a miserable northerner, do you know what I mean? It's really hard to pretend that I was happy, do you know what I mean? And, I've seen other people, around that time as well, just manage it really, really well. I don't know whether they're just really good at pretending, or they just love it, and they like being famous and they like all that, sort of, side of it. I think having a break, and it was a very long break, I never thought I'd do anything again in music to be honest. I was like, 'I'm done.' I think that really, really helped and it has helped me appreciate even those times, a lot more. And remember them fondly rather than, you know, being miserable about it.



Ed Gamble

Was it the second life the song got on the internet that almost sort of brought you back to stuff?

Rick Astley

It was weird because the timing was a weird thing, I actually-, I met a guy in a pub, it was actually The Half Moon in Putney where-, it's a band venue really, a gig venue.

Ed Gamble

Great pub.

Rick Astley

Yes, and I went there because some friends of mine had started a record label and the first artist that they signed was Natasha Bedingfield. She was doing, like, a showcase or what have you, so there's a few different people. And, this guy is a massive promoter and he got talking to me and we got chatting and he kind of basically said, 'Why don't you go out and sing any more?' I said, 'Well, I just don't want to do it really, I'm done with that and I think it's done with me.' And he said, 'No, no, no. You should go out and sing, you should just-, I said, 'Nah.' Anyway, he not convinced me, but kind of laid it out for me, he said, 'Look, go and sing anything you want, it doesn't have to be your old songs if you don't want, you can sing anything you want. We don't have to make money, we don't have to do anything. Just go and sing and if you don't like it, we'll shake hands and forget it, and if you do we'll talk about it.' So, that's a well trodden path, but I ended up singing like a lot of Frank Sinatra songs, because that's what my dad used to sing around the house and I knew them all, and I kind of have always loved them. I just went and did it, sort of, under the radar, in tiny little venues, and I loved it. I absolutely loved it, and I loved being on stage again, because there was no record to promote and I didn't do any interviews, and I didn't do anything for it. I just went out and sang with a great band. I did sing Never Going to Give You Up at the end because I'd get lynched if I didn't. But, it was like-, it wasn't about that. And then, I did a couple of other things, I had an offer to go to Japan and sing my old songs, kind of thing. And my wife and daughter made me do it, she was like, 'I want to go to Japan.' And we stayed in an amazing hotel and we were looked after and we had a week's holiday there afterwards and everything. So, after doing that as well, I just kind of thought, 'This isn't painful, it's actually quite enjoyable. Because no one, sort of, knows I'm doing it, other than the people that came to the gigs.' It's like, I wasn't being a pop star, do you know what I mean? I wasn't doing anything, really.

Ed Gamble

You were just remembering what you actually liked about it in the first place.

Rick Astley

Kind of, yes. It was just different, it was just very, very different. And, there wasn't any connection to-, well, like I say, like selling something. I didn't feel like, you know, I've said it loads of times actually, that I could've been selling paint in the eighties, I could've been selling anything. I just felt like I was going around going, 'Buy this.' It didn't feel that attached to music even. Because, most of the time they didn't want you to sing live either, so you're going miming, in Germany, Spain, Italy, Norway, what have you, and America eventually and Australia and all the rest of it. You're just going miming on a TV show. My



brother could've done it. Do you know what I mean? It's like, there's no relevance to anything that I ever started to do as a teenager to what I'm actually doing.

James Acaster

Weirdly, it would've been a better promo stunt to send your brother.

Rick Astley

Probably, yes.

James Acaster

And, just have him walk out every time and have them all go, 'Hold on a second, that's a different guy.'

Rick Astley

That's weird, he's meant to be tall isn't he?

James Acaster

Turns out it's your brother.

Ed Gamble

Hang on, it does sound like him.

Rick Astley

Yes, and also it's down to me. If I want to play a cover of something, that's what we're doing. If you want to go to the bathroom, off you go.

James Acaster

But, you must have it, that people quite like-, because you did two sets at Glastonbury last year and one of them was you and Blossoms doing the Smiths covers. And, that was a huge hit.

Rick Astley

Yes.

James Acaster

As well, I mean, it's quite rare that someone has the Glastonbury you had last year, where they have two sets that everyone is talking about.

Rick Astley

Yes, it was bonkers. It was 100% bonkers.

James Acaster

And yes, I mean, for the first half of the festival, everyone was just saying, 'Did you see Rick Astley? I was amazing.' And then, the second half everyone was saying, 'Did you see Rick Astley and Blossom?' So, like, it was-, so, but people must surely also be quite up for hearing covers from you now as well, because you-



Rick Astley

Yes, I guess. Well, it's weird because I just really like doing it, and when we rehearse, my band are amazing by the way and they can play everything without even thinking about it, they're all super annoying in that respect. I just throw them a song, and they go, 'Yeah, whatever.' And play it, I'm like, 'Okay, right.' But, what's amazing about that also is that I have no fear about-, so, sometimes we'll just sit there and jam through songs for, like, 40 minutes and then I'll suddenly realise we've gone a bit far, Slip Knot. We've gone a bit far. So, we'll pull that.

Ed Gamble

Please do that.

James Acaster

It's Ed's favourite band, literally Ed's favourite band.

Rick Astley

Is it?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

He would love it if you did Slip Knot.

Ed Gamble

Rick, I'd lose my mind.

Rick Astley

Okay, it's just hard to play, it's hard to play.

Ed Gamble

Yes, so you'd need nine people really.

Rick Astley

You'd need nine people and-,

Ed Gamble

You need some, like, oil drums, and-,

Rick Astley

You need all that, all of that. What's the one, 'Push my fingers into my eyes.' That is just-,

Ed Gamble

I'd watch you sing an acoustic version.



Rick Astley

That is the-, well, yes, could do.

James Acaster

I think what was-, and I know we should get on with the menu, Benito, I know we should get on with it. But, I think what was nice, what was particularly nice about that Glastonbury one, is that there's a lot of us who really enjoy those Smiths songs and grew up with them. And then, Morrissey became the man he is now, and we would never want to go and see him live. But this, was a way of seeing those songs live and enjoying it and being able to sing along to them again. It was like the Beyond Meat burger, to use the reference that Morrissey would probably appreciate actually. It was like, 'Oh, this tastes just like it but without any of the inhumane stuff I don't agree with.' That was what was nice about I felt. I felt there was a lot of people going. 'I've really wanted to see these songs live and sing along with a field full of people. But I've made my peace with the fact that's never going to happen.'

Rick Astley

Yes.

James Acaster

And then, it was a way of doing it. You don't have to comment on it Rick, you don't have to comment on what I've just said.

We always start with still or sparkling water Rick Astley.

Rick Astley

Yes, yes. It has got to be still for me, I don't mind sparkling, but I just-, if it's sparkling, I'd rather it was something else. If it's fizzy, I don't want water, do you know what I'm saying?

James Acaster

Yes.

Rick Astley

So, yes, I'm easy, I'll go tap, not in every country in the world, but I'll go tap.

James Acaster

Also, I'd imagine-, so you're from Lancashire, right?

Rick Astley

I am indeed.

James Acaster

So, the tap water there is very good.



Rick Astley

I mean, Mr Steve Coogan, my God, has he got a bee in his bonnet about northern water. I mean, come on.

James Acaster

Yes, he has. But it's good water.

Rick Astley

Yes, I'm not denying that, yes.

Ed Gamble

You don't have local pride for your water, your tap water?

Rick Astley

Yes, probably do, but I mean, I'm not going to-, I'm aware of being a professional northerner at times, and I haven't lived up there for, like, 30 odd years. My wife is Danish, you know, I've spent more time in Copenhagen than I have, you know, in the town that I'm from, do you know what I mean? So, it's kind of like, so I'm always still. To be honest, as well, there's something about the carbonation of water if you like, that is a bit-, I don't think that helps with food to me.

Ed Gamble

Because it fills you up, or it?

Rick Astley

It's just something about it, and some of them are quite-, they've got a taste to them, I think.

Ed Gamble

Definitely.

Rick Astley

A very definite sort of something, and I don't want that when I'm eating. The water is to, perhaps, cleanse your palate a bit, but also just to keep you hydrated with the lovely wine we're about to drink.

James Acaster

Yes, yes, little sneak preview. So, the tap water wouldn't be from anywhere in particular then?

Rick Astley

No.

James Acaster

Because, sometimes it's fun if the-, I mean, what's Copenhagen tap water like if you've been?



Rick Astley

I mean, yes, you can drink tap water there, 100%. I wouldn't think twice about it in most places. I think, to be honest, it's to do with, when you're working especially, like, I'm very sensitive to not eating shellfish and stuff when I'm working, and getting-, I've only cancelled one gig in my life and it was in Australia. I had the wildest-, and I've had food poisoning a few times, the wildest food poisoning ever and.

Ed Gamble

Talk us through it in detail.

Rick Astley

Well, we did sound check and we all ate chicken salad, right? And then, I did not feel very well and the room was, like, moving and everything was going really-, it was going into a very strange place and I went outside and found a metal lamppost and was hugging it, and I thought, 'There's something very wrong with me right now.' And then I just started throwing up like there was no tomorrow, like, really bad. And if I could've sensed this was about to happen, I would've done something about it. But, I thought, 'I'll be fine, I'm going to throw up a few times and I'll get through it. I might have a couple of vodkas and I'll be fine.' Right? And then I really wasn't, and I was beginning to get worried, and then the audience was already in by this point and they made a bit of an announcement and said, like, 'Is there a doctor in the house?' Or whatever, but somebody quietly, you know, found a nurse and she came out to see me, and she said, 'I think you should go to hospital.' And at that point I started to get-, because I was off my tits at this point. I was, like, I hadn't been drinking or anything, I was just hallucinating and I was full on, you know-, I really wasn't very well. And they called for an ambulance and in the end the ambulance said, 'Look, we just can't do it. We're not going to come for someone who's got food poisoning.' They were, and then they weren't, and then they were, then they weren't. So, they got a doctor, a private doctor and he injected me in the bum region with something, sent me to the hotel, and I immediately went to sleep for, like, twelve hours. You know. So, I don't know what it was he gave me or what have you, but I was really, really ill and that's the only gig I've ever cancelled.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

And so, and obviously it was chicken salad, so what can you do? You know what I mean? You can't avoid.

Ed Gamble

No.

Rick Astley

Chicken salad's quite a regular thing, but I think, ever since that day-, because that's pretty good going, only cancelling one gig in my life.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Absolutely.

Rick Astley

And I've been really ill doing gigs, by the way, like, really ill, but that was something else. That was on the edge, that one, you know?

Ed Gamble

I know what you mean about, like, suddenly getting paranoid about food if you've got a show that night as well.

Rick Astley

Yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

Like, if there's an oyster kicking around or something, you're like, 'I'm not doing that.'

Rick Astley

Oh my god. No.

Ed Gamble

Just in case.

Rick Astley

And I like, as we're going to get into, I like seafood of any description.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

Pretty much any description, and I always, you know, I do love oysters and I love lots of things. But, if you're gigging it's just like, 'Mmm.' You know?

Ed Gamble

I will say, it's rare that I'm doing a gig and there's an oyster kicking around.

James Acaster

Come on, you're Ed Gamble.

Rick Astley

Well, that's also what sounds really dodgy, just an oyster kicking around.



Ed Gamble

Yes, an oyster.

Rick Astley

You know what I mean?

Ed Gamble

I found this oyster just on the road.

Rick Astley

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, I am never worried about that normally.

Rick Astley

No.

Ed Gamble

Like, if I'm not working.

Rick Astley

No.

Ed Gamble

I'm like, 'Yes, I'll have a bit. I'm sure it's absolutely fine.' But, I just know, one day, it's going to happen.

Rick Astley

Yes, absolutely. Bite you on the arse.

James Acaster

Poppadoms or bread, Rick Astley? Poppadoms or bread?

Rick Astley

Oh my god. Oh my god, I still can't get used to that. There is no need for a poppadom in what we're about to, you know. And, like, most people say on this thing, 'Yes, I like poppadoms,' and I like them when I'm going to have an Indian, or a takeaway, or what have you. But, no, I'm going to have bread, and also because we're going pretty full on Italian in this place, because remember, we're on an Italian beach somewhere.

Ed Gamble

Yes.



James Acaster

Yes.

Rick Astley

Overlooking one of the seas, whichever one you want. So, if we're going to have bread at all, it's going to be something Italian.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rick Astley

Something nice, yes.

Ed Gamble

Which particular Italian bread are you thinking?

Rick Astley

I don't mind, I don't really mind, really. It's this weird-, as we know, it's got lots of different kinds of bread. Some of it's awful and inedible, and I don't know why they put it out in a restaurant, it makes no sense whatsoever.

James Acaster

Really?

Rick Astley

Yes. It's awful.

James Acaster

Awful.

Rick Astley

I think a lot of it's in the north, actually. It's just white bread with no anything in it.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

It's just awful, and they do that in English, Italian restaurants or Italian, English-, you know, whatever. And it's like, 'Yes, yes, but we don't want that. That's not the Italy we want.'



Ed Gamble

We don't want proper, rustic, Italian bread.

Rick Astley

No. No, well, we want the rustic that is a certain part of Italy's rustic.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Yes, yes, yes.

Rick Astley

We don't want that white bread with nothing in it.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

It doesn't mean anything to us. I'd rather have the sticks in the plastic paper, you know what I mean?

James Acaster

Yes, yes, yes, the bread sticks.

Rick Astley

Yes.

Ed Gamble

So, you're more thinking, maybe, a nice focaccia?

Rick Astley

Yes, something like that, yes, possibly with even a herb in it, you know what I mean? But, it's got to have good olive oil. That's the thing. If you've got, even reasonable bread, good olive oil and you're away, aren't you? You know? So, it's one of the things that I actually-, it's going to sound like right snob now. But, my wife and I do this all the time, where, when they pour you some olive oil and we just look at it and go, 'That's disappointing, isn't it?' You know what I mean? Because it doesn't look rich enough, and strong enough, you know what I mean? And then you taste it and you go, 'Yes, I knew that was going to be disappointing.'

Ed Gamble

There's something very-, earlier at the top of the episode, Rick, you described yourself as a miserable northerner.

Rick Astley

Yes, well.



Ed Gamble

And, just the idea of you looking at olive oil being poured out going, 'That's disappointing.'

Rick Astley

No, but come on, that's, that's-, I mean, we've all stepped up our game with food I think.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

And, obviously, some of your listeners, perhaps, are of an age where they've never known any other time where you couldn't just get everything all the fucking time. Just sat on the couch and, sort of, going, 'I want Thai.' 'Well, I want this.' 'Well, I want Korean, but obviously, I want North Korean.'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

I don't want none of your-, you know what I mean?

Ed Gamble

I think even-, you know, I live in a good area for Deliveroo, I'd struggle to get North Korean cuisine, I think.

Rick Astley

I don't know, maybe you're on the wrong Deliveroo page then, love. But, you know what I mean? You can-, and obviously, I'm 58, and I grew up in a small town in the north, and it was, like, it was not exotic. It really wasn't, and I think, it's not even being spoilt. I sometimes feel it's spoilt, I do. I don't worry about it, I don't lose sleep over it. But, I do sometimes wonder about where it's led us that you can eat anything whenever you want. You know? You can have blueberries from Chile, you know what I mean? And you're like, 'Hang on a minute, how did they get here? What is that? Does that make any sense?' No, it doesn't, but we've got used to it and I think, at some point, we're going to have to address that a little bit, you know?

Ed Gamble

Yes, I think so. But, let's enjoy it.

Rick Astley

Let's enjoy it while we can, yes.

Ed Gamble

Let's not think about it.



Rick Astley

Let's just enjoy it.

James Acaster

Let's ignore all of it and.

Rick Astley

But, I think the olive oil thing-, maybe it's an age thing as well, I don't know. But, it's like, you just get into it, don't you, at some point. You guys must be into olive oil.

Ed Gamble

So, yes, what are you looking for? When the olive oil is poured out, what would make you and your wife go, 'Lovely'?

Rick Astley

I want it to be dark. Dark, like some kind of-, you know, and a bit, like, oily. Like, a proper, you know? I say oil, in the sense of something you put in your car, viscosity, if that's the right word?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

Do you know what I mean? Some where you can really see it's like, 'Hang on a minute. Hold the phone.' And then, when you actually taste it, you want that, kind of, kick in it. Really, almost a bite in it, and I just hate it when it's just nothing. It's just like, 'Well, there's no point in putting my bread in that.' You know?

James Acaster

And what do you think of-, I mean, you're spending a lot of time-

Ed Gamble

Imagine you saying that to a waiter. 'There's no point me putting my bread in that.'

Rick Astley

Just, not even doing it.

James Acaster

You spend a lot of time in Copenhagen.

Rick Astley

Yes.



James Acaster

I believe that's the origin of-, the first place where they started putting olive oil directly onto ice cream and drizzling it on top.

Rick Astley

Oh really? Is that in one of the, like, Noma-esque restaurants up there and all that?

James Acaster

Yes, kind of, everywhere now round there.

Rick Astley

Oh really?

James Acaster

I went last year for a couple of days and every ice cream place would offer sea salt and olive oil on the top.

Rick Astley

That's just to you.

Ed Gamble

I don't know if that started in Copenhagen though.

James Acaster

Okay, well, I've got it in my head.

Ed Gamble

I think that might be an Italian thing.

James Acaster

Maybe it is an Italian thing.

Ed Gamble

But it's very, very in.

James Acaster

Yes, very in, it's all over Copenhagen.

Ed Gamble

Olive oil on the top.

Rick Astley

You must know, obviously, that Copenhagen is, in the last ten years or whatever, more, has just become this revolutionary food because, obviously, it had the best restaurant in the world a number of



years running. All the rest of it, and so many people who've gone through that restaurant, obviously, have started other places and it is-, our daughter lives there and we go there a lot. Obviously, my wife's there right now and it is pretty amazing for food. It's pretty amazing for everything to be honest. You guys won't know this, but we have a couple of bars in London that we're involved with from one of the places called Mikkeller. I don't know whether you know that.

Ed Gamble

I knew that. I knew you were involved in this. Yes, yes.

Rick Astley

So, anyway, that's like the whole, everything, with food, and just drinking, and everything, has really changed, I think. I mean, I'd like the old school, Danish food as well, to be honest. Like, open-faced sandwiches, which is still a big thing with me and stuff, and the herrings, and all of that. At Christmas, we always have a Christmas-, well, we have a styling around the food that's all very, very Danish. Like, you know, they're big in pork, I'm not so big in pork, to be honest. So, Lena, my wife, normally makes me something else. But, anyway, and the crackling that's on it and everything.

Ed Gamble

The Christmas potatoes? We've heard about on this podcast before.

Rick Astley

Yes. Well, did they call them Brunede Kartoffler? Which is, like, Christmas potatoes.

Ed Gamble

No. Is this, like, with the really sweet.

Rick Astley

Sugar, yes.

Ed Gamble

With sugar round them.

Rick Astley

It's basically sugar, yes. It's like white, boiled potatoes, tiny ones. Like, little, new potatoes, almost, and you literally-, I mean, it's obscene when you see it. You look at it and you just think, 'That's a health problem right there.' It's just a pan full of sugar and you just melt that down, put the potatoes in, and they just become brown potatoes then, and it is amazing.

Ed Gamble

That does sound amazing.

James Acaster

Your dream starter.



Rick Astley

My dream starter is swordfish, but done-, oh for god's sake, when you just slice it really thin.

Ed Gamble

Carpaccio?

Rick Astley

Carpaccio is what I'm after, yes. And again, I think, I wouldn't say I would have that on every restaurant I've been to. But, I think if you go to a nice one and you get the feeling, 'Well, the olive oil was really good. So, I might actually push.'

Ed Gamble

Is it, like, a testing thing, like when?

Rick Astley

Yes, a little bit.

Ed Gamble

Metallica used ask for brown M&Ms.

Rick Astley

I think it's true, yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

But you go with, 'If the olive oil's good, you're ordering the swordfish.'

Rick Astley

Kind of, yes. And I would feel better about ordering the seafood as well, and the everything, you know what I mean? Because it's a marker. They've set a marker of, like, 'We're a good place and we know what we're doing.' You know? And that, it doesn't have to be swanky and posh it's just, 'No, we really care about the food in here and this is what we're doing.' You know?

Ed Gamble

Is it our first swordfish on the podcast?

James Acaster

Good question.

Ed Gamble

It must be one of the few.

James Acaster

Yes, we haven't had it come up much.



Rick Astley

Well, they put it in pasta a lot in Italy, or certain parts of Italy anyway, they did in Sardinia a lot, Linguine della Spada, I think it's called and it's got a very fish taste, but not to the point where it's-, because fish and pasta, for me, is a bit of a weird one. You know, like, salmon and spaghetti? I'm not saying I've ever eaten it, and I would eat it tonight. If someone's made it and I've gone round theirs I'm going to eat that and I'm fine with it. There's a bit of me going, 'Are you sure?' No?

Ed Gamble

No, I see what you mean. It doesn't feel like a match made in heaven, does it? Salmon and pasta.

Rick Astley

It seems odd to me. That seems like someone else's version of what should be going on spaghetti.

Ed Gamble

Prawns, sure.

Rick Astley

Yes, prawns.

James Acaster

Prawns, lovely.

Ed Gamble

Clams, sure.

Rick Astley

Yes, all of that, you've hit the nail on the head there. But, I mean, salmon and spaghetti.

James Acaster

I've definitely had it before and it was nice, but I think it really comes down to what sauce they have with it.

Rick Astley

It's very creamy, normally, isn't it?

James Acaster

Yes, yes, and then it's delicious, and they've got that right there. But, like, yes, I know what you mean. I think I actually made something during lockdown that was a salmon pasta and it, obviously, flakes up quite nicely when you're stirring it.

Rick Astley

Yes, yes. Yes, yes.



James Acaster

And you're like, 'This is great.'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

But yes, on paper.

Rick Astley

And I think, like I say, if I saw it on a menu in the UK, especially, or possibly in Italy, I don't know, but it wouldn't be what I'd go to. But, seeing the swordfish thing in a pasta, and also I think, perhaps I was thinking, 'I've never seen this before.' I've probably seen it since, but I hadn't seen it, perhaps, the first time we used it because we used to have it a lot in the same restaurant in Sardinia. I kind of thought, 'We're getting a bit of an insight to local-', 'do you know what I mean?'

James Acaster

So, is this in a-, this isn't in a pasta, this starter?

Ed Gamble

No, this is carpaccio.

Rick Astley

No, this is just carpaccio.

James Acaster

As it is.

Rick Astley

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Rick Astley

And it's light.

Ed Gamble

What goes over the top of it?

Rick Astley

Well, there's olive oil.



James Acaster

Not disappointing olive oil.

Rick Astley

And sometimes, there might even be a tiny bit of onion or maybe a tiny bit of garlic and stuff. But, I think, if it's nice enough, I think you can just eat it the way it is, you know?

James Acaster

Yes, yes.

Ed Gamble

Super light starter, just to get you ready.

Rick Astley

Yes. Yes, and again, the thing with carpaccio for me is that you've really got to be as thin as you can be, and almost see through it, kind of thing.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

And then it, sort of, it just takes on another level of loveliness I think. When it's fat carpaccio, who wants a fat carpaccio? Do you know what I mean? That's just wrong, isn't it?

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

That's just sashimi at that point, isn't it?

Rick Astley

Yes, it's just weird.

James Acaster

So, your dream main course isn't too far from that then?

Rick Astley

No, no, because I've gone full Italian, to be honest. We have a lot of memories, being together in Italy, and I kind of think-, and I love Spain as well, by the way. I think the food in Spain is just incredible, I think. We did definitely have more holidays-, we used to go on holiday with one particular family and we went to the same place ten years running, kind of thing, and our kids, kind of, were on this little beach where, even if we weren't there-, I know it sounds a bit weird now, but even if we weren't there, we felt they were safe. It wasn't a big, sort of, you know what I mean? It was just, like, 'It's okay.' I think there



was always one of us there, thinking about it, I don't think we'd have left them alone, but it had that feel of it. Almost like you're in an Enid Blyton book, do you know what I mean?

James Acaster

I mean, those kids were always in danger.

Rick Astley

It's like, 'Where are the kids?' 'They're down on the beach with.'

James Acaster

Those kids were always helping to face down criminals, Rick, that's an awful, awful example.

Ed Gamble

Yes, that's a bad example. Yes, yes, yes.

James Acaster

Those kids were in a lot of danger all the time.

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes, they should've had supervision at all times.

James Acaster

Yes, the Enid Blyton kids.

Rick Astley

They probably did, they probably did, they probably did.

James Acaster

They were investigating crimes left, right and centre.

Ed Gamble

I thought you meant the Enid Blyton kids had supervision, they didn't.

James Acaster

They never did.

Rick Astley

Oh, they never did.

Ed Gamble

But you meant your kids.

Rick Astley

Unbelievable, unbelievable.

James Acaster

No, they were left with a dog.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

Yes. Just very weird, all of that, very weird. So, yes for a main, I've gone for spaghetti vongole, but with bottarga on top.

Ed Gamble

Okay.

Rick Astley

Are you aware of bottarga?

James Acaster

No, I'm not.

Ed Gamble

I'm aware of the name, I don't think I know what it is, Rick.

Rick Astley

Well, I'm going to embarrass myself by not knowing what it is either, but I think what it is, is it's eggs from a fish that somehow gets, I think, compacted, and then they shave it. I'm just going to google bottarga.

Ed Gamble

No, I think.

Rick Astley

Has anyone ever googled on the actual, like, thing that they brought in?

Ed Gamble

Yes, normally we make Ben do it.

James Acaster

Normally, we make Ben do it, but I think it's fun to have you do it.

Rick Astley

Because, I've always got a couple of questions of-

Ed Gamble

I think you might be right.



Rick Astley

Yes, bottarga is salted, cured fish roe. It is, yes. I was pretty certain it was, by the way, but then, when you just-, because when you're just telling a friend about it, it's one thing. But, when you're on a podcast with two gentlemen like yourselves, you think, 'Is that right?'

James Acaster

Yes.

Rick Astley

And I've never really ever seen it, other than in, either an Italian restaurant that has a Sardinian owner, or chef, or connection. There's lots of people in Italy who don't eat it, I don't think.

James Acaster

Right.

Rick Astley

And we just kept seeing it, and I just thought-, so I tried it and I just went, 'Oh my god.'

Ed Gamble

So, what does it taste like? What does it do to the dish?

Rick Astley

It's very fishy.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

But, but again, this thing with fish, and pasta, and mixing the two things. So, your spaghetti vongole, yes? Which is a very traditional-, and a good one of those, I think, is just amazing. I just love it.

Ed Gamble

So, clams and, yes.

Rick Astley

Yes, and it's perfect on the water. It just feels you're one with sea and the whole-, you know. But, throwing the bottarga on top just adds this other dimension to it and it just-, again, I think it's fond memories. I think it's happy memories of being on holidays with your kids when they're young and all the rest of it.

Ed Gamble

How do you feel about-, because we've talked about vongole a couple of times on the podcast.



James Acaster

Harry Hill chose it.

Ed Gamble

Harry Hill chose it.

Rick Astley

Alright.

Ed Gamble

How do you feel about the admin?

Rick Astley

What do you mean?

Ed Gamble

The shell admin.

Rick Astley

Oh, I think that's part of the joy.

Ed Gamble

Yes?

Rick Astley

Yes.

Ed Gamble

What? You like-, because I struggle with it, I don't know if you could tell. Because, when I get a meal, I'm ready to just.

Rick Astley

Yes, you just want to eat it.

Ed Gamble

I'm going straight in.

Rick Astley

Well, I do know what you mean, and there are certain things-, I'll try and think of one. There are certain things, I think, 'I just can't be bothered, can't be arsed messing. I just want to eat the bloody thing.' But with that, I don't mind. It's a bit like when you have.

Ed Gamble

That was Rick clicking a clam.



Rick Astley

It's a bit like when you have mussels, moules, and-, do you do that thing where you use one of the shells to pluck out the meat of the?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I don't do that.

Ed Gamble

Do you not do that?

Rick Astley

You don't do that?

James Acaster

No, I mean, I rarely get it, and every time I do get it, I get frustrated with the admin and I splash myself with the juice at some point because I'm so-, I'm just trying to get it over and done with so I'm going too fast.

Ed Gamble

But yes, the tongs-, using one of the shells as the tongs to get the other one out.

James Acaster

Oh, I see.

Rick Astley

Yes.

Ed Gamble

I mean, it's quite cruel, really.

Rick Astley

Is it? But they're already dead.

James Acaster

They were friends.

Ed Gamble

Because this guy, he can see his mate ripping his tummy out.

Rick Astley

Well, they're dead though, aren't they?



Ed Gamble

Depends where you go.

Rick Astley

So, that just reminds me of something, while we're on a food conversation here for the podcast. Have you guys been to Japan?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

I'm going for the first time next month.

Ed Gamble

I just got back, James is going next month.

Rick Astley

Amazing, fantastic. Well, I'm sure you're going to love it. You must've loved it, I'm sure.

Ed Gamble

Incredible.

Rick Astley

Yes. So, I've been a few times and, back in the day, in the '80s and stuff, and I remember the second time we went-, first time was just promo and stuff, second time we went for gigs, and the promoter took us to this amazing restaurant in a town, I think, called Nagoya. So, you know, it's still a massive city, but one of the smaller cities, as it were. We went to this restaurant and I basically think he was just taking the piss, because we were given these bowls, like a clear soup, but something was still alive, swimming round in it.

Ed Gamble

Wow.

Rick Astley

But didn't have the whole of its body to do so.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

Like, tentacles had been cut away and things, and that was a bit of a shock so I didn't-, and again, I was 22, 23, do you know what I mean? I wasn't-, I'd travelled a bit by then, and I'd eaten in a lot of places and stuff but it was still.



Ed Gamble

Nothing prepares you for that though, does it?

James Acaster

No, you're not old boy.

Rick Astley

That's nothing compared to what happened next. So, they brought out these huge fish that were skewered so that they were in a curve, an arc, you know, tail up and head up, and the meat of the fish had been cut away from its body while it was alive and placed back on the fish. So, you were meant to eat it while it looked at you.

Ed Gamble

Oh my god. I mean, look, I am not squeamish but I think that'd put me off.

James Acaster

Yes, I couldn't do that.

Ed Gamble

I mean, like your theory about, 'If the olive oil is good, you know the rest of the meal is going to be nice.' When they brought you the little thing swimming around in the bowl, get out.

Rick Astley

There's a-, yes.

James Acaster

Let alone when you have to make eye contact with the thing you're eating.

Ed Gamble

Get out, it's the bloody Marquis de Sade's restaurant.

Rick Astley

Yes, now, I don't know whether that might even be a thing any more and whether they're legally allowed to do it.

James Acaster

Sure.

Rick Astley

I'm going back 35 years, you know, so it's a while ago, more even. But, I remember just thinking, 'This is ridiculous.'

James Acaster

Yes.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

And I was, kind of, looking at all the other Japanese people thinking, 'Are you going to eat this or is this?'

James Acaster

A crazy prank on the visitors.

Rick Astley

Yes, and I'd seen prawns cooked on, like, a teppanyaki where they're still alive, they just put them on the thing in front of you, and I know lobsters go in the thing when you're not looking and they just put them in the-, you know, I don't like all that. Listen, don't get me wrong, I love eating food. I'm not vegetarian. I think about it sometimes, and I do think there's an issue, like I said, with the way we are living at the moment can't really be sustained and all the rest of it, but yes, it's a tricky one.

Ed Gamble

There's a step too far, isn't there?

Rick Astley

A little bit.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Yes, I think we definitely have to, at least, stop making eye contact with the fish while we're eating it alive.

Rick Astley

Yes, kind of.

James Acaster

Let's at least take that step as a species.

Rick Astley

Well, having said that, this is just reminding me of something else and, please, this is not about-, right. Here we go. So, one of my passions in life has been skiing over the years, and so, I was on holiday skiing with some friends, and it was a bit of an occasion, and we needed to celebrate something, so we went to this restaurant which, again, I don't think is open any more. Not because of what I'm about to describe, I just think it's not open any more and it was called My Father's Farm, Mon Ferme de Mon Pere, whatever. And, massive reputation, you know, Michelin stars, all the rest of it. So, we went, it's like a fifteen course, lah-di-dah, whatever. But, the building is a farm and animals-, I'm not saying those



animals, necessarily, but in other words, pigs, ducks, geese, cows, are on the other side of glass beneath you and on the side of you as you walk in to the restaurant. So, it's basically like saying-, but then I don't think, on the one end, there's nothing wrong with actually explaining, especially to kids.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

Because if kids just think-,

James Acaster

Yes.

Rick Astley

Because if kids just think that a slab of meat is just something, you know, they don't connect it to being an animal, that's a whole other issue again. But that was pretty-, that was a bit-, I mean, they weren't dragging animals out and butchering them, you know?

James Acaster

Sure.

Rick Astley

But it was still very much like-,

Ed Gamble

But at some point-,

Rick Astley

'You've just ordered this and that's one of those over there, beyond that glass.' It was a bit weird.

Ed Gamble

Yes. It's quite confronting, isn't it?

James Acaster

It's good. I mean, yes, I'm all for it. But I think I wouldn't be able to hack it at the same time and maybe I should reflect on that.

Rick Astley

Mmm. Yes. Well, I don't cook a lot. My wife's an amazing cook, an incredible cook. And, it's one of the main ways that she relaxes and I don't really love it.

Ed Gamble

Does it stress you out?



Rick Astley

Yes. If it's for anybody else. I'm not adverse to making an omelette or making something for myself, cobbling something together. But the reason I was mentioning this was, if someone said, 'Right, there's a joint, there's an actual big piece of animal, make it.' Or even a chicken, getting a chicken out of its packaging from the supermarket and putting it in the oven is a bit like, wow, do you know what I mean? Whereas when it's cooked and it's on your plate, it's just very different.

Ed Gamble

It is.

Rick Astley

Yes.

Ed Gamble

And, don't get those mixed up Rick, otherwise you're going to have another one of those incidents.

Rick Astley

Exactly.

Ed Gamble

You're going to be cancelling more gigs.

Rick Astley

Yes.

James Acaster

Your dream side dish, Rick?

Rick Astley

Sorry, yes. Well, I'm going really traditional again. All the things I've chosen, I think, are pretty traditional in a beach side Italian restaurant so I'm going rocket and Parmesan which, you know? The thing with rocket, as well, or arugula, as the Americans say, is when it's good, it's amazing. It's almost breath-taking. Again, it's back to that thing of the very peppery sort of thing about olive oil sometimes, where you go, oh and it literally goes to the back of your throat and goes, oh my God you know. And, you, kind of, forget sometimes just how amazing it is. Like, we've all been having that as a salad for years, now. But I remember as a kid, I say as a kid, a young man, in an Italian restaurant and me thinking, 'Oh, well, that's just some kind of leaf salad thing.' And eating it and going, 'Jesus.' You know?

Ed Gamble

It is a shock, the first time you have rocket. Yes? It's mind blowing.

Rick Astley

And, also Parmesan's a big thing in our house.



James Acaster

Oh, yes?

Rick Astley

Oh, yes. My wife doesn't really eat dessert. She doesn't eat sweet things, particularly.

James Acaster

You should leave her.

Rick Astley

But at the end of dinner, in restaurants she very often will say, 'I don't want a cheeseboard, I don't want a whole selection. Just give me a big block of Parmesan and a nice glass of red wine.'

Ed Gamble

Well that is, that is one of the ballsiest moves I've ever heard of. Being in a restaurant and going-,

Rick Astley

My wife-,

Ed Gamble

'Give me a big chunk of Parmesan.'

Rick Astley

She is a ballsy woman, believe me. She is.

Ed Gamble

That's a real curve ball, isn't it, for the people working there?

Rick Astley

Maybe but I think there's an element of-, it depends, doesn't it? It depends what kind of a restaurant you're in. And, even some of the ones which do have, like a Michelin star and they're like sometimes I think they are more accommodating than people would think they are, sometimes. Not always. Sometimes it's like, 'That's what we make, fuck off, if you don't want it that way.' And, dah, dah. But, sometimes they, kind of, get it that people go, 'You know what, is there any chance?' I don't know.

Ed Gamble

Does she go through the rigmarole of looking at the dessert menu and going, 'Hmm, actually I'll just have a big block of Parmesan please.'

Rick Astley

She'll, kind of, have a scan of it and she will have a spoonful of mine or someone's but she's not really-, it's just not where she's at, at all. There's pretty much nothing in the world of dessert that she's interested in. It just doesn't do it for her.



James Acaster

Mind-boggling.

Ed Gamble

I'm going to try that.

James Acaster

Yes, I'm sure you will.

Ed Gamble

Because I love just a big block of Parmesan.

Rick Astley

Too right. Glass of red wine with it, especially. It's just like, yes.

James Acaster

This is what we've learnt today. And, I don't know which order these episodes are going to go out in that we've recorded today. It's going to be Rick first. Well then, this is a flash forward.

Ed Gamble

In that case.

James Acaster

But a guest earlier said that-, and if the listeners can figure out which guest this was, make sure you tweet the podcast, and Benito will send you a signed chopping board. Said that, 'Christopher Walken said to always start a meal with Parmesan and red wine.'

Ed Gamble

Christopher Walken wasn't our guest, by the way.

Rick Astley

Oh, okay.

James Acaster

That wasn't our guest.

Ed Gamble

Our last guest said that, 'Christopher Walken said in an interview to always start a meal with just a block of Parmesan and red wine.'

James Acaster

And, that's never come up on the podcast before.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

You're literally our next guest and you've said, 'Parmesan and red wine's great.'

Rick Astley

Weird, that is very strange.

Ed Gamble

And, I have Parmesan in the fridge at home and God knows, I've got some red wine.

James Acaster

God knows.

Ed Gamble

I'm going to do that tonight.

Rick Astley

Do it.

Ed Gamble

I went to a restaurant once, called Beast. I don't know if it's still there but the starter was literally-, it was quite early on in the life of this restaurant and there was only one starter. And, they brought you, like, a huge chunk of Parmesan that you could absolutely never finish and a knife. And, you just hacked off bits of Parmesan.

Rick Astley

Wow. Is that here, in London?

Ed Gamble

Yes, yes.

Rick Astley

Right, okay.

Ed Gamble

It's run by the, you know, do you know, Goodmans Steakhouses. I think it's one of their places, yes.

Rick Astley

It rings a bell that name but I don't know whether-,



Ed Gamble

Yes. I think it's changed a bit, now. But, it was like Parmesan and then steak and, like, I think lobster but it was ridiculously over the top restaurant but yes, I loved it.

Well your dream drink then. So, we've got that nice salad.

Rick Astley

It's a Chardonnay. It's an Italian Chardonnay. It's Antinori, basically. And, the reason I'm, sort of, stumbling over saying that and everything is because of how expensive it is. It's ludicrously expensive and it wouldn't be an every day, you know, but I'm in my favourite restaurant, dream restaurant, you know, all the rest of it.

Ed Gamble

Why not?

Rick Astley

Again, you don't see it everywhere but when you see it and I had very weird experience in Italy recently. And, that was that, it's a long story. But, I was picking-, I don't fly that often so I drive everywhere, like, you know, I've driven to Budapest a few times and southern Portugal, outer northern Norway and everywhere. I've driven across America a few times and round Australia because I don't like flying that much. I do, do it, obviously, but I'm saying I cut it down. And, I like doing the drive as well and also, I think, I've done an awful lot of travelling, especially when I was younger, where I was on planes all the fricking time and you arrive somewhere and you go, 'Oh okay. I'm in the back of a car and I saw this and I saw that. And then, I've been to Rome but I have got no fricking clue about Italy or what it's like or anything.'

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

And, driving there you get a sense of it because you just stay in places and do stuff. Anyway, on with the story. So, I'm going to pick my wife and a friend up in the airport in Rome. So, the night before, I just stayed outside of Rome, on the coast actually, funnily enough, in a little place, not a fancy place at all. It was just me and very often I'll just think, 'I'm not going to spend a fortune, I'm only going to be there to sleep.' So, dah, dah, dah and I go downstairs and I went into the little restaurant they had and it was. It was nothing-, it was lovely but there's nothing amazing about this place, not what you're expecting. I'm looking on the wine list and I see this wine and I, sort of, think, 'No, no, no, hang on a second.' And, it has got a younger brother, by the way.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley



Which is about half the price. I kept reading it going, 'I think what they've done is, here, it's the younger brother but they've written it like it's the big brother.' So, I said, 'Can I have a look at that wine?' And, he said, 'Yes.' So, over he goes or I think, maybe, I went over to their wine cabinet and had a look at it. They had like a glass, you know? I thought, 'No, that's pretty much, that's, you know, and it was literally.'

James Acaster

It's the big brother.

Rick Astley

It was stupid, the price of it. It was, like-, so much so that when I told my wife and her friend the day after, they said, 'Well perhaps we should just go back and buy everything they've got.'

James Acaster

It's too cheap.

Rick Astley

I know and I feel guilty about it actually. And, I kept thinking, 'No, no, I should have told them. Should have told them.' Anyway, whatever. It's been a dilemma ever since but it is phenomenal this wine and my favourite wine, anyway, is Chardonnay and Chardonnay's got a bit of a bad rep, I think, over the last 15 years. So everyone's like Chardonnay, I don't want to drink that. 'Footballers call their kids Chardonnay, I don't want to drink that nonsense.' Which is absolute bollocks because the finest white burgundy you can possibly have is Chardonnay. People just don't necessarily call it that upfront because it's, sort of, frightened everyone into thinking it's like, do you know what I mean?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

Chardonnay's got-,

Ed Gamble

Well, there was that ABC thing for a long time, was it, Anything But Chardonnay? Yes.

Rick Astley

And, it's sort of, got a bit of a bad rep. And, it, sort of, annoys me when I go into a restaurant and they don't have a Chardonnay by the glass. It really annoys me because I'm like, you're reacting to that. You're not reacting to whether it's good or not and we've travelled a lot in America and got a lot of American friends and some of their Chardonnays are just unbelievable. My daughter and quite a few of her friends and family friends have this thing about me liking buttery Chardonnay. So much so it's almost become ridiculous. Like, if we're having a glass of wine, like in Copenhagen and stuff, they're all looking at me, waiting for me to go, '(takes a deep intake of breath) now that's buttery.' Do you know what I mean? 'Is it buttery Rick?' Do you know what I mean? It's become like this sort of thing but anyway.



Ed Gamble

Oh, that is such a classic dad-bullying thing, isn't it?

James Acaster

Yes. You find the thing.

Rick Astley

Yes.

James Acaster

You find the one bit of happiness your dad has-,

Rick Astley

And then destroy it.

James Acaster

And, then you make it a thing of mockery.

Ed Gamble

'Oh, it's buttery, is it.'

Rick Astley

Yes but also to be fair. I think she and some of her friends have been grateful, the fact that, you know, I bring nice bottles of wine to drink and stuff and I've pushed them in certain directions and stuff. And, I think over the years-, I love red wine, by the way, I really do but obviously with the things I've chosen, I wanted a white and this is just phenomenal, it's just absolutely gorgeous.

Ed Gamble

And, I thought beer might come up. I thought we might be-,

Rick Astley

Yes.

Ed Gamble

In for a beer because you've got the Mikkeller bars.

Rick Astley

For sure, yes. I do love beer but I think, for me, beer is something I drink in a bar or a pub or at home. But, if I'm in a restaurant, the connection of food, depending on what it is. If you're having a burger or you're having something that's a bit more, yes, I get it. But if you're going to eat, like, swordfish and pasta and, you know, I'm going wine every day, you know what I mean? So-,

Ed Gamble

That wine sounds absolutely delicious.



Rick Astley

Yes, it is amazing. I almost toyed with the idea of bringing one and then I thought-,

James Acaster

Oh, you motherfucker.

Rick Astley

Yes, I know, you see-,

James Acaster

Why are you dangling-, why tell us? That you didn't bring us a really expensive wine.

Ed Gamble

Dammit Rick Astley.

Rick Astley

I know, but I did think about it and then I thought, 'No that's the last thing they're going to want to do because.'

James Acaster

What?

Ed Gamble

What the?

Rick Astley

Okay, all right.

James Acaster

What? Drink extremely nice wine, yes. Are you out of your tree?

Rick Astley

Okay, all right. Well, next time, next time.

Ed Gamble

Also, the next thought was probably, 'I'll just save that for myself and my family.'

Rick Astley

No, no. But I-,

James Acaster

They can have the little brother.



Rick Astley

But one of the things about wine and also the thing-, you mentioned the beer thing because of the Mikkeller guys and everything, is that, when I grew up as a kid, wine was not really a thing. Nobody I knew had wine at dinner. You know, I'm from a small northern town and blah, blah and all the rest of it, where we eat coal and all that. It just wasn't on the, you know?

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

And, I think I've loved the fact that I've been introduced to that from being about 21, really. Because the weird thing was when I had that first record out and everything, it was a really big hit at the time. I know it's had its life and everything but-, so I got taken to restaurants that were just off the scale. As a 21-year-old and probably didn't really appreciate it and also because we were, kind of, doing it a lot. Because I came to realise that somebody at the record company would think, 'Great, he's had a number 1 so I can take him to this restaurant.' Or whatever. And, we were going there because they wanted to not because I wanted to. I would have much rather gone out and had a burger and a few beers and hung out with younger people at the record label. But obviously, the CEO and the God knows what would be taking you out because they're like, 'Well we can go to wherever.'

The one upside of that, I think, was-, and I wasn't a wine drinker at all and it took me quite a while, I think, to actually get into it. And, also I would say and this is, a really nobby thing to say but it's just the god-damn truth, if you've got a bit of money you can take that further. And, you can buy a nice wine that's not that super expensive and we, you know, drink wine at home on a more regular basis that isn't super expensive for lots of reasons. And, that is, I think, one of the main ones, I think, is that if you find something that you like, again, it's a slightly different thing. I mean, I've got friends who drink certain kinds of wine. I'm like, 'I'm not drinking any of that muck. I'd rather have a cup of tea. I am not drinking that.'

Ed Gamble

Again, I'm imagining all this happening in your actual life, where you go to a friend's house and they're all drinking wine, you're like, 'Put the kettle on.'

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

'Fuck off, I'm not drinking that shit. If you think I'm dipping my bread in that, you're sorely mistaken.'

Rick Astley

No. But, wine is a really wired thing because you become accustomed and it doesn't have to be super expensive and upscale and all the rest of it. You, just, sort of, get a taste for what you like. It's a bit like when you're on holiday and something locally tastes great. And, you bring it home and it doesn't.



Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

And, it's like yes, I think your taste-buds are informed by other stuff. It's not just, you know, and there's a Chardonnay we drink at home all the time. It's about, I think, it used to be about about £10, it's probably £12 now, from one of the big wine distributors that we all know. And, we drink gallons of the stuff because it's just like-, it's got this, it is French. It's a Chardonnay, blah, blah, blah but it's not produced in Burgundy. It's a long story-, how boring is this? This is boring, isn't it?

Ed Gamble

No, I love it.

Rick Astley

Okay, whatever. Anyway, so it was an experiment. I read about it, it was an experiment. I think it's Louis Latour, I'm pretty certain it is. And, he had an experiment-, I don't think he exists as a person, anymore. I think he's long gone.

Ed Gamble

Do you mean he's dead?

Rick Astley

He had an experiment to say, 'I'm going to-,

James Acaster

No, he doesn't exist as a person.

Rick Astley

'And I'm going to produce it somewhere else. I'm going to, you know, produce a Chardonnay but not in this region.' And equivalent-wise, in other words what I'm trying to say is, for £12 you're probably drinking £30 worth of wine.

James Acaster

Yes. Because it's slightly-,

Rick Astley

It's slightly, it's not from-.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rick Astley

And so it's like-, it's a bit like the Champagne thing, right. If you like your bubbly, whatever, you don't have to drink Champagne to drink a nice one any-more. I mean, England's making really good sparkling



wine and everything. I was going to call it Champagne but you're not allowed to. You're not allowed to. Fuck off, you're not allowed to, do you know I mean? God it bugs the arse off me, that. Anyway, there you go.

James Acaster

I definitely want to make, like, a documentary about you at a dinner party.

Rick Astley

Yes.

James Acaster

'Fuck off. I'll call it Champagne if I want to, come on, fuck off.'

Rick Astley

No, but it's-

James Acaster

'I'm not drinking that muck.'

Ed Gamble

Yes, but quite often if you can buy wines produced near to some of the massive vineyards that are literally-

Rick Astley

Totally, hundred per cent.

Ed Gamble

All that separates them is a fence. The terroir exactly the same.

Rick Astley

Yes.

Ed Gamble

The weather's, obviously, exactly the same. It's going to taste as good and it's, like a quarter of the cost.

Rick Astley

Well, I will agree with that wholeheartedly but I've had one or two experiences that have literally melted my mind, right? And, this is, we have a couple of friends who we didn't know that well at the time because I'm going back quite some years. I'm going back 15, 16, maybe, more years. Around at theirs for dinner and-, Peter his name is. I'm not going to tell his last name but Peter, seriously into wine and my God, you know and I've been so embarrassed bringing over bottles to their house. Going like, 'Oh Jesus, I should have, you know, pushed the boat out a bit more,' But he's not like that at all. He just wants people to taste it and he's been, like collecting wine all his life, kind of thing, almost all his life and invested in it and all this. Again, not mega-wealthy. Not like-, sort of, like, just loves wine. Just loves



wine and would rather drive a car that's older but drink this wine. Do you know what I mean? Or whatever it is.

And, my wife and I had been over to theirs for dinner and this other friend, who's been round and they have brought bottles of wine from Burgundy, white Burgundy and I think, I would imagine, that's harder to do than red wine, to be honest. They've brought them and the other person has told them the year, the vintage and what exactly it is. And, we're talking about the fields that when you go on one of those wine tours or one of those wine trips, as you say, well it's that field over there that produces that and the field over there produces that and they are different and they're dah, dah, dah and all the rest of it and those mothers have actually told the other one what they've served. And, I've just gone, 'What are you doing? How have you done this? How do you do that?' And, they say, 'You have to drink an awful lot of wine.'

James Acaster

They just take a sip and go, it's from that field?

Rick Astley

The year and literally the field it came from because they've said this is a Marcel but it's a dah, dah, dah and you're going, 'Fuck off, how have you done?' And then it, sort of, dawned on me eventually because I've been to Bonnes for instance, in that area, loads of time actually. Not just for wine, its halfway to skiing.

James Acaster

Yes.

Rick Astley

You know, we were halfway to the South of France and I drive everywhere. So, and when you are in one of those areas and you're thinking, 'Okay, well, I guess if this is what you drink a lot of especially when you're pushing the boat out a bit, there's still quite a lot but you could get used to it.' You know what I mean? You could, sort of, go, 'No, I, kind of, know what this is.' It's not like you said, 'Oh, well actually I've brought you some Chilean Chardonnay.' They probably have no clue whatsoever. It's probably not on their radar as much. I'm saying that, he knows about some of them as well because he brought me a bottle of really nice Chilean Chardonnay. I was like, 'Oh my God.'

James Acaster

I can do it with Ben and Jerry's.

Ed Gamble

Yes. James can do it with Ben and Jerry's.

Rick Astley

Oh, really.



James Acaster

Tell you what flavour.

Rick Astley

So, you like a sweet-,

James Acaster

And who made it, Ben or Jerry? Every time.

Rick Astley

Is that your thing, then, dessert? And, like, sweet stuff?

James Acaster

Love dessert. That's why-,

Ed Gamble

This is a big moment coming up, now, right.

James Acaster

Yes. Well we get to your dream dessert now and I swear to God, if you skip this like your god-damn wife-,

Rick Astley

No, no. I would-,

James Acaster

You're in so much trouble.

Rick Astley

Never skip dessert and even if I'm not really in the mood for one, I'm definitely the person at the table. When everyone's, sort of, going, 'No, no, I don't really want a dessert.' I'm like, 'Bollocks.' And I order something for the table. So, we've got to order at least one or two.

James Acaster

So, what's your choice?

Rick Astley

I've gone for Tiramisu and I know-, I can feel people at home going, 'Hmm, how novel.' But I, kind of, think it's like, a good Tiramisu-, do you like dessert?

Ed Gamble

I do. I really like dessert. I'm more of a starters guy.



Rick Astley

Okay.

Ed Gamble

I'm more of a savoury guy but I will, you know? If I'm out with this guy I'm having dessert because we're all having dessert.

James Acaster

And, sometimes he doesn't and he gets shouted at.

Rick Astley

A good Tiramisu is a pretty amazing wonderful thing. And, again, that's probably one of the first desserts I would have eaten-, I don't think I had it as a kid. I don't think we-, I don't think I went to many Italian restaurants before I was 21. I might have done in London once or twice, do you know what I mean? So, Tiramisu was a bit of a, sort of, like, 'What is that?' And, then I think it's just become, 'A good one is amazing.' It really is amazing.

James Acaster

I had the best one of my life, recently.

Ed Gamble

So, did I. You first?

James Acaster

At different places.

Rick Astley

Oh. That's weird.

James Acaster

Bristol. A place called Cor, C-o-r.

Rick Astley

Oh, right.

James Acaster

Did a Sicilian-style Tiramisu where instead of sponge fingers they used panettone.

Rick Astley

Oh.

James Acaster

I've said it on the podcast before, I don't know what order it's going to come out in. But, I'm going to keep saying it every time Tiramisu comes up because it was like Christmas pudding Tiramisu. It was



incredible and it was only on the menu for one day as a special and I want to try and bully the restaurant into having it permanently on the menu. So, the more I say it on the podcast, the more people are going to go in and ask for it and hopefully, I can throw my weight around and make that happen. Because it was one of the best desserts I've ever had anywhere, definitely the best Tiramisu I've ever had.

Rick Astley

Wow.

James Acaster

It drove me crazy.

Ed Gamble

Mine was in Manchester.

Rick Astley

Oh really?

Ed Gamble

New restaurant called Skof. Brilliant chef called Tom Barnes, just opened. Insanely, like, wonderful tasting menu and at the end, like you're so used to all of these beautifully put-together things on the tasting menu, they just serve you up, like, a big helping of this Tiramisu that he used to make for his dad, like, just before his dad passed. So, it's like it means so much when he comes to the table and explains that. And, it's just-, I think the cream is infused with coffee as well so it's just got that coffee hit. Oh my God.

James Acaster

I can't wait.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

One of the things I love and I, kind of, touched on it a little bit, is when you go somewhere and they are incredible. And, they can do all the, kind of, like almost chemistry stuff but they can still relate to the fact that fish fingers are pretty good. So, if we could invent the fish finger again or, like Heston Blumenthal does mad things, doesn't he? But even, you could go somewhere and they go, 'Well, it's a Tiramisu but it's got that in it.' Or, 'It's got that in it.' Do you know what I mean? Whichever one we talked about just then but it's like, it is that and maybe there are purists who say, 'No a Tiramisu should only ever be this.'

Ed Gamble

Yes.



Rick Astley

I get that as well, but I just think you guys sound like you go to a lot of high end-,

Ed Gamble

Now and again. But, you know, not all of the time. I think-,

James Acaster

Yes, but definitely more since doing this podcast.

Rick Astley

Right.

James Acaster

And getting into that more. But, yes, we're not going all the time. But when we do it's-,

Rick Astley

Yes.

James Acaster

They're pretty much, especially because we're doing this podcast, your brain is automatically on record.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

And you're like, 'Right what am I eating? What do I love.'

Ed Gamble

Can't wait to talk about that. Yes.

James Acaster

And, yes, you remember it even more. And I'm going to that place that Ed just said soon. So, I'm very much looking forward to that.

Rick Astley

The one in Manchester you mean?

James Acaster

Yes.

Rick Astley

Oh, right.



James Acaster

I'm bringing my dad with me.

Rick Astley

Oh brilliant.

James Acaster

That's his favourite dessert is tiramisu.

Rick Astley

Oh right.

James Acaster

And Ed says it's the best tiramisu he's ever had.

Rick Astley

Fantastic.

James Acaster

So, I'm very much looking forward to just watching my dad while he eats that and says that it's buttery or whatever.

Rick Astley

And he can't have the one in Bristol unless they put it back on the menu.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

They could do you a one-off.

James Acaster

Yes. So, unless I successfully bully them. Which I will successfully bully you. If you're listening to this, and I know you listen to this owner of Cor because you said when I went into the restaurant that you listen to Off Menu so I know that you're listening to this. Put it on the menu or I'm going to bully the hell out of you.

Ed Gamble

But your tiramisu that you want, classic tiramisu?

Rick Astley

Yes, I think I'd just go, I mean, generally speaking, I may have had one bad tiramisu in Italy but I can't even remember doing so. It's something that people have done for their kids and their kids and their kids. It's just forever isn't it?



Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

Someone's gran or grandad has always been making a tiramisu in Italy and it's just part of the fabric of Italian food and, sort of, Italian life to some degree. A bit like an espresso and that's one thing I was going to say because do you go in-, I mean, I can't finish today without having an espresso you see.

James Acaster

Absolutely.

Ed Gamble

I mean yes, I do.

James Acaster

We'll send you that.

Ed Gamble

I love coffee.

James Acaster

I do love coffee at the end of a meal. Every now and again if I've had a very special meal and we've maybe added a few little bits and bobs here and that, maybe if we've started-, if someone has the good idea of starting with cocktails and we all have a Martini or whatever at the top. Usually, by the end you've done a few special things and I think having an idea to have a coffee at the end is pretty great.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

Rick Astley

Yes, I just love it. I, kind of, think it's, there's just something about it I think.

Ed Gamble

Rounds it off.

Rick Astley

Yes.

Ed Gamble

Puts a full stop on it.

Rick Astley

It does. And again I think anyone who likes coffee is, you know, we've all gone past that thing of crap coffee, kind of, thing. Do you know what I mean? It does infuriate me a tiny bit sometimes how



expensive a coffee can be. And again, I don't know whether again they still do this but in Italy, it always used to be you couldn't pay more than a euro for one.

Ed Gamble

Right.

Rick Astley

If you stood at the bar and ordered an espresso, they weren't legally allowed to charge you more than a euro. Which I thought was pretty amazing really. It's kind of a-

Ed Gamble

You do need to, like, neck it and leave right? Is that the vibe?

Rick Astley

Well yes.

James Acaster

Is that true? When people say people have to accept stamps as legal tender. Is that a real thing?

Rick Astley

No, it was a real thing.

James Acaster

And they charge you more than-

Rick Astley

No, it was a real thing. So, even if you went into, like, a five star hotel or what have you in Rome or wherever. And went into the bar area and said, 'Can I have an espresso,' and stood there. I don't think they were able to charge you more than a euro for it, I think.

James Acaster

We won't charge you anything for this espresso, it's the dream-

Rick Astley

Thank you.

James Acaster

Or we'll charge you €1 if it makes you feel better.

Rick Astley

Charge me a euro, yes.

James Acaster

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



Rick Astley

Lovely.

James Acaster

You would like still tap water, you would like Italian bread with olive oil.

Rick Astley

Yes.

James Acaster

Starter, the swordfish carpaccio.

Ed Gamble

Tricky one.

James Acaster

That's the one I struggled with is the word swordfish. Main course, spaghetti al vongole with bottarga.

Rick Astley

Yes.

James Acaster

Side dish of rocket and parmesan.

Rick Astley

Yes.

James Acaster

Your drink you'd like an Antinori Chardonnay. And dessert, a tiramisu followed by an espresso. And, of course, I will send over a block of parmesan for your wife.

Rick Astley

Thank you. She'd appreciate that big time.

Ed Gamble

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

Rick Astley

My absolute pleasure. Thank you.

James Acaster

Thank you, Rick.



Rick Astley

I've enjoyed it, thank you.

Ed Gamble

Well, there we are James, the lovely Rick Astley.

James Acaster

Thank you so much Rick for coming in.

Ed Gamble

Thank you, Rick.

James Acaster

What a pleasure. What a lovely menu as well.

Ed Gamble

Lovely menu. And that's what I meant when I said he dipped his toe into the world of food and drink.

James Acaster

Yes.

Ed Gamble

He has bars.

James Acaster

He has bars.

Ed Gamble

Very nice bars as well actually.

James Acaster

Yes. Get yourself along there.

Ed Gamble

Yes, very nice. Good beers.

James Acaster

Have a crisp pint.

Ed Gamble

Have a crisp pint, yes, please.



James Acaster

Yes. And I would say, never walk past one of those bars, always go in. And that reminds me of the book 'Never' that's out.

Ed Gamble

Yes, very good.

James Acaster

The autobiography of Rick Astley that comes out tomorrow.

Ed Gamble

That was less good than in the actual interview. That was less of a good link than it was in the actual interview.

James Acaster

Well, I got my confidence up about segues.

Ed Gamble

Yes, it did. See that's when you're at your worst when your confidence is up.

James Acaster

Yes. Never is out on 10th October.

Ed Gamble

Published by Macmillan. Go and grab your copy of 'Never.'

James Acaster

So it'll be out now most likely for most of you when you listen to this.

Ed Gamble

Yes. If you're listening to this, as assumed whenever we say things like that, if you're listening to this on the day of release-,

James Acaster

On the day of release.

Ed Gamble

That's when time happens. And of course, Rick did not say, '7Up.'

James Acaster

Thank you for not saying-,

Ed Gamble

Never going to give him 7Up.



James Acaster

We were never going to give you 7Up.

Ed Gamble

I'm back on tour doing my tour, 'Hot Diggity Dog,' going to lots of different places, edgamble.co.uk for tickets. Doing another big London show in November. If you've not seen the show so far come and see me in the London Palladium in November.

James Acaster

That's my boy. It's my favourite show of Ed's.

Ed Gamble

Thank you, James.

James Acaster

I absolutely loved it and I've consistently laugh my head off every time I see Ed Gamble so that is saying something.

Ed Gamble

Bless you.

James Acaster

Ghostbusters Frozen Empire is available to stream on demand.

Ed Gamble

But remember if you are watching it online don't cross the streams.

James Acaster

Don't cross the steams. Oh, good. Slimer's still advertising it. I'm still seeing Slimer on billboards, posters. That guy he's, he's at the grindstone.

Ed Gamble

Yes, he really is. He's like Rick Astley after he released his first single.

James Acaster

The rest of us have moved on from it ages ago, Slimer is absolutely-,

Ed Gamble

Yes, but what other projects has he got going on? Nothing?

James Acaster

Yes. To be fair to him, I've got to send him a little something.



Ed Gamble

What's he going to do? He keeps sliming people.

James Acaster

Yes. So, I thought I better promote it.

Ed Gamble

Yes. Imagine Slimer in a different film.

James Acaster

Well. He goes to auditions apparently.

Ed Gamble

Yes.

James Acaster

Never gets it.

Ed Gamble

They always end in slime.

James Acaster

Always end in slime.

Ed Gamble

See you next week.

James Acaster

See you next week.