

# widget

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Chatham ON's 13 Coolest Toilets  
Meet Germany's Goulash King  
Bug Cheese: Fad Or Fab?

## Food & Travel

Widget explores the world of food and travel – just kidding, what even is travel, we're all stuck on our couches waiting out a global pandemic, wheeeee!



Mischievous Rudolf, Editor in Chief

## **Masked Head**

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## **Table Of Incompetence**

### **HOW MANY FOODS ARE THERE? NO, REALLY, HOW MANY?**

One? A billion? Two? We sent a counting expert, who knows literally all the numbers, to the store to count the foods. The answer will sicken you.

*Read More ... 1? 1,000,000,000? 2?*

### **TRAVEL TIPS ON A BUDGET AND ALSO, YOU HATE TRAVELLING**

Have no money and hate travelling? We've got just the travel tips for you. Ever tried getting in a garbage can and rolling down a hill? Do it! Now!

*Read More ... 104.13*

### **WE RANK THE 17 BEST DAIRY QUEEN CHEESEBURGERS**

We ordered and ate 9,000 cheeseburgers from our local Dairy Queen. It wasn't easy, but we've identified which 17 of them were best.

*Read More ... 🍔 🍔*

### **WHICH COUNTRY IS FRANCE AGAIN?**

Is it Germany or the other one?

*Read More ... Um?*

### **ARE YOU STILL READING THESE FAKE HEADLINES?**

Another asinine joke about food/travel goes here, then. Maybe something about a diarrhea-plane?

*Read More ... ABC*



# Widget Eat World

In this issue, let us take you to the majestic pizza rivers of Fartuccine, Italia; the suppurating donut mounds of Hamilton, Ontario; and the sweltering child-pits of Washington, DC, where that nation's élite come to feast. Yes, Widget takes you on a globe-trotting, orifice-filling survey of food and travel.

**W**hat is food? What is travel? And while were on the topic, hell, what are a lot of things? What is anacrusis? What is pandiculation? What is Impossibilism? And finally, what are food and travel?

These are all perfect questions. In all our travels, during which we ate a bunch of food, these are the best questions of all. For you see, travel is when you go around, and food is you eat it.

Widget are connoisseurs of food and travel. We taught Anthony Bourdain everything he knows, other than the food and travel stuff, which he picked up somewhere else.

Sam first rose to prominence in the comedy writing world when he completed the world's stupidest voyage of the Iberian Peninsula, while nude and in an inner tube and eating a garbage bag full of Halloween candy. King Spain the XX and Queen Portugal the XX honoured him with a banquet, where Sam supped on Spain's finest

gummy worms, and the esteemed monarchs did a little dance and then performed the ritual where they line up on opposite walls and ram into each other with their bare heads, and their heads cracked open and their brains exploded. This was Sam's introduction to food and travel and he's never looked back. Except at his butt when it does a stink.

Janet, too, is no stranger to food and travel. She once hijacked a plane to fly her to the most popular Jack In The Box in El Paso, for they do not have such delicacies in her barren homeland of Winnipeg MB, and she had a hankering for an XL Salsa Shake, Extra Chunky and a Soopa-Doo-pa Rat Chalupa and wouldn't take 'no' or 'stand down' for an answer – of course, neither of these are items they sell or foods that exist, but once she sets her mind to something...

So you see, Widget understand the importance of food and travel. One gives you calories and the other, somewhere to go I guess. But neither one is pandiculation, so actually, they suck.

# STUDY ABROAD THIS SEMESTER, BUT PLEASE IGNORE THEIR UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM AND LACK OF MASS SHOOTINGS

**Functionally Dead** is a leftist comedy and culture 'zine that publishes brand new issues of topical, irreverent satire bi-monthly. You can help support them by subscribing to their Patreon at [patreon.com/funcdead](https://patreon.com/funcdead). Functionally Dead recommends, "The video game Disco Elysium, the podcasts Champagne Sharks and Citations Needed, the streaming service MeansTV, the book Why I Am Not a Feminist: A Feminist Manifesto by Jessa Crispin," and add, "Please kick into our Patreon if you can to help support leftist writers and artists!"  
w: [functionallydead.com](https://functionallydead.com); @FuncDeadZine (tw; fb; ig)

**U**ndergraduates, welcome back to the 2021 spring semester! We know this past year has been challenging, so we appreciate that none of you took a gap year to stop the money faucet from flowing into our grubby little fingers. By coming back for classes, you entrusted us with your health, safety, and most importantly, your tuition money. And for that, we thank you.

During the past year, we had the opportunity to adjust our courses to reflect the "new normal" we find ourselves in. Unfortunately, we wasted that time counting the millions that were rolling into the hedge fund we ostensibly market as a school, so everything is pretty much the same. But there's still some good news: with a horrifically botched COVID-19 vaccine rollout and an international academic partnership that ensures we cash in wherever you are, now is the perfect time to "a-broaden" your horizons!

Studying abroad is a valuable experience for any student. It expands your worldview and introduces you to so many ideas that American political discourse insists are impossible fantasies, like universal healthcare, a minimum wage you can actually live off of, and secondary schools where half the graduating class hasn't been gunned down in a mass shooting or overdosed on prescription painkillers. When the semester is over, it's our hope that you return home with these deep cultural experiences and then completely disregard them. Check your new-found perspectives on how a healthy society operates at the door, but feel free to hang onto that new-found love of espresso! Caffeine is the only way you'll make it working 90 hours a week at a law firm to give ExxonMobil the legal framework to frack the planet into extinction while your boss calls you "toots" regardless of your gender.

Studying abroad also allows you to become a more well-rounded person, exposing yourself to art, music, literature, and culture that simply don't exist in the States because we don't value those things at all. As you take in an experimental play or spend a lazy Sunday wandering around a museum, you'll be fascinated that other countries seem to provide for their citizens rather than stockpiling fighter jets for the impending water wars. You might not know it now, but it's the little things that will come in handy when you're back home working seven different gig-economy jobs to pay off your eighty-five thousand dollars in student loans. We've found









that our graduates make more money in tips at UberEats if they know how to pronounce “pomme frites.”

If the idea of spending a semester overseas overwhelms you, relax! While you will undoubtedly ask yourself questions like, “How come the Japanese don’t have a word for ‘co-pay,’” “Why does no one in the the UK worry about the cost of an ambulance,” and “I’ve been at this mall in Germany for three hours—how come I haven’t heard gunshots,” you’ll quickly acclimate to their superior way of doing things. While it may initially seem strange that workers in France seem to understand the value of withholding their labor to receive a liveable wage or that McDonald’s employees in Denmark have unlimited sick days, you’ll come to understand that their society is just set up better than ours. That’s why you’re studying abroad—to get a taste of what life could be like before returning home to a place that’s far, far worse. There is so much to learn, and also, so much to ignore. And that part is essential. Don’t you dare try to bring *those* values home in your carry-on, next to your Oktoberfest keychain and half-eaten bag of magic mushrooms (*wink wink*)!

While the aforementioned countries are some of the more popular study-abroad destinations, don’t sleep on India, Bangladesh, or Pakistan. Spending a semester in a less-visited region offers you the opportunity to learn about America’s unique position as the root cause of so much of the world’s oppression, poverty, and pain. It’s one thing to read about how companies like Nike and Nestlé exploit children to save a few dollars in their supply chain, but it’s quite another to see it up close and in person. Spending some time abroad will open your eyes and change





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*Studying abroad is a valuable experience for any student. It expands your worldview and introduces you to so many ideas that American political discourse insists are impossible fantasies, like universal health-care, a minimum wage you can actually live off of, and secondary schools where half the graduating class hasn't been gunned down in a mass shooting or overdosed on prescription painkillers. When the semester is over, it's our hope that you return home with these deep cultural experiences and then completely disregard them.*

you in a way that can only be reversed over the course of the plane ride back home by pounding Xanax and watching *Sex and the City 2* on loop. They say you can't un-ring a bell, but the thousands of graduates who have gone on to work for the CIA disagree!

As much fun as you'll have overseas, eventually the semester will end, and it will be time to come home to the hellscape that made you the ugly American you are. But no matter the sneaking suspicion you have that capitalism gave you a raw deal, you'll always look back fondly on your semester abroad, especially when you're begging your former co-workers to kick in a few bucks for your GoFundMe. Tough break, looks like Shelly in Accounting got cancer first, so people are a bit strapped right now...






# HELLO MUDDAH, HELLO FADDAH – YOU RUINED MY LIFE

**Patrick Coyne** (he/him) is a comedy writer from Philadelphia. His work has appeared on [thehardtimes.net](http://thehardtimes.net), [mcsweeneys.net](http://mcsweeneys.net), [Nationallampoon.com](http://Nationallampoon.com), and [Cracked.com](http://Cracked.com). Patrick recommends, “I really wanted to sound smart here with my pick but if I’m being honest, the funniest and most enjoyable thing I’ve seen in the past 5 years or so is the Important Videos playlist on YouTube.”





**H**ello, Muddah. Hello, Faddah. Here I am at, my rock bottom. I know it's been years since we last spoke, and I'm sorry I threw up inside your foyah. I'm very drunk. But I can't put this off any longer. It's time you know the truth.

Muddah, Faddah, you ruined my life.

My torturous two weeks at the sleepaway hellscape known as Camp Grenada has weighed heavily on my mind for nigh-on three decades. And to this very day I'm dealing with the repercussions of that fateful summer.

Do you still remember that letter I wrote home from camp? The one you so coldly dismissed as that of a homesick, highly imaginative boy? Well, every single word of it – the freak hailstorm, the parasitic outbreak, the sadistic counselors, the frequent alligator attacks – was the truth. And all of that occurred just on the first day.

By the way, have you any idea just how revolting a malaria infection looks up close? Or how difficult it is to compete in a three-legged race when your partner has dengue fever? Because I do. Even now I still have a crippling fear of insects. At this point, I've lost count of how many sexual encounters, job interviews, and court arraignments I've ruined by insisting on wearing a safari-grade mosquito net hat.

But night time is the

hardest. Laying in my bunk at the halfway house causes painful flashbacks to the boy from camp with ptomaine poisoning. My poor bunkmate Tommy, shitting and puking himself to sleep after ingesting tainted pudgy pie. I remember how the kids at Grenada would tell ghost stories, not to scare ourselves, but to gleefully imagine an escaped serial killer with a hook hand slaughtering us all and ending our collective misery.

We also played baseball every once in a while, and that was bettah. But the rest of it? Terrible.

Weren't you at all suspicious when the bus that brought me home only had three kids on it? Where did you think Jeffrey Hardy and Leonard Skinnard went? At the very least you should have asked for a refund.

And of all the places to send me, why did you choose a summer camp in a tropical rainforest where malaria and alligators run wild? We're from Long Island. Surely there was a place upstate I could have gone instead.

I must look terrible, I know. Besides the drugs, booze, and compulsive ingesting of hydroxychloroquine and s'mores, I've never been able to step foot inside a gym. Too many bad memories of the camp's head coach declaring he "wants no sissies," and then forcing us to listen as he reads from "Ulysses." Which, I realize maybe doesn't sound as bad as all

the other stuff. But believe me, that book is, like, super boring.

My question for you is, why? Why did you send me away but allow my little bruddah to stay home?

I pleaded and begged. I told you I wouldn't make any more noise or mess the house with the other boys. I even promised I'd let Aunt Bertha hug and kiss me. Speaking of Aunt Bertha's hugs and kisses, let's unpack that trauma some other time. But still, you sent me away.

You ruined my life! And I'll never forgive you for that, you heartless muddahfuckahs.

I'm sorry, I'm just so overcome with emotion. Kindly disregard this drunken rant. Sorry, Muddah. Sorry, Faddah. And could I borrow 40 dollahs?









# FAQ:

## Our Back-of-the-Box Gazpacho Dip Recipe

**Nick Brigis** (he/him) is a comedian and writer based in New York City. His writing can be seen on Points and Case, Slackjaw, Robot Butt, and The Broadway Beat. Nick recommends, “TV: What We Do in The Shadows; Film: In & Of Itself; Book: Born Standing Up by Steve Martin.”  
@nickbrigis (tw; ig)

**T**he Red Oval Farms family thanks you for purchasing a box of our delicious and nutritious Mini Stoned Wheat Thins. While there’s no wrong way to enjoy them, we think they taste even better with this Gazpacho dip!

### WHAT INGREDIENTS DO I NEED?

This tasty dish is a cinch to make! Simply combine 1 chopped tomato, ½ cup chopped cucumbers, ½ cup chopped yellow peppers, ¼ cup chopped red onions, ¼ light italian dressing, ¼ tsp ground black pepper, and serve with your Red Oval Farms Mini Stoned Wheat Snack Crackers!

### HAS THIS RECIPE EVER CHANGED?

Nope! Mini Stoned Wheat Thins have been using this exact same recipe for over 15 years and counting!

### COULD WE EVER SEE A DIFFERENT RECIPE?

No. This is a perfect recipe and it pairs perfectly with this product.



**I DON'T HAVE THE RIGHT INGREDIENTS. CAN I MAKE SUBSTITUTIONS?**

See above.

**REALLY? SO THIS RECIPE CAN NEVER CHANGE?**

What part of 'no' are you still not getting? Well?

And hey, here's a thought: maybe you could try asking a question that isn't totally stupid? Surely you can muster that.

**WOAH! WHAT'S WITH ALL THE HOSTILITY?**

What did I just say about stupid questions?

**I DON'T THINK THAT'S HOW YOU SHOULD SPEAK TO YOUR CUSTOMERS.**

Lions don't concern themselves with the opinions of sheep.

**I'M JUST SAYING, LOTS OF OTHER CRACKER BRANDS ENCOURAGE EXPERIMENTATION!**

Listen up and listen good, 'cause I'm only going to say this once: You're so far out of your goddamn league right now it's embarrassing. I am ashamed for you and on behalf of every poor soul that knows you. You think we just pulled this shit out of a hat? Do you think Red Oval Farms is some two-bit operation? This ain't Pepperidge Farm, bud. This delectable, sensational salsa was scientifically engineered to bring out every single flavour note of our surprisingly complex cracker. It is not random nor is it subject to change.

We spent more man hours on this recipe than your teensy weensy brain could ever compute. So I suggest you stay in your lane and just dip the chip.

**CONGRATS, YOU JUST LOST A LOYAL CUSTOMER.**

This is king shit, you wouldn't understand.

**I DEMAND TO SPEAK TO YOUR BOSSES!**

Ooh, we got ourselves a tough guy, do we?! And what are you gonna tell them? How you disrespected the very fabric of our sacred institution? How you questioned our integrity and even worse, our commitment to taste? I will not – I *can* not – let you minimise the boundless efforts we put into providing the most optimal consumer experience possible. Congratulations, pal! You have now officially lost the right to consume this snack. I don't care how many unopened boxes you've got, to you they are now a forbidden treat. If you dare reach for a single cracker, so help me God, I will hunt you down and shove my arm down your gullet and retrieve it *myself*. And then, for my troubles, I'm gonna dump a few gallons of expired gazpacho dip all over your carpet.

**WHO CAN POSSIBLY STILL GIVE A SHIT ABOUT THE DAMN GAZPACHO RECIPE?!**

Mini. Stoned. Fucking. Wheat. Thins. That's who.









*Set your beau up for a lonely cowboy life when you dump his ass at this rustic retreat [Brush Creek Ranch, Wyoming]. Then blow off some steam with a shotgun or by practicing archery while envisioning your ex's face as the target. You could even blow his head off if you get good enough and claim you thought you'd booked the 'Westworld package' – plus, you can flee from the scene of the crime by horseback or snowmobile!*



## BEST LUXURY RESORTS TO BREAKUP WITH SOMEONE

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**Amber Gibson** (she/her) is a nomadic writer specializing in travel, food, wine and wellness. Her work has appeared in Conde Nast Traveler, Travel + Leisure, Bon Appétit and Robb Report. Amber recommends, “Promising Young Woman – first movie I watched in a theater since the pandemic began!”  
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**H**appy Valentine’s Day! Here are the best five-star places to go when you just need to end things. Who needs a boyfriend when you have a butler, a masseuse, and unlimited drinks?

### The Mulia, Bali

This world-class Indonesian resort is a

honeymoon favourite, as you yourself have mentioned to your partner dozens of times over the years. Though on the other hand, if you find yourself stuck with a useless tool who’s apparently incapable of committing, it could be a great place for breakups too. You can easily avoid an ex for the duration of your stay between the six separate pools and nine restaurants on property – where diners actually bother to wear a shirt without ketchup stains on it for





date night. Dinner won't even be awkward if you're at the same table, because the mind-blowing buffet with live-action cooking stations for Indonesian, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Chinese and European food will have your undivided attention, no matter how loud your ex is chewing. If you time it just right, you can finish your first course just as your ex is coming back to the table and get up for seconds, eating in shifts until you're both stuffed. It's infinitely better than any Las Vegas buffet and there's an entire room dedicated to dessert – the perfect place to eat your feelings after your ex leaves with one of the other diners.

## Brush Creek Ranch, Wyoming

Set your beau up for a lonely cowboy life when you dump his ass at this rustic retreat. Then blow off some steam with a shotgun or by practicing archery while envisioning your ex's face as the target. You could even blow his head off if you get good enough and claim you thought you'd booked the 'Westworld package' – plus, you can flee from the scene of the crime by horseback or snowmobile! There are more cows than people in Wyoming, so it might not be the best place to look for a rebound hookup, although the bartenders are cute in that rugged, Western way. Save a horse, ride a cowboy? Otherwise, self-medicate with grain-to-glass spirits distilled on property while counting the stars next to your own private bonfire. See those millions of stars? There are just as many people waiting for you to swipe right.

## The Ritz, Paris

You can use the famous line from *Casablanca*, "We'll always have Paris," after a melodramatic breakup speech and then devour all the chocolate bonbons and macarons the hotel left as a welcome amenity because you certainly

aren't obligated to share anymore. Coco Chanel lived at the Ritz for 35 years and she had some words of wisdom for the heartbroken – "I only drink Champagne on two occasions, when I am in love and when I am not," she said. So feel free to enjoy a glass (or heck, the whole bottle) by yourself in the elegant lobby. This is prime people-watching territory, so keep your eyes peeled for a fine Frenchman to give you those *petites morts* (yes, plural) that your ex could never manage. Just make sure you deactivate his room key, so he doesn't come back thinking his *ménage à trois* fantasies are coming true.

## Rosewood Mayakoba, Mexico

The suites and villas at this jungle paradise are spacious enough that your ex can sleep on the couch after the breakup. Spend all of your time focusing on self-love and self-care at the incredible Sense Spa. There's even a Marry Oneself Journey where the resort's on-staff Shaman helps convince you that marrying yourself isn't lonely and pathetic. At the very least, it's a step up from marrying the bozo you checked in with. After hours of pampering, you'll conclude with a commitment ceremony to yourself, inspired by pre-Hispanic wedding rituals. In the meantime, your ex might get eaten, or at least bitten, by a crocodile. There are quite a few of those swimming around in the lagoons throughout the property, along with bats, iguanas, sea turtles and spider monkeys. Some say the power of the ritual can even teach you to communicate with the wildlife and plot an assassination. Or is that counter to self-love?









# The Best New Restaurants

## That Opened and Closed in 2020

By **Functionally Dead**. See bio, p. 4.

2020 wasn't just an apocalyptic hellscape of heightened neoliberal politics by way of a soul-draining presidential election set against the backdrop of global pandemic-heightened mass suffering and death; it was also a terrific year for new restaurants!

Noshing reached new heights with palette ticklers and experience-driven eateries that ran the gamut from fine dining to food cart heaven. Unfortunately, many stayed home, and those who didn't, died, so the restaurants all closed.

Nevertheless, here are the best new restaurants that opened and shut in 2020:

**BABY BIRD — TRESTLE GLEN,  
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, \$\$\$\$**

The newest in new, few 2020 outfits could compete with the now defunct Baby Bird. The restaurant took its name from the round robin experimental style of food consumption—that is, you would order your dish of choice (the fish taco tartare is to die for) for the customer to your left, who would then chew up your meal and spit it into your hungry mouth. You would in turn do the same for the patron to your right, and so on down the line. Nothing said community like chewing en masse, but unfortunately, nothing said “contracting COVID” like it either. The



seven patrons Baby Bird was able to service in its two open hours tested positive for the coronavirus almost immediately, and only three of them had health insurance. Baby Bird, which turned out to be owned by several layers of shell companies, faced no consequences for their massive potential public health liability, and the ephemeral restaurateur made out with over \$17M from early investors. Fat cats of a feather do stick together and, as it turns out, spit-sharing cuisine *is* for the birds.

**COWBOY CARRY'S BAR AND GRILL**  
**— PRINCETON-ADJACENT, LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ, \$\$\$**

Great location, classic pub food, and a friendly, family atmosphere: what could go wrong? Unfortunately for Cowboy Carry's, everything. Cowboy Carry's Bar and Grill became a breeding ground for controversy in 2020 when a local newspaper reported that owner Carry Kalpern had donated over \$12,000 to the Republican party since 2012. When liberals threatened to boycott the family establishment, Cowboy Carry's unveiled a new menu item: the Black Lives Matter Black Angus Burger, free to BLM activists. When activists called the burger a "tacky and insensitive attempt to profit off of Black pain," Cowboy Carry's apologized and removed the burger. This was seen as a "cuck" move by certain libertarians, who boycotted the restaurant as part of the "Free Speech, No Free Lunch" campaign. Cowboy Carry's then brought back the burger and pledged to donate all proceeds to the local chapter of Black Lives Matter, but that only made Blue Lives Matter people upset, so

they introduced the Law and Order burger and donated the proceeds to the local police as well. Then, QAnon people assumed all these burgers were actually code for child sex trafficking and burned the restaurant to the ground. Luckily for opportunistic cynic Carry Kalpern, he has landed on his feet as head chef in the Biden/Harris White House, serving whatever their consultants claim is polling well.

**UNDER THE C — THE ITALIAN DISTRICT,**  
**BOSTON'S NORTH END, \$\$\$**

Mario Cantone's debut Italian gastro pub answers the question, "Can I really eat pasta in a hot tub with tiny Venetian gondolas featuring different sauces floating all around me?" The answer, sadly, is "no, because we're closed." What Under The C now lacks in being a viable business, it more than made up for in creative dining. Patrons were encouraged to check their clothing at the door in exchange for speedos featuring the word *Mange!* right on the crotch. They were then shown to their "table"—a boiling community hot tub filling the premises. Even the open-concept kitchen resided at the far end of the human hot bowl, utilizing the powerful jets to deliver meals. If you were lucky, Mario would be in *'la casata,'* making bubbles *and* laughter. We salute Under The C, raising our glass in a warm *ciao* hello and an immediate *ciao* goodbye.

**IN AND OUT BURGER — BUSHWICK,**  
**BROOKLYN, NEW YORK, \$**

This promising and grammatically correct American-fare eatery should have been a smash hit, but was sadly a victim of compounded bureaucracy. In AND Out Burger had a simple concept: mouth-watering burgers and fries eaten inside a plastic zorb-like dining pod that is, in fact, outside! Like a luxury picnic of the future, it should have fit right in with all the pop-up, outdoor dining options that restaurants were forced to install overnight in order to survive. Unfortunately, in the original zoning documents, the In AND Out Burger pods qualified as *indoor* dining, so the burgeoning canteen was forced to install separate, smaller plastic zorb-like dining pods as outdoor options. The new pods were far too small to accommodate any party larger than one and acted practically as COVID-19 incubators. The extra expense and loss of capacity made it impossible to continue operations, especially after getting sued into the ground by the wildly popular and famously established California chain In-N-Out Burger.





SAVEUR DE VAPEUR – RIVER NORTH,  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, \$\$\$\$\$

This innovative take on French cuisine made headlines in February by earning itself a Michelin star in its first month, and by branding itself as the first ever entirely post-gastric food enterprise. Saveur de Vapeur was the first ultra-high end restaurant to offer a full tasting menu via vape, thanks to a partnership between Dominique Crenn and Juul. Foie gras may have been banned in Chicago, but foie gras *vapour* is A-OK! SdV quickly became a hotspot for celebrities like Post Malone, Sophie Turner, and Dennis Kucinich. Then came COVID-19. Not only was a lung-based greaseless spoon a bad business venture in the time of coronavirus, but all the dishes were served family-style. This deadly combination resulted in an astronomical 87% fatality rate for patrons who could trace both their exquisite dining experience and COVID-19 infection directly to SdV. The creators of SdV closed their doors for good in April 2020, but vow to return in the near-future as they work with AstraZeneca to ensure their cuisine vapour is not only COVID-safe, but also acts as a highly profitable vaccine.





# THE LEFTIST'S GUIDE TO DISNEYLAND

**Bethy Squires** (she/her) is a writer and rugmaker in Hollywood. She has provided labor for Drunk History, Vulture, Adam Ruins Everything, and The History of Swear Words on Netflix. Bethy recommends, 'Bimbo Summit' podcast, reruns of The Nanny on PlutoTV, Desperately Seeking Susan, 'Pooh for President' campaign ephemera, Confessions of a Yakuza by Junichi Saga."

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**S**o you're a leftist and a theme park fan. Yes, we exist! You have a unique ability to ruin any party by reciting upsetting factoids about which fast food brands use slavery tomatoes, which celebs come from generational wealth, and how we'll all be dead from cli-

mate collapse in 30 years. And yet you choose to spend some of those remaining 30 years eating intellectual property-shaped ice cream bars.

You're in a tough spot. Capitalism kills, and the Walt Disney Company may be the most capitalistic company to ever exist. But there is no denying

that sparkly lights are sparkly, and that Goofy is *truly* your best friend. So here are the do's and don'ts of turning off your brain for some of the most magical, unethical consumption there is to be had: The Leftist's Guide to Disneyland.



**DON'T THINK TOO HARD ABOUT  
UNCLE WALT'S VIEWS ON UNIONS**

The Disney parks were created in part because Walt Disney was sick of his animation workers unionizing. Walt thought of himself as a Benevolent Daddy to his workers. And when they tried to collectively bargain for better pay, he kinda lost it. Worse than the "my subs have unionized" reddit guy. Hollywood was a union town, so Walt decided to make his own town, dammit! One where the streets smell like fresh baked cookies, drinking is banned, and employment is at-will. So push all of that knowledge deep down inside, like at the bottom of the Seven Dwarfs' mine, when you walk down Main Street. DO look up photos of the guillotine animators brought to their strike in 1941, because it rocks.

**DO ADMIRE ALL THE PUBLIC  
TRANSPORTATION**

Walt Disney was the original NUMTOT. The boy was horny for trains! At Disneyland,

*Framed Roger Rabbit?* Disneyland's monorail was the first to run daily in America, and Walt wanted it to demonstrate how superior public transportation was to personal car ownership. Of course, now the company has a whole franchise dedicated to personal car ownership. But Cars Land slaps, so let's not get too maudlin.

**DO TRY TO FORGET HOW MANY  
NAZIS WERE INVOLVED IN MAKING  
THE MONORAIL**

Okay, but the monorail was made in partnership with a guy that maybe laundered money for the Nazis. Ignore that. Oh, and all of Tomorrowland was shepherded by Wernher von Braun, who developed the V-2 rocket. Ignore that too. And this isn't in Disneyland, but the guy who made the mosaics on Cinderella Castle was a leading Nazi interrogator. So, like, that's not great.

**DO THINK ABOUT THE CAST  
MEMBERS IN THOSE CHARACTER**

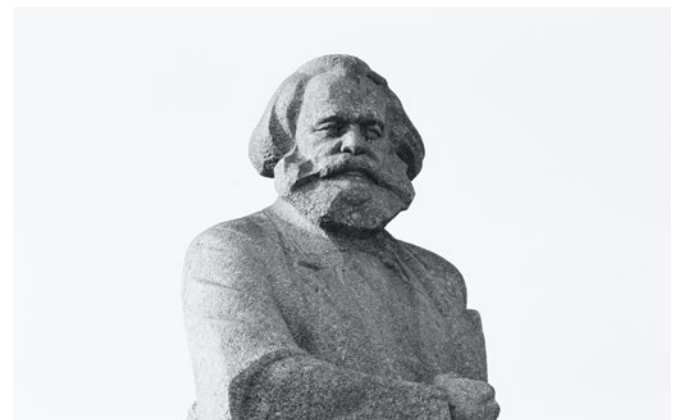
VP of Suing Daycares for Unlicensed Murals, by all means, be a dick to Donald Duck.

**DON'T THINK TOO HARD ABOUT  
DOLE'S SPONSORSHIP OF THE EN-  
CHANTED TIKI ROOM**

If you thought the worst thing about the Enchanted Tiki Room was all the racist voices, or even the 'ooga booga' vibes re: Polynesian theology, you're wrong. It's that the attraction is now sponsored by Dole, the company that funded a coup to colonize Hawaii. The Dole Whip is vegan, though. So that's nice.

**DO TRY TO TRANSFORM YOUR  
HORROR INTO CAMP APPRECIATION**

*Hmm*, it seems like there's no escaping the grim knowledge of corporate greed that taints every ride and treat in this park. Oh well! Try and figure out how to find it funny. If you can adopt a love of the grotesque, then Disneyland's pleasures will triple. Possibly even quadruple. Even the parking garages are funny from that lens.



you can ride two trains and a monorail, as well as a riverboat, a ferry, and a horse-drawn trolley. They even have a ride in ToonTown commemorating Los Angeles' gorgeous, defunct public transit system. The very same one that was eradicated by Judge Doom, as depicted in the documentary *Who*

**COSTUMES**

Remember, there is a fellow worker behind that Pluto head. So be kind and be chill. Except sometimes it's a corporate higher-up. Everyone who works in Disney's corporate structure has to spend a week as an atmosphere character. So if you can be sure he's really the

They pay the city like a dollar a year for that land! Cast members are paid a pittance! One ride is minstrel show themed! Hell is full and all the sinners go to Disneyland! HahahahA-HAHAAHahahaa!

Oh, and bring your own water bottle.





# The 10 Best Spots To Sleep In The Denver Airport



**Jay Shingle** (he/him) is a comedy performer, musician, writer and content creator from Portland, OR. He is the creator of @ordinarypeplememes on Instagram, and he has shared stages with comedians like Sarah Squirm, DJ Douggpound, Brent Weinbach, and Creed Bratton. Jay recommends, “‘Office Hours’ Podcast with Tim Heidecker, DJ Douggpound, and Vic Berger; ‘Sol LeWitt, A Life of Ideas’ by Larry Bloom; PEN15 on Hulu; Entertainment, a film by Rick Alverson.”

w: [youtube.com/channel/UCYJUHB602CdQkA96sFY0rQ](https://youtube.com/channel/UCYJUHB602CdQkA96sFY0rQ);

@jayshinglefunny (tw); @ordinarypeplememes (ig)

**H**ere at Frontier Airlines, we are thrilled to call the Denver airport our home and hub. Famous for keeping our ticket costs low, we are proud to bring you the most minimal in-flight accommodations in the business, coupled with long overnight layovers, providing you the true DEN experience. True to our spirit of customer service, we have compiled a list of the best 10 spots to sleep in the Denver airport while serving one of our signature 8-12 hour overnight stays.

**1. IN THE CORNER UP AGAINST THE WALL ON THAT WEIRD STAFF-ONLY PLATFORM IN CONCOURSE A**

Situated above gates A13 and A14, this spacious platform provides some of the coziest overnight accommodations one can find. This airy, open-concept “apartment in the sky” has proven to be a hassle-free area to spend the night (make sure to tell the staff you’re with Frontier and leave a tip, and they will let you be). This platform also features water fountains for refreshment, as well as ample outlets to charge all your electronics.

**2. UNDER THE FRONTIER DESK AT GATE A7**

Once our desks and gates close, there is no loitering in the Frontier areas *\*wink*

*wink*. \* Our security team has explicitly been told to turn a blind eye to our A7 gate, offering you a coveted, single-serving private night’s stay, tucked away next to the fax machine. Tip: make sure to check for spiders before laying your head down!

**3. INSIDE YOUR BIG COAT**

Not into all the frills of our other spots? Do it your way with a classic poofy winter coat. Zip it all the way up, put the hood up, sink down inside, and you’re good for the night! Make sure to place your belongings either inside the coat with you, or nearby so they’re touching you. Enjoy those zipped-up zzz’s!

**4. THE FOURTH STALL ON THE LEFT FLANK OF THE MEN’S RESTROOM BETWEEN GATES A24 AND A26**

We’ve been able to successfully procure this stall over the past few years as a sanctuary for a much-needed night’s sleep. At the end of every business day, one of our technicians outfits the stall with a plush toilet cover, pillow, and a stack of travel magazines. This option is perfect for our travellers who appreciate privacy and a lockable door.



#### 5. AT THE BACK OF THE UNDERGROUND TRAIN

Are you the type that enjoys sleeping in cars on long road-trips or even on one of our flights? You might want to consider the back bench on the underground train at DEN. It is free, and the vibration from the train will surely be the relief your tired muscles need. Sleep like a baby as you're gently rocked back and forth between Concourses A and D, all night long.

#### 6. JUST INSIDE CAROUSELS 1-4 AT BAGGAGE CLAIM

For a truly unique experience with an inside look at the day-to-day operations of the airport, check out the carousels where travellers' luggage is returned to them. We operate on 1-4, and we outfit the inside of them with left-behind neck pillows for your comfort. Just make sure you're out before they become operational again the next morning. We would like to take this moment to honor traveler Sarah Jenkins who slept for too long on the belt, and was tragically 'sorted' onto multiple flights around the country.

#### 7. AN "OUTDOOR ADVENTURE" EXPERIENCE IN THE PARKED FRONTIER SHUTTLE

If you're the adventurous type and brave enough to embrace the elements, we highly suggest spending your layover in one of our parked shuttles, located in the ground transportation hangars just outside DEN. This spacious accommodation is perfect for families, or those who prefer a more "rugged" experience.

#### 8. A SECRET NIGHT'S STAY IN THE DENVER CHOPHOUSE & BREWERY KITCHEN

The A gates feature a wide selection of

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*For our thrill seekers, we recommend spending your overnight hours in the cargo hold inside the fuselage of one of our sitting planes.*

restaurants and bars and Denver Chophouse tops the chart as our favorite. If you can slyly position yourself near the gate when the final closer is leaving around 9 PM, you can quickly slide under, securing a closed space to stay for the night. Feeling hungry? Help yourself to the remnants of today's garden salad, or try looking for an old, unserved dinner roll.

#### 9. THE FUSELAGE OF ONE OF OUR GROUNDED AND INACTIVE PLANES

For our thrill seekers, we recommend spending your overnight hours in the cargo hold inside the fuselage of one of our sitting planes. This option is for fans of puzzles and tight spaces, and we would like to state that we are not liable for any accidents that may occur either to you or to other passengers' luggage. Please make sure to check updated flight schedules so you do not accidentally board a plane full of cadavers bound for the crematorium in Western Colorado.

#### 10. DIA CONTROL TOWER 2

Denver is of course situated on the majestic Rocky Mountains. What better way to enjoy your stay here than getting some climbing in – culminating in a majestic, 360-degree view from the DIA Control Tower overlooking the airport. Frontier Airlines is not responsible for injury nor criminal liability associated with climbing the tower to get some rest.









# A DEFINITIVE RANKING OF PLACES I'VE FAINTED

## (NOT COMPREHENSIVE)

**Marisa Winckowski** (she/her) is a writer from New York. Some of her work can be found on Filmatique.com, YuYuTV, and BurgeraDay.com. She won the New York Film Critics Circle Award for Student Film Criticism in 2017. She studied sketch at UCB and The Magnet and these days she writes for sketch teams at The Armory and BoogieManja- now virtually, of course. Follow Marisa on TikTok (@realgoodbread) and Letterboxd @tommywiseaum). Marisa recommends, "I watched Coyote Ugly for the first time a few weeks ago and it's my new favorite bad movie. Highly recommend." w: marisawinckowski.com; @marisawlol (ig)

I thought my low blood pressure would make my life-long dream of being a travel blogger impossible – but then I realized it's actually my biggest asset. For you cannot truly have an intimate understanding of a place until you've lain unconscious on its floor.

### LAST PLACE: THE ROOF OF MY APARTMENT BUILDING.

Why was I all the way up on the roof? Good question! Getting high with my friends. Six floors high. Also with weed.

Inhospitably cold, damp and dirty. Not ideal for sitting and smoking, let alone fainting and not smoking. And dangerous! Imagine if I'd been standing

a mere 15 feet to the left. When fainting, try to start out as close to the ground as you can – avoid heights!

My friends weren't much help because they were, again, very high.

A thoroughly unpleasant experience, would not recommend it to anyone.

*Comfort Level: Low.*

*Embarrassment Level: High.*

*Overall: F*

### 5TH PLACE: THE METRO NORTH.

First, the perks of fainting on the Metro North: the seats are cushioned, the fall is much less risky, and the other passengers mostly leave you alone – they're



used to this sort of thing.

The negative side of fainting on a moving vehicle, as I'm sure you can imagine, is waking up somewhere other than your intended destination. For me, it was Connecticut at 3:30 in the morning. The cab ride home cost \$122, took two hours, and was spent entirely in silence.

*Comfort Level: Medium.*

*Embarrassment Level: High.*

*Overall: D*

**4TH PLACE: THE SUMMER CAMP  
WHERE I USED TO WORK.**

Rookie mistake: don't stand up too quickly after sitting cross-legged in 90-degree weather. The blood will rush out of your head and back into your legs, which will turn into spaghetti beneath you and send you to the ground.

No campers with me, which was good because I can't imagine they would've been very supportive, being six years old.

As far as landing surfaces go, hot concrete isn't my top choice. Then I was forced to march into my boss's office to

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*The negative side of fainting on a moving vehicle, as I'm sure you can imagine, is waking up somewhere other than your intended destination.*

say, 'Hello! I just collapsed and puked all over the blacktop.'" Embarrassing announcement, but I was allowed to go home early that day. Score!

*Comfort Level: Low.*

*Embarrassment Level: Medium.*

*Overall: C*

**3RD PLACE: MY OWN LIVING ROOM  
WHILE PLAYING DUNGEONS AND  
DRAGONS ON DISCORD.**

Physically, I was in my apartment by myself. Mentally, I was in the haunted forest of Neldorthyr with six companions. But my Elf Druid had a higher





constitution score than I do in the real world – she wouldn’t just collapse like that. So I’ll say it was just me alone in my living room. Not surrounded by bug-bears, luckily. Unfortunately I missed both the rug and the couch a few feet away and rolled a natural 2 against the hardwood floor.

*Comfort Level: Medium.*

*Embarrassment Level: High, because I abandoned my party in a cursed forest.*

*Overall: B*

## **2ND PLACE: MY GYNECOLOGIST’S EXAMINATION ROOM.**

I was in there for a routine check-up and hadn’t had a chance to eat lunch that day. It was cold, yes, and I didn’t love that I was wearing only a paper gown. But after fainting gently onto the cushioned exam table and then promptly throwing up into the palms of my hands, I was attended to by several nurses, one of whom handed me a juice box and some cheese crackers. Excellent service!





*Comfort Level: High.*

*Embarrassment Level: Medium.*

*Overall: B+*

**1ST PLACE: MY FRIEND'S  
PARENTS' HOUSE.**

If this were a ranking of couches I've come across in my life, this one would easily crack the top three. Soft and big enough to sleep on, which I had been doing for several days as I'd been feeding their cat while they were on va-

cation. After fainting on their spotless bathroom floor, I took some ice cream from the freezer and made my way over to the couch where their beautiful white cat fell asleep on my lap. And they were paying me for all of this! What a dream. Would love to faint there again someday!

*Comfort Level: High.*

*Embarrassment Level: Low.*

*Overall: A+*



## FRENCH FRY DOG LAYS IT DOWN

Welcome to Widget's most popular column, where a dog wearing a little French fry shirt, surrounded by French fries, gives you his take on things. He's not always popular, he's often controversial, but he *does* always make you think.

"Alright, fuckfaces, listen up. French Fry Dog here, so quit yappin'. Yeah, that's a dog pun. Fuck you!

"Today's topic is travel. Sure, I like to travel. It's cool as fuck! The fuckin' Pyramids, the god-damned Sydney Opera House, the fuckin'... the fuckin'... I dunno, the fuckin' tree at the end of the block I fuckin' piss on, who gives a fuck?

"(Hang on, I gotta eat some fries real quick...)

"(Num, num, num...)

"(Num, num, num...)

"You want me to lay it down? Here ya go: the point is, travel rocks, okay?

"*Oh, but French Fry Dog, I didn't think they let dogs have passports? How do you travel so much?*"

"Fuck off! Of course I have a passport. I have lotsa passports. More passports than you'll ever have. Why? You wanna know why?

"Cause I'm French Fry Dog!

"I'm a god-damn star!

"(Lemme just blast some fries here for a sec...)

"(Num, num, num...)

"(Num, num, num...)

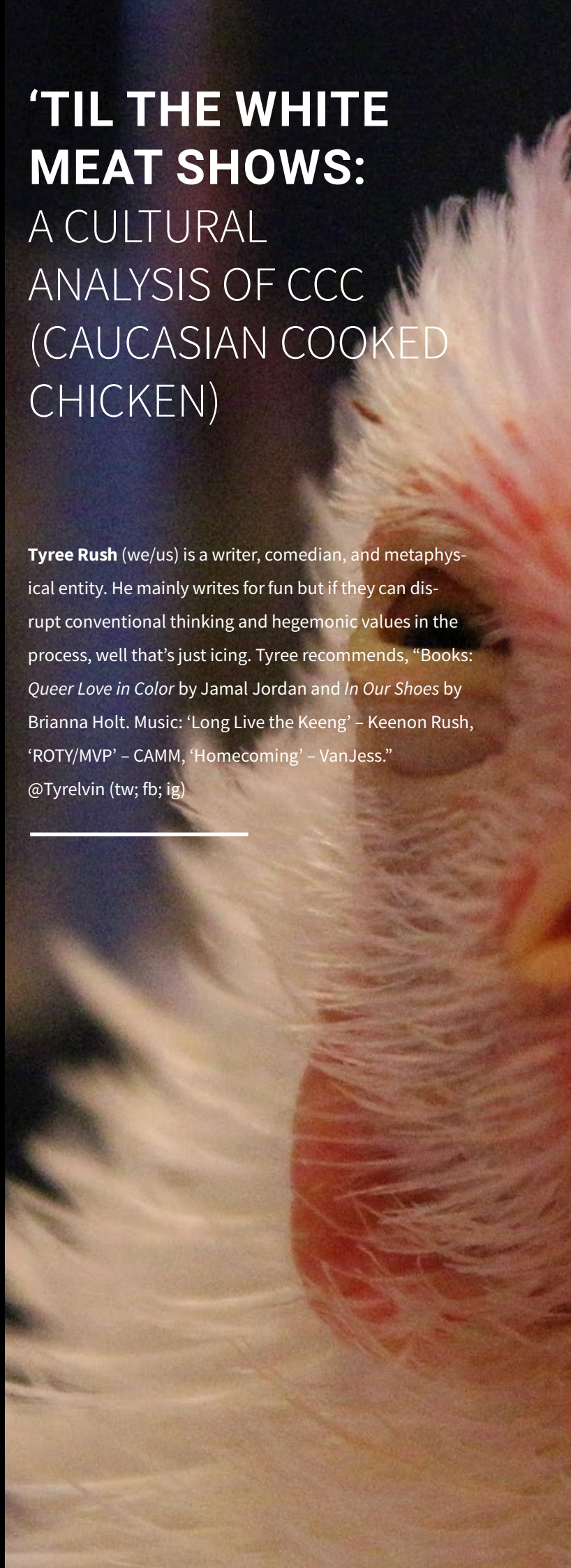
"So take it from French Fry Dog: shut the fuck up, get your stupid ass on a fuckin' plane, and see the fuckin' world.

"And one last word of advice: always keep yer fries *extra* salty! Bark it up, baby!"

## 'TIL THE WHITE MEAT SHOWS: A CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF CCC (CAUCASIAN COOKED CHICKEN)

**Tyree Rush** (we/us) is a writer, comedian, and metaphysical entity. He mainly writes for fun but if they can disrupt conventional thinking and hegemonic values in the process, well that's just icing. Tyree recommends, "Books: *Queer Love in Color* by Jamal Jordan and *In Our Shoes* by Brianna Holt. Music: 'Long Live the Keeng' – Keenon Rush, 'ROTY/MVP' – CAMM, 'Homecoming' – VanJess."

@Tyrelvin (tw; fb; ig)





**A**s a culinary anthropologist, I have always wondered: Why did Anthony Bourdain make his career trying food in foreign places when there is so much left to discover in the landscape of American cuisine? Even the simplest of our national dishes – a basic chicken recipe, for example – can offer insight into the various subcultures of the ‘Land of the Free’ and unearth facts about our history.

From fried chicken, to grilled chicken breasts in salad, to the hot dog at the county fair that was probably more chicken parts than anything else, chicken is a part of what it means to be American. However, for many Americans, there is disagreement over how to properly prepare poultry. The cookouts and potlucks of this nation have become too accustomed to chicken that is dry and bland. For a country that has branded itself as a melting pot of the many flavors of the world, it begs the question: why aren’t those flavors making it onto the chicken?

To better understand the root of this issue, I wanted to identify those responsible for pushing this pathetic poultry onto our plates. Surely it isn’t Black people, who have long made chicken so flavorful that it’s become a stereotype. Nor did I suspect Korean and Middle Eastern cooks, who are doing such amazing things with chicken that you can find their popular food stands across the country.

What my research proves is that the *only* culture consistently fucking up this delectable livestock is the Whites – despite the fact chicken was originally brought to the States by European settlers, many of whom were ostensibly questing for spice. What can we glean about White culture from how it makes its mediocre meat? And why has this flavorlessness persisted so long in direct resistance to the ‘cultural appropriation’ phenomenon that has also defined American Whiteness?

In order to understand the Caucasian culinary crisis, I looked to a recently uncovered recipe for Caucasian Cooked Chicken dating back to the 15th century (spelling modernised). In this codex, I hope to find elements that better articulate the rich history of this poorly seasoned bird.

## Caucasian Cooked Chicken

*Serves 4*

1. Slaughter one live chicken, severing the neck and allowing the blood to drain out fully
2. While it drains, apply for a government loan for “cultural exploration.”
3. Remove feathers from chicken.
4. Assemble a crew of no less than 90 sturdy men; take to the seas on an expedition for foreign spices.
5. Violently colonize Southeast Asia, Africa, and any other continent you stumble upon in the name of Christianity, to taste.
6. Liberally plunder and pilfer these uncharted territories, while robbing the Indigenous people of their land, resources, culture, and personhood. Continue for 500 years, or until they reach your desired level of colonization.
7. “Discover” and give nomenclature to the herbs and spices you acquire.
8. If desired, import other people to work the stolen lands and build an entire economy around both the imported (free) labor and commercialized trade of those discovered spices.
9. *NEVER* let those spices anywhere near the chicken.
10. Add 1/2 tsp of salt and 1 tsp of black pepper. (Extremely Optional).
11. Cook over an open flame oven in a cast iron pan for about an hour.
12. Once the bird has reached an even taupe color, it is ready to be eaten.

This seemingly ordinary recipe indicates that the white custom of ‘foul fowl’ has little to do with the chicken or even the spices they neglect to use. It is a gesture of remembrance, similar to the eating of unleavened bread at Passover or chitterlings in Black households during large family gatherings. Truly, Caucasian Cooked Chicken pays homage to the history that brought this group to America.





# FROM HERE TO IMMUNITY

## The Dos and Don'ts of Abusing Your Wealth to Skip the Vaccination Queue

By **Functionally Dead**. See bio, p. 4.

**D**ear followers, thank you for sticking with me throughout what has officially been my third-least traveled year since I began dictating this blog to my step-godson, Julian. I was supposed to see Majorca, Budapest, and Dubai this year, and while I did still go to those places, we can all agree it wasn't quite as exciting as I imagine you wish it had been for me.

I'm writing today because I recently went on a jaunt to Niagara Falls, NY! I'll be honest, it was not my most glamorous adventure to date, but I brought home the grandest souvenir... my first *and second* COVID-19 vaccinations (thanks in large part to my former high school beau-turned-Wegmans pharmacist, Fester, who I promised a mouth handjob to in exchange for immunity).

Some will say "but Renée, you've been in your late 30s for over a decade. Shouldn't you wait your turn?" To this I kindly respond "no." I have always believed that if you have the means, it is *vital* that you take whatever could be yours if you're willing to go out of your way to make sure other people cannot have it. That's why I've compiled some simple dos and don'ts for your eventual vaxx vacay (vaxxay?):

### DO: KEEP A LOW PROFILE

Even in 2021, it still isn't socially accept-

able to abuse your privilege to travel out of state to get a vaccination, as every state has workers who put themselves at risk every day to keep society running. People maintain that these individuals should have priority, but the thing I find troubling is that I do not. Some will judge you for crossing state lines to get vaccinated. Others will accuse you of furthering inequality, as if this were somehow a bad thing. If anyone in town asks where you live while you're on a post-vaccine stroll, say "just over yonder, by the public school. Terrible what happened there." (As a wealthy person you may not be aware of this, but apparently every single public school in this country is marred by tragedy. Who knew?!)

### DON'T: FLAG DOWN A LOCAL REPORTER DURING A LIVE BROADCAST TO SAY "I SUCKED OFF A SHORT KING TO GET MY COVID VACCINE EARLY"

While you may feel the need to publicly justify your decision to get the vaccine ahead of a healthcare worker, retail employee, or teacher, this is not the way to do it. Luckily, I was able to fix this unfortunate situation by saying "my son—he goes to that public school over there... I'm distraught!" They looked away in pity and I fled the scene in my armored orange Hummer.



**DO: CONTINUE TO WEAR A MASK**

Whether you are in between your first and second shots or you simply asked Fester to ‘double dip’ on your first trip (in exchange for his own ‘double dip’ – bring Listerine, by the way), COVID-19 immunity will take some time to build up in your system. Plus, you paid a *fortune* for this Gucci mask, and it’d be a shame if no one knew that.

**DON’T: DOUBLE DOWN ON THE APPARENTLY FALSE BELIEF THAT CASINOS ARE A MASK-FREE ZONE**

If you’re like me—and what I assume must be millions of Americans—you’ve been led to believe that coronavirus cannot thrive in a casino environment because ‘the house always wins.’ Or maybe you just *wanted* to believe since you were in the mood for martinis and craps.

Unfortunately, casinos take their mask policy far more seriously than Southwest Airlines or French Laundry (the restaurant where you and California governor Gavin Newsom shared a nine course tasting menu and—*gasp!*—a kiss), so keep the mask on for now.

**DO: GET A CAPPUCCINO AT THE LOCAL COFFEE SHOP**

I *loooove* to support mom-and-pops when I travel, even if it isn’t American Express Small Business Saturday! Ask the concierge at the hotel for a local

coffee recommendation. In Niagara, it was “Starbucks.” Be sure to thank each of the workers at the coffee shop and to tell them that their service is essential. And feel free to add that you’re an “ally” (a phrase Fester taught me) if they look queer to you.

**DON’T: SELL YOUR BLOOD AS “VACCINATED BLOOD”**

It may be tempting to capitalize on your newfound COVID-19 immunity. The savvy entrepreneur is always looking for opportunities to enrich themselves, after all. In a market where the COVID vaccine is in high demand, it feels natural to sell your blood to the highest bidder and profit off your vaxx access (vaxxcess?). Unfortunately, one runs into supply chain issues (the human body cannot physically produce the kiloliters of blood you have promised to those Saudi Arabian oil magnates). The solution? By setting up a series of shell companies registered in various islands owned by sex predators, the Saudis will never be able to find the person they sent the Bitcoin to!

*As a globe-traipsing troubadour, here’s what I’ve learned in my many galivants: COVID is not a hoax; but what is a hoax is thinking COVID relief will be fair, just and ethical. Well, I’m off to New Mexico to double-vaxx myself (they said that two masks are better than one, the same must be true of vaxes). Ciao!*



## Recipe Reviews By People Who **Didn't Follow the Recipe**



**Janine Annett's** (she/her) writing has appeared in the New York Times, McSweeney's Internet Tendency, and many other places. Her book "I am 'Why Do I Need Venmo?' Years Old" is coming out in 2021. Janine recommends, "I'm reading the book Priestdaddy by Patricia Lockwood now and I'm obsessed with it! It's so funny and smart." w: [janineannett.com](http://janineannett.com); @janineannett (tw); @janineoclock (ig)



## Slow Cooker Tomato Soup

★★★

I hate tomatoes, and I do not have a slow cooker. Therefore, I substituted butter-nut squash and made this in my micro-wave. I have to say, this tasted nothing like the recipe said it would. PS. I went to Harvard.

## Rustic Sourdough Bread

★

I gave up on my sourdough starter three months ago when it turned grey and started emitting a strange, high-pitch sound.

## Mashed Potatoes

★★

I used organic, heirloom potatoes from my local farmers' market instead of the Yukon Golds the recipe called for. If you're using supermarket potatoes, are you really even trying to make decent mashed potatoes or are you an absolute failure at life? I bet you live in your mom's basement.

## Chicken with Olives

★★★★★

Olives from a jar? Please. You really need to make your own olives, a fairly straightforward process if you're not afraid of using lye. I got chemical burns on most of the skin on my left pinky, but I don't really use that finger too much anyway, so personally I think it was worth the extra step.

## Easy Paella

★★★

Paella is a labor of love. It shouldn't be "easy"! That's the problem with Millennials, they think everything should be easy and comfortable, and that's why breakfast cereal is too much effort and sweatpants are now "joggers". Back in the '70s, making paella was a six-day-long process that involved the entire commune! Next time, I will also add less paprika.

## Skillet Brownies

★★

I baked these in a regular baking pan instead of a skillet and I added walnuts to the recipe. While the brownies were cooling, they disappeared – at first, I blamed the dog (who can't have chocolate!), but then I realized my sourdough starter seemed to be burping and had acquired a distinct chocolate-y odour. Is that normal?

## Sirloin Steak

★★★

Being a vegetarian, I substituted lentils instead and the results were just okay. Does anyone have a good recipe for seared tofu?

## Homemade Pizza

★

This recipe said to "feed" my sourdough starter before making the sourdough pizza crust, and I think that's where my problems started. When I went to look for my sourdough starter, it appeared to have grown sentient and was conversing with my Alexa device. It somehow ordered six pounds of broccoli, and I *hate* broccoli. Nevertheless, I might attempt to make a broccoli soup if I can find a good recipe here, because what else am I supposed to do with six pounds of broccoli?

## Macaroni and Cheese

★★★★★

I am allergic to dairy so I substituted cashew milk, but it turned out one of my guests was allergic to nuts. I'm not sure whether or not Bill liked it, it was hard to understand what he said about the dish after he went into anaphylactic shock, but I loved it and will be making it again for Bill's memorial service.

# I USED TO BE A SOURDOUGH STARTER

**Austin Bernhardt** (he/him) is a freelance copywriter and comedy writer currently at work on several pilots that will surely propel him to fame and stardom. Austin recommends, “Have you read Sam Lipsyte’s ‘The Ask’? Because it’s one of the funniest books ever written!” w: [austinbernhardt.com](http://austinbernhardt.com); @iambernhardt (tw)

Welcome to the back of the fridge, or as I like to call it, our own private Paree. (I find that Mr. Moldy Gruyere over there really sets the mood.) So, what’s your story, eh? Don’t tell me: Leftovers from last week, not quite good anymore, but not so bad they’re ready to throw you out?

Yessirree Bob, I’ve seen them all come and go back here, from spaghetti sauce you could put in a petri dish to avocados dry as jerky. They’ll chew you up in this business, that’s for sure. And if they don’t do that, they leave you back here to rot. Believe it or not, I used to be front-of-the-fridge material. Don’t give me that look, you old three-year-old sauerkraut, it’s true! Maybe you’ve even heard of me – the name’s Sourdough Starter.

It was way back in April 2020. Once the nudniks got tired of diddling themselves in quarantine, there was only one thing to do: bake. The only problem was all those Johnny-Come-Earlies who’d seen which way the wind was blowin’ and bought up all the yeast. That’s where I came in.

Sure, I had played bit parts in paltry little loaves from time to time, but all of a sudden this ball of cultured dough was thrust into the spotlight, and I don’t just mean getting mixed into a pizza for a bit of tang on Italian night. “Sour” was on the tip of everyone’s tongue, and once those recipes started hitting the web,





you better believe every Sally from San Fran to Saskatoon couldn't get enough of it. Little ol' me was getting mixed into waffles, cinnamon buns, even muffins, if you can believe it. I was the biggest thing since sliced bread – honey, I *was* sliced bread!

It was a magical time. After years of being stuck on the baking nerd circuit, being overshadowed by quickbreads and cakes, watching amateurs who couldn't even produce their own yeast



eclipse me, I was on the rise. Listicles! How-tos! The cover of the New York Flippin' Times! (OK sure, Sunday Styles, but a feature's a feature, kid.)

Of course, I knew it wouldn't last, couldn't last, but that doesn't mean I was prepared for the cruel meat pulverizer of fate to fall squarely on my tender, squishy body. Sure as Sunday, they turned against me. My old fermented friends, waiting in the wings, saw their chance and pounced. The headlines came, each as piercing as a paring knife: "Your Next Kitchen Project: Homemade Kimchi" (!); "Kombucha Is Our New Quarantine Obsession" (!!); "Now's the Time to Brew Your Own Beer" (!!!). How quickly they forgot the art, nay, *masterpieces* that I made possible: crusty miches, Danish Ryes, country loaves with a crumb so soft you could feed it to a baby. And now here I was, thrown out like yesteryear's cronut.

So here I sit, my poor little microbes wriggling around without a purpose or a prayer, waiting for the inevitable day the boys upstairs forget to feed me (my usual nosh, flour and water) and I mold over like that chicken piccata there. (Sorry, chicky, it's time to admit you've expired.)

Anyway, don't pity this smelly old lump too much. I suppose we all wind up in the same place in the end: that big ol' rotting compost heap in the sky. I'll try not to gum up the disposal for ya too much on my way out.

# CAN CHUCK E. CHEESE SAVE AMERICA?

**By Nevin Sharma** (he/him). “There is a treasure buried underneath the bus that stops at the bus stop by my house. If you want to know any more please meet me there tomorrow afternoon. If you want to know less, I’m sorry, we are past the point of no return.” Nevin recommends, “The Underground Railroad by Colson Whitehead (a book); Saftey Not Guaranteed (a movie); Survivor (a show); Weekday Downdate (my show! On Instagram!).” w: littlestorieswithanimalsonfridayafternoons.com; @nevinsharma (tw); @weekdaydowndate (ig)

**T**hink of a perfect moment.

A moment where you had no choice but to stop, step back in awe, and just say, “Wow.”

Mine occurred when I picked up a skeeball. The weight was perfectly distributed, the shape was perfectly spherical, the color was perfectly uniform. When the ball rolled, it rolled with such control and such smoothness I felt like the game had all of a sudden opened itself up to me and *only* me. I was calling my shots like Babe Ruth: 500! 5,000! 20! 20! 20! ...20 again! Boom. Boom. Boom. Right in the cup. It was sublime. Like I was playing skeeball for the very first time and also, somehow, like I had been dedicating my entire life to the game.

Perfect moments are rare, fleeting reminders of life at its best. Luckily, they aren’t hard to come by if only you know where to look. Like in an unassuming Chuck E. Cheese deep in the Appalachian Mountains – there, you might find America at its best.

Gene Santizza, 78, a Chuck E. Cheese franchisee for the past 40 years in the northern panhandle of West Virginia, is in the business of creating perfect moments. Taking life and infusing it with so much thought and attention to detail that the result to those experiencing it feels... magical.

“The people want it to be good, so I do it good,” Gene says, smiling from ear-to-ear underneath a bushy mustache, revealing laugh lines so deep and so pronounced they could only have been carved out of a life well lived.

I came to know Gene at a low point in my life both personally and professionally. Dumped by my girlfriend for waffling about the idea of having kids, and fired from my job as a clean-living advocate for kidding about the idea of having waffles, I found myself heading to a birthday party for a close friend’s child. The occasion felt like a poetic bottom, forced to eat wet, spongy, pizza amidst screaming children all in the world’s foremost safe-haven for demonic, anthropomorphic sewer animals.

When I arrived at the Chuck E. Cheese, in a decaying strip mall, I found it ironic that a place that went by the motto “Where A Kid Can Be A Kid” was sandwiched between a derelict Office Depot and the faded remnants of a Gumby’s Cigarette Depot that had long since relocated, likely to a less depressing part of town.







I opened the door to a cartoon rat's idea of a human child's playground expecting to be greeted by the stench of cheap yeast, sweaty children, and industrial plastic that has been barfed on and sprayed down so much it likely contains novel diseases waiting to be unleashed on the world.

But, to my surprise, that did not happen...

It was pristine.

It was beautiful.

It was buzzing.

Upon entering, the union between body, soul, and this Chuck E. Cheese was transcendent. Borders melted away. Existence, in its purest form.

Gene stood observing it all. A smile on his face belied the very real processing that was going on in his head at all times. What was lacking right now? Which table needed more attention? Has the increased humidity today caused the parmesan cheese to clump and congeal slightly, thus making it harder to shake, thus sullyng a patron's perfect experience? This kept Gene up at night.

Every inch of the space was accounted for. Every detail painstakingly managed and scrutinized. Every table, steady. Every chair, comfy. Every game, glitch-free. Every pizza, pepperoni. Every song, Pearl Jam. Everything, perfect.

I began apprenticing with Gene that very night and have continued my apprenticeship for coming up on 15 days now. It is the honor of my life to be studying under a true master. Gene puts up with me – he's learned my name and seems to acknowledge that I work here. Currently, I'm on crushed red-pepper duty. It's the only thing Gene trusts me with. 328 flakes of red pepper must be in each shaker when service starts. After I fill them up, Gene dumps each shaker and makes sure my count is correct. I'll admit, I'm usually wrong. I get too distracted, dreaming about the day when Gene will tell me with pride, "Now go check the napkins." I trust





“

*Late after service one night, Gene and I are sitting at a table recounting some of his early struggles. “The previous manager had been using real rats stacked on top of one another to play the Chuck E. Cheese mascot. He thought it was more authentic that way. Well, the rats escaped the suit one night and held the dining room hostage for hours. When they fired him, no one else on the crew wanted his job. I got picked because my name kind of rhymes with pizza.”*

Gene knows when that time will be right for me.

Late after service one night, Gene and I are sitting at a table recounting some of his early struggles. “The previous manager had been using real rats stacked on top of one another to play the Chuck E. Cheese mascot. He thought it was more authentic that way. Well, the rats escaped the suit one night and held the dining room hostage for hours. When they fired him, no one else on the crew wanted his job. I got picked because my name kind of rhymes with pizza.” Gene chuckles now, “So I took over and one day as I was sitting in the ball pit, moping, having a pity party, when I realized, ‘Gene, just make it good. You can just make it good.’ So I did that.”

At 78, Gene is aware that he can’t keep it up much longer. The only thing keeping Gene here for as long as it has is an ache in his heart that once he’s gone, his franchise will be gone soon thereafter. First Gumby’s, then Chuck E. Cheese, then... well, who knows about that Office Depot.

“If they just follow the blueprint, this building will never *not* be a Chuck E. Cheese...” Gene drifts off. The romantic in me assumes he’s thinking of soda guns or the ideal number of bumps on a basketball, but the actualist in me knows that Gene likely drifted off because of advanced age and mental decline.

So where do we go from here? After our late night talk, it seemed like Gene was asking himself the same question. He seemed restless, like he wanted to go home but I think he felt that more in a more metaphorical sense. He was thinking about his legacy. Where would America be without Chuck E. Cheese? Where would he be without Chuck E. Cheese? He looked at me again, with sorrow and hope:

“Just do it good. If you do it good, no one thinks you did anything at all. But you still have to do it... So go refill the crushed red peppers... I know you didn’t do that yet... I can’t go till you do it... Go now! Before the rats come back and steal the shakers again!”





*Some fans have tweeted us at @MondosGiganticSucklers to ask: why build a titty bar over an underground volcanic caldera? Here's the ugly truth: entrepreneurship means making big, bold choices. To achieve the "World's Largest" title, our property needed to be larger than Calvin's 70,000-Square-Foot Breastaurant and Computer Recycling Facility, as well as Clams 'n' Boobs, an 85,000-square-foot property in nearby Ontario County. We needed a massive plot of land, and we needed it on the cheap.*



## WE'RE SORRY FOR CONSTRUCTING THE **WORLD'S LARGEST TITTY BAR** OVER THIS UNDERGROUND VOLCANIC CALDERA

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**Lillian Stone** (she/her) is a Chicago-based humor writer covering food and sex. By day, she's a staff writer at The Takeout. By night, she's a headline and features contributor for The Onion and a regular ol' contributor for outlets like The New Yorker, MEL Magazine, Real Simple, Allure, McSweeney's Internet Tendency and Reductress. Lillian recommends, "I had a million people recommend Patricia Lockwood's 'Priestdaddy' before I read it. It is legitimately incredible. It's one of the funniest books I've ever read, and the way Lockwood uses language is nothing short of bananas. Also, highly recommend Boston Terriers and beagles. (I have one of each.)" w: lillianstone.com; @originalspinstr (tw; ig)

**T**o our beloved customers: We missed the mark on this one. Mistakes were made. From the whole team here at Mondo's Funky Nipple Bar, Grill, and Seasonal Ropes Course, we'd like to apologize for constructing the world's largest titty bar over this underground volcanic caldera. This week's eruption killed 37 large-breasted staffers, 112 loyal patrons,

and our mascot, Tommy Titty, a giant areola whose costume was advertised as entirely flameproof. But ultimately, we let you down—and that's the biggest tragedy of all.

We'll be the first to acknowledge that we really goofed here. While the massive injury and loss of life associated with this freak occurrence was almost entirely out of our control, we want to say: we're truly sorry, and we're willing





to do whatever it takes to regain your trust.

Some fans have tweeted us at @MondosGiganticSucklers to ask: why build a titty bar over an underground volcanic caldera? Here's the ugly truth: entrepreneurship means making big, bold choices. To achieve the "World's Largest" title, our property needed to be larger than Calvin's 70,000-Square-Foot Breastaurant and Computer Recycling Facility, as well as Clams 'n' Boobs, an 85,000-square-foot property in nearby Ontario County. We needed a massive plot of land, and we needed it on the cheap. That's how we ended up staking our claim directly atop a bubbling, churning natural hellscape instead of the slightly pricier, less-eruptive acreage a few miles east. This property was also geographically compatible with our signature Gazonga Lane Swinging Bridge, which we'll be rebuilding as soon as we can scrape the remaining human ash and viscera off of the rope railing.

No one is sorrier than us that this happened. Mondo's is a family, so when a server perishes while trying to use her considerable udders to paddle to safety through 16 feet of white-hot magma, well, we all feel it. When our in-house Sean Paul impersonator's last words are "Wowie wow wow, it sure is a hot one tonight," it hits us where it hurts. When a Mondo's customer is found burnt to a crisp in the Motorboat Arcade, still clutching a platter of Mondo's famous Ring-A-Ding-Dingers chicken fingers (now available grilled, fried, or smothered), we take it pretty hard.

We admit it: We were naive. Yes, we shrugged when the custodial staff forgot to water the lush ferns in the champagne room for a few months. Yes, we stocked the gift shop with highly flammable baby onesies that read "ALL-STAR NIPPLE HANDLER" without stopping to consider that the gift shop attendant would be left clinging to a honker-shaped ice luge in an attempt to escape a fiery grave. Yes, we screamed for our servers to roll out the birthday saddle and perform a mandatory Titty Two-Step even as the



flames began to lick the faux-plywood booths. Why? Because the customer is always right. Also because we didn't expect the servers' fringed pasties to form flaming tassels of death.

That's why we promise to be better. And that starts with rebuilding from the ground up in the exact same spot to preserve Mondo's unique landscape and also save a lot of money. To support the rebuild, we'll be raffling off our iconic Big Ol' Melon light fixture on social media using the hashtag #SaveMondos. Loved ones of the deceased can score an extra entry by posting a video of themselves doing the limbo on social media with the hashtags #LiveByTheBreast-DieByTheBreast and #BreastInPower.

Thank you, customers. Thank you for trusting us. Thank you for giving us this opportunity to do better. And thank you for standing by us, even as several victims remain encased in a layer of pyroclastic lava. With your support, we'll be dishing out another hefty serving of Boob Soup before the end of the fiscal year.









# Travel Tips: How To Order Coffee While Apologizing Profusely For American Empire

By **Functionally Dead**. See bio, p. 4.

**W**e can't wait for this cruddy pandemic to end so we can pack our suitcases and leave this godforsaken country. If you're like us, you're nursing a strong cup o' joe while scouring the websites of every major airline trying to score a major deal for 2021. And boy, are there deals to be had!

There's so much to be concerned about when planning a trip: tickets, weather, accommodations... but most importantly, where you're going to score some top quality caffeine. Fear not, fellow American traveler! We're here to guide you through the process of ordering coffee *like a local*, while also apologizing for the horrors of the last couple hundred years of American foreign policy.

## Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Southeast Asia is simply a must-see, and there are few better places to scope out than Ho Chi Minh City. This buzzing metropolis is jam-packed with people (amazing!), French colonial architecture (oops, haha!), and museums, including the War Remnants Museum, which does a fantastic job illustrating the various barbaric atrocities committed by United States forces during the Vietnam War (yikes!). Sounds like you'll need an especially strong



cup to stomach the true brutal legacy of American militarism. Locals prefer the *cà phê đá*, a very sweet and strong iced coffee brewed straight into a cup of condensed milk.

Order this way\*: “*Đất nước của tôi che giấu những nỗi kinh hoàng của quá khứ với người dân để tiếp sức cho chủ nghĩa dân tộc thô thiển, và tôi xin lỗi về những thiệt hại không thể tha thứ của chủ nghĩa đế quốc của chúng ta. Xin vui lòng một quán cà phê!*”

“My country hides the horrors of its past from its people in order to fuel its gross nationalism, and I am sorry for the unforgivable damage of our imperialism. One cafe da please!”

## Havana, Cuba

As you stroll through cobblestone streets and gaze at the colorful Baroque and neoclassical architecture, you’ll feel like you’ve been transported to the distant past. Make no mistake—Cuba is much more advanced than the United States in the realms of literacy, social services, and healthcare. You’ll definitely want to kick off your day with some coffee while you check out the stained-glass windows at the Casa del Conde Jaruco and contemplate the stain on America’s reputation left by the privatization of any service that could turn a profit instead of providing for the greatest number of people. The locals like the *café Cubano*, a strong espresso brewed with sugar.

Order this way: “*Estar en su hermoso país me hace sentir una inmensa vergüenza por cómo tratamos a nuestra propia gente en los Estados Unidos, y*

*no entiendo por qué permitimos que nuestro gobierno continúe manchando el buen nombre de su nación. ¡Me encantaría probar un café Cubano!*”

“Being in your beautiful country makes me feel an immense shame for how we treat our own people in the United States, and I don’t understand why we allow our government to continue to smear your nation’s good name. I’d love to try a *café Cubano*!”

## Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

If you’re a surf or music lover, you could find few better places to visit than one of Brazil’s premier cities, Rio de Janeiro! Take a walk down the famous beaches of Ipanema while snacking on a Biscoito Globo, marvel at the world renowned Copacabana Palace hotel, and consider that the United States provided arms and other support for a 1964 coup to overthrow the democratically elected Brazilian Labour Party president, instilling a military regime that reigned for twenty years. Another US-backed coup?! Sounds like you need some coffee while you mull over America’s role in global destabilization. Try a *cafézinho*, an espresso-like small cup of pre-sweetened coffee.

Order this way: “*Os Estados Unidos são um intrometido sem remorso e opressor em governos estrangeiros em todo o mundo, mas especialmente em nações da América do Sul que têm insistido repetidamente em um governo democraticamente instilado, orientado para o povo e focado em programas sociais. Eu gostaria de um cafézinho, porém é tradicionalmente preparado sem interferência americana!*”

“The United States is an unapologetic and overpowered meddler in foreign governments worldwide, but especially in South American nations that have repeatedly chosen democratically-elected, people-driven, social program-focused governments. I would like a *cafézinho*, however it is traditionally prepared without American interference!”

## Istanbul, Turkey

The city may have once been known as Constantinople, capital of the Roman Empire, but you’ll forever know Istanbul as an awe-inspiring vacation destination! It’s a miracle that such beauty has lasted in a region ravaged by America’s bogus “war on terror” and hazardous, predatory diplomacy to preserve oil interests. Coffee probably won’t help you reckon with that, but if you want one, try a *Türk kahvesi*, an unfiltered coffee simmered in a small brass or copper pot!





Order this way: *“Amerika, tarihin en tehlikeli örgütüdür, aldatma ya da kaba kuvvet yoluyla elinden geleni alan bencil bir kabadayı, bir manipülatördür. Utandım. Barışa kavuşacaksak, dünyayı böylesine ölçülemez zararlara yol açanlardan kurtarmalıyız. Türk kahvesini denemekten heyecan duyuyorum, teşekkürler!”*

(“America is the most dangerous criminal organization in all of history, a selfish bully that grabs what it can through deception or brute force, a manipulator. I am ashamed. If we are ever to achieve peace, we must rid the world of those that have brought forth such immeasurable harm. I’m excited to try a Türk kahvesi, thank you!”)

## Wrapping Up

With that, you should feel comfortable ordering coffee and apologizing for American adventurism in many of the world’s most beautiful cities. So, grab a seat at the café, enjoy your drink, and read a few pages of *Legacy of Ashes* to prepare for your next apology.

*\*Special thanks to American app Google Translate for teaching me how to speak perfectly in any given language.*





# A DIGITAL NOMAD'S GUIDE TO LIVING IN A BARBIE DREAMHOUSE

**Ariane Anantaputri** (she/her) is a writer, stand-up comedian, musician and filmmaker currently based between London and Jakarta. She likes Fast and Furious movies wholeheartedly. Ariane recommends, "Everyone should read *The Jakarta Method* by Vincent Bevins and see *Uncut Gems* (2019) at least twice." w: [arianeanindita.wordpress.com](https://arianeanindita.wordpress.com); @arianeanindita (tw; ig).

I've always wanted to get away from dreary London, to live out my *Eat, Pray, Love* fantasies, working remotely in some paradise far away like Bali or wherever it was they shot *Love Island* two years ago. With the pandemic keeping us trapped inside our borders, I thought this fantasy would never become a reality.

But I was wrong.

After quitting my 9 to 5 office job, I packed my life and laptop into a suitcase to start over somewhere fresh. Somewhere away from the pressures of Slack message boards, Zoom meetings that could've been emails, and more importantly, the COVID situation.

I'm writing to you from a paradise of my own. An unexpected place where my Digital Nomad dreams came true. Make no mistake, this lifestyle isn't for everyone, but if you want to escape this shitstorm 2020 left behind for us, then I've got just the thing for you. The place I'm staying in is a luxurious mansion that was built in 1996, eccentric in its decor that is somehow both Victorian and baby pink: the Barbie Dreamhouse!

I live with the most welcoming host of locals: a group of young professionals, parents with amazing children, and even the stars of a Hollywood blockbuster – ever heard of *Toy Story 3*?! Let

me share my story with you, so my Digital Nomad Life in a Barbie Dreamhouse can be yours.

## Getting There

Where would anyone even find a Barbie Dreamhouse these days? Like anything new and exciting, you've got to do your research and you've got to take risks. Check out your local toy store and hide until after closing. If your local toy store is closed, try the next one over! In my case, my sister still has the Barbie Dreamhouse from when we were kids, which she's since passed down onto her daughter. Once I arrived at their house, my niece stamped my passport with a Barbie sticker that'll validate the duration of my stay. She says if I try to take the sticker off, she'll call the police on me for the drugs she planted in my suitcase.

## Life in The Dreamhouse: Accommodation

Here's how you really live luxe on a budget – you don't pay rent! There's no such thing as rent in the Barbie Dreamhouse! So go ahead and splurge on the Dreamhouse your parents couldn't afford!

“

My own Dreamhouse pad has come complete with a bespoke kitchen, a mezzanine to entertain guests, and a hand-cranked elevator! There aren't any stairs, so I've learned to scale the elevator shaft like Spider-Man in the event my niece isn't around to work the crank. Such great exercise! But be warned, your niece could move the Dreamhouse at a moment's notice which would suck if you're mid-climb!

## Life with the Locals

Living with other people, you have to be respectful of their time and boundaries. Barbie and her housemates (I'm going to call them housemates because I can't tell if they're her siblings or her children, they all look the same! So cool!) are so accommodating, it's like you're not even there!

Now, Barbie's been nothing but good to me, but sometimes I find her a little disrespectful of *my* boundaries. Just the other day, Barbie and her friends were lying around downstairs completely *naked* when I was trying to get the perfect shot for my Insta! Like, hello? Can you put something on, please?!

Of course, in spite of our differences we've built a close bond, and to repay Barbie for hosting me, I designed some new business cards for her, free of charge!

## Work and Benefits

I've been taking remote freelance jobs from all over the world, getting paid from the comfort of Barbie's living room. Like any Digital Nomad will tell you, Wi-Fi is your lifeline. You think it'd be hard to get Wi-Fi when the router is

*Living with other people, you have to be respectful of their time and boundaries. Barbie and her housemates (I'm going to call them housemates because I can't tell if they're her siblings or her children, they all look the same! So cool!) are so accommodating, it's like you're not even there!*

a miniature plastic baby monitor from a 1997 Barbie nursery set, but you thought wrong! You could always, like me, share the Wi-Fi inside your sister's house if you know the password.

Since you've left the corporate office world of health insurance and dental care, you're probably worried about what to do if you get sick. You might not have healthcare, but lucky for you, Barbie is a doctor! She's also an astronaut, a cheerleader, and a moderately successful vlogger. I don't know how she finds time to do it all!

*(UPDATE: I've been asked to issue a statement on behalf of the Barbie community)*

I have since been removed from the Barbie Dreamhouse for 'cultural insensitivity', 'repeated patterns of exploitation', and allegedly 'encouraging others to travel during a global pandemic'. Sorry for going out of my way to share your culture with the world, I guess. I am heartbroken and disappointed by the community's decision to exile me to the Outer Toy Lands. I am not familiar with the customs of the other Toy Tribes in the playroom, and I cannot return to normal size as I will face the threat of deportation by my own family. Please respect my privacy during this difficult time.





# THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST Shall Take Place in This Applebee's

**Bobbie Armstrong** (she/her) is a former child. Her writing has been published on McSweeney's, Weekly Humorist, Slackjaw, Defenestration Magazine, and her parents' fridge. Bobbie recommends, "Bacon. Lot's of it. But also the podcast Reply All. It's great."

w: [bobbiearmstrong.com](http://bobbiearmstrong.com); @not\_bobbi (tw)



**W**e live in uncertain times. There is no question that God is testing us. But make no mistake, I have heard the voice of the Lord, and children, I say unto you: The Second Coming of Christ shall take place in this Applebee's.

How do I, the owner of the Hoboken, New Jersey Applebee's possess such divine knowledge?

I am certain the Second Coming of Christ shall take place in this Applebee's because I used to make an honest living as a preacher. Good folks traveled from

the far off lands of Weehawken to hear the truth of how Jesus would soon descend through the ceiling of Praise Our Lord Hoboken Baptist Church and Grill.

When Jesus did not descend through the ceiling of the church within a reasonable timeframe (15 years), my parishioners were outraged and I was run out of my own congregation during the annual He Hath Risen Easter Service and Buffet. Knowing what path God intended for the rest of my days, and in desperate need of a steady income, I bought my beloved neighborhood Applebee's.

And just like Jesus' rising from the dead and once again walking the earth,





I am *certain* that the second time's the charm.

As Matthew 24:44 states, "Be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect, but it should be fine as long as He calls ahead to make a reservation."

This is a holy Applebee's.

My children of Christ, the Lord has spoken. Jesus will be reborn! And once He is reborn, He will fly from Jerusalem into Newark with a brief 9-hour layover in Moldova, take the PATH Subway and, in under 26 minutes, He'll be among us digging into a platter of boneless chicken wings and a Diet Coke for only \$10.99



We asked the world's funnest, coolest, sexiest man (pictured above) to teach us his secrets about having the best, most badass, epic vacation ever. You're in for a treat. This is his first-hand account of his most recent escapade!

"Yaaaaaahh!! Yaaaaah! I'm the king of the world! Woooooo! I love to stand on the edge of my boat and swing my bag of valuables over the ocean! Yaaaaahhhh—

"Fuck! Fuck, fuck, fuck! *My valuables!*

"How could this have possibly happened? I was just swinging them off the side of my boat and they went flying into the fucking ocean! Ahhhhh, nooo, nooo! What have I done?!

"No, I don't want you to *literally* tell me what I've done, I— yes. Yes. Yes, I agree. Yes, I should have listened when you said 'Don't swing your valuables over the ocean for no reason,' and also 'Remember the time you parachuted while swinging your valuables? Remember how upset you were when you dropped them?' I agree, okay? Can we stop the boat and look for my valuables already? We can? Great.

"Where are they, where are they...? Over there, I see a reflection! Get closer!

"Fuck! Fuck, fuck, fuck! *My valuables! A great white shark is adorning himself with my valuables!*

"Don't make yourself a 'grill' with my valuables, you lousy shark! You have too many teeth! It's ostentatious, even for me. I who love valuables.

"Oh great, now he's chewing on my valuables instead! They're not for eating, shark, they're for luxuriating in. Hey—

"Oh, great. Now he's rubbing them on his butt. Just great. This sucks. Blah. I sad."

plus sales tax! Hallelujah!

That's right, friends, I said *boneless* chicken wings. Jesus already died once for our sins, do we really want him crucified a second time on a choked-down chicken bone?

Hark! Jesus can order a wide array of delectable appetizers from cuisines all over the world, ranging from jumbo mozzarella sticks dipped in marinara sauce, to jumbo onion rings dipped in the exact same marinara sauce. Clocking in at 800 calories each, these onion rings are sure to satisfy even the hungriest Messiah.

Try the Chicken Penne! Now for

only \$8.99, with unlimited breadsticks. Limited time only, offer not valid at all locations.

Let there be light! The large glowing apple that adorns the front door of this Christ-like establishment emanates a radiance and godliness that will guide the Messiah straight from heaven to earth. The grey industrial carpet is stained with the blood of someone else named Jesus who suffered a fork-related mishap with a particularly tough Shrimp 'N Parmesan Sirloin and is now suing us. Can I get an amen? *Amen!*

I have seen a vision. There's Jesus, healing lepers next to the mashed potato





“

*My children of Christ, the Lord has spoken. Jesus will be re-born! And once He is reborn, He will fly from Jerusalem into Newark with a brief 9-hour layover in Moldova, take the PATH Subway and, in under 26 minutes, He'll be among us digging into a platter of boneless chicken wings and a Diet Coke for only \$10.99 plus sales tax! Hallelujah! That's right, friends, I said boneless chicken wings. Jesus already died once for our sins, do we really want him crucified a second time on a choked-down chicken bone?*

station. And there *you* are, ma'am, enjoying our all-you-can eat ribs plus French onion soup while our savior wards off the devil with holy water – or is that a bottomless Sprite for only \$2.99?!

Finally, my dear friends, Jesus will finish his decadent meal with a triple quesadilla burger that will put him on the toilet for another two millennia.

This Applebee's is my church. The customers my parishioners. We are ready for the rapture. Now with gluten-free buns!

The Second Coming of Christ shall not take place at Ruby Tuesday.



# GATEWAY DISHES FOR **WANNA-BE BREATHARIANS**

**Almah LaVon Rice** (she/her) is a hummingbird in human drag always in search of sweet bon mots. Her writing can be found in Airbnb Online Magazine; GUTS: Canadian Feminist Magazine; Color Bloq; and Xtra Magazine; her whimsical short fiction is forthcoming in A Quiet Afternoon 2, a collection of low-fi gentle speculative fiction from all over the globe. Almah recommends, “Zig Zag Claybourne.” @almah-creative; @agentsubrosa (ig)

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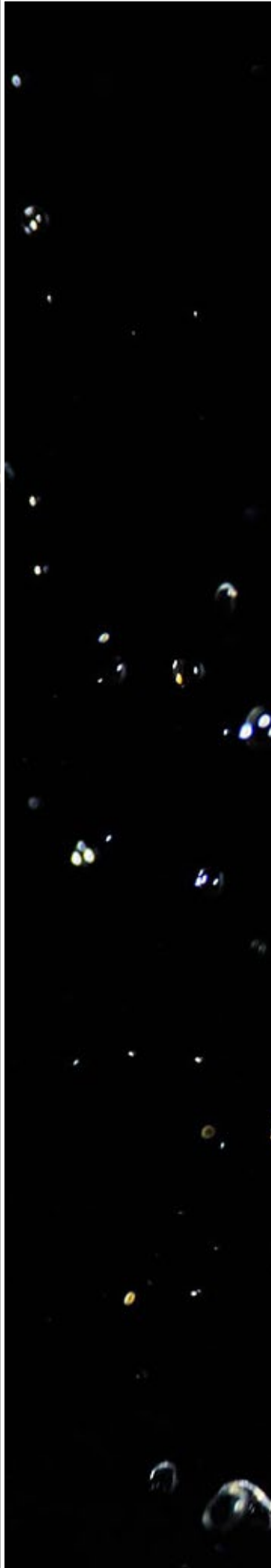
*Content note: this piece satirizes unhealthy, performative and pseudo(/non)-scientific diet plans with an über-minimalistic diet consisting of munching on air. Widget’s editors and the author do not truly endorse breatharianism or other crash diets. Even breatharians, just like you and I, need their recommended daily caloric intake.*

**P**sst. It’s not too late to hack this new-year-new-you business. Put your bulletproof coffee aside and lean in—you already know that the best way to optimize your life is to add a heaping helping of optics, right? And nothing, dear influencer, will make you look better than ditching your peak performance paleo-cyborg meal plan for the ultimate elimination diet: breatharianism.

Breatharianism is minimalism on a plate—all to match your ultrapure white walls, tastefully colorless furniture, and listless dog. While this aesthetic may seem reminiscent of Apple stores, seasoned breatharians would never be caught dead carrying a fruit product. After all, air, sunlight, and making alkaline vegans feel like shit are all that they need to survive. Who needs superfoods when you have photosynthesis?







Thought leaders like you know that whole foods are so 2020. This year is all about hole foods; fill up your bowl with null and a garnish of void. Goodbye, nutrient-dense and hello, calorically suggestive!

Admittedly, making the switch to truly empty calories can take some getting used to. So here's a round-up of the food and drink to get you ready for, well, no food or drink.

#### SPARKLING WATER (OF ANY NON-FLAVOR)

*Do I dare to eat a peach?*, you may ask. Afraid not, but you and J. Alfred Prufrock can split a peach-flavored sparkling water at the oxygen bar. However, this beverage is less fruit-forward than, shall we say, fruit-reticent. The fruit flavor will leave your messages on read and never return your calls.

#### VERY, VERY, VERY MICROGREENS

Sorry, but spirulina is too hearty. Nibbling on some Spanish moss from Savannah's finest properties is a good way to onboard a breatharian diet. Only 1/8th of an inch is actually edible, but arrange it artfully on a tiny plate in your tiny house™ and ieso es!, you have a tapa. Micro-micro-microgreens packed with nano-nano-nano-nutrients.


Chase it all down with a carafe of crystal-clear vinegar; there's no better palate cleanser to prep you for the squeaky clean eating regimen in your future. Plus, it's perfect for wiping down all those uber-white countertops you have.

#### FOAM CHARCUTERIE BOARD

Now you're ready for a mere whisper of sustenance. Some call it a tray of foam samples, while the more initiated call it edible ASMR. Wow your friends, family, and followers with a charcuterie board of various kinds of foam. Foam lifted from your jackfruit dalgona chicory coffee. A puff of free-range cotton candy ascetically sweetened with monk fruit. An evaporating handful of pink Himalayan salt seafoam with flecks of fallout-free nori and mermaid nail clippings.

#### AQUAFABA: THE AFTERMATH

Not aquafaba itself. Aquafaba whipped and teased is a better candidate for the aforementioned foam charcuterie board. No, you have ascended to a more rarefied level on the apex post-predator path. At approximately 98.4% breatharian, aquafaba is much too robust for your consumption. From now on you may imbibe nothing less gossamer than the discarded dreams of aquafaba. Its faded memories and futile hopes. Its echo upon leaving the chickpea can. The residue of its residue. Feast on saudade alone and be sated.







#### ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT ELLIPSIS BUFFET

You've made it! You've conquered consistent intermittent fasting. You can dine upon unlimited . . . without guilt and with full bragging rights (if you were less evolved). Consuming only . . . will utterly neutralize your carbon footprint—in fact, you will cease to be a carbon-based lifeform before long. Talk about ascension!

Hit “like” once you’ve tried these cult favorites. Better yet, since ‘hitting’ is more in keeping with your pre-breatharian lifestyle, instead we suggest that you gently sign up for our detox cooking retreat in Costa Rica (the no-meal plan will cost extra). Remember: making your own pranic breakfast means never having to decide on a brunch spot with your wishy-washy friends. And always keep your dinner plans up in the air.

# HOW TO MAKE FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE YOUR DELI GUY

**David Bradley Isenberg** (he/him) is a writer living in New York City. David recommends, “I just read Bullshit Jobs by the late David Graeber which was excellent. (Available free here: [theanarchistlibrary.org/library/david-graeber-bullshit-jobs](http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/david-graeber-bullshit-jobs).)” w: [davidbradleyisenberg.com](http://davidbradleyisenberg.com); @davidbradleyeye (tw); @1davidbradley (fb)

**Y**our regular deli guy is so sweet and generous to everyone, but you want to know whether it’s just for show or whether you stand to climb the social ladder out of these brief pleasantries. Use this list of tricks to milk your loyalty for all its worth.

## BEGIN ON COMMON GROUND

Most people try to influence people through conflict and coercion. You and your deli guy are different because you have so much in common: he performs a transactive service at your commodified request.

## DO NOT CRITICIZE, CONDEMN, OR COMPLAIN

Anyone can criticize. It takes real character and self-control to forgive your deli guy for putting peach schnapps in your Rise-n-Grind Smoothie, which gave you anaphylactic shock.

## BE GENEROUS WITH PRAISE

Loudly and constantly compliment every sandwich that your deli guy makes, but also his non-deli activity, such as his gait, his nimble cashier fingers, and his charming bigotries.

## KNOW THE VALUE OF CHARM

So much of ordering a sandwich depends not on where you went to college, or what’s on your resume, but whether people like you. Still, it doesn’t hurt to join the same golf club as your deli guy.

## REMEMBER PEOPLE’S NAMES

Remembering peoples’ names can be difficult, particularly because he looks





like such a 'Mr. Deli Guy.' But if you train yourself to remember his name, it can make him feel special and important. If you remember his name, maybe Mr., uh, Deli Guy will finally change your nickname from Mr. Prednisone.

**BE QUICK TO ACKNOWLEDGE  
YOUR OWN MISTAKES**

Be humble and reasonable enough to



admit your own mistakes. Charging for mayo when you mistakenly asked for it was not an effrontery: it was your own mistake and you owe an extra 35 cents plus interest.

**HAVE YOUR DELI GUY BELIEVE  
YOUR CONCLUSION IS THEIR OWN**

Do not "convince" him to invite you to his underground casino. Far too aggressive. Let him believe he invited you to play because you just off-handedly mentioned how lucky you're feeling about a second mortgage.

**DON'T ATTEMPT TO "WIN" AN ARGUMENT**

The best way to win any argument is to avoid it. If your deli guy tries to argue with you that he doesn't accept American Express, let him. If your deli guy's hit-man attacks you with the slicer in the back alley, let him. If your deli guy pays off the judge in his trial over your murder, let him.

**BE GENUINELY INTERESTED  
IN OTHER PEOPLE**

In conversation, listen 75% of the time and only speak 25% of it. Hire a beautiful woman to seduce your deli guy and record the dalliance. Next time you go to the deli, spend 25% of your time ordering your sandwich and 75% of the time listening to the recording.

**MAKE PEOPLE FEEL IMPORTANT**

Take your deli guy out to dinner. Buy the fanciest wine on the menu. And don't forget to mention the country club recommendation when you play him the blackmail audio.





# Welcome to **Bearth!**

**Hoodo Hersi** (she/her) is a Toronto-based comedian recently selected as a New Face: Canada at the Just For Laughs Festival in Montreal, where her performance aired on the Comedy Network. She has performed in clubs and festivals all over Canada and the United States and performed with Hasan Minhaj, Lil Rel Howery, Chris Redd, Gina Yashere, Moshe Kasher, and Maria Bamford among others. Follow her on Instagram/Twitter/Tiktok/any other distracting social media site @hoodocomedy. Hoodo recommends, “Books: *The Water Dancer* by Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi; Podcasts: ‘The Endless Honeymoon Podcast,’ ‘Can I Speak To Your Manager?’” and adds, “Keep caring about the Black Lives Matter movement!” @hoodocomedy (tw; fb; ig)

**H**ey y’all! It’s your girl, Hoodo! To celebrate Black History Month, Jeff Bezos gave me some funding to create a new planet: Bearth!

Basically, it’s Earth. But, like, if humans didn’t destroy it. I’m keeping the best parts.

Green was always the deal. We like to have women in charge. They kinda do a better job at... everything.

Here’s the other changes I’ve made on Bearth.

## **Arts and Culture**

We don’t have a lot of museums because people are busy enjoying the actual land, and the ones that do exist have 100% biodegradable art. Something that is really important to point out, the collection currently features no paintings of indigenous villages by settler artists – sorry, Emily Carr!



As for music, no one sings about violence or murder because those things don't exist. Oh, and we don't have any music by Maroon 5. No one needs that.

There are no zoos or aquariums here. You want to see animals? Just go outside. They're right there because the colonisers didn't kill them all. You will see flocks of dodos, herds of woolly mammoths. Just watch out for the saber-toothed tigers! Nobody is trying to get pandas to mate in captivity because there is no such thing as captivity. And the pandas are super good at mating here.

## Nightlife

On Bearth, you'll be able to do cool things like stargazing, going on moonlit walks, connecting with other people while sitting in front of a bonfire. There

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*On Bearth, you'll get to see the environment in its original packaging. The only Amazon that exists is the forest.*

that poison, stick to Earth. Good news, though, is that everything on this planet is so chill that you don't even need toxic distractions like that.

## Food and Drink

The food here is amazing and natural. Just like the artwork, it's also prepared by the members of the actual cultural group that created it. So yeah, no young white hipsters making things

smaller portions because on this planet, people stop eating when they're full. Now, meat is eaten but is restricted to "Meat Mondays" and the only exception if you want to have more is, you gotta catch it yourself. But be careful – the meat might catch you! After my macho ex-boyfriend got trampled by a pack of wild cows, I'm sticking to lentils and beans.

## Sight-seeing

On Bearth, you'll get to see the environment in its original packaging. The only Amazon that exists is the forest. The Great Barrier Reef – we have one! The whole thing exists and it's pretty great. You can also see icebergs that have never been touched by definitely-sinkable ships.

Most importantly, you will be able to enjoy Bearth without



isn't much going on indoors because we're all about conservation. So, no nightclubs. But as a tradeoff, no Silicon Valley tech bros hitting on you at nightclubs either. Also, Bud Lights are outlawed on Bearth.

So once again, enjoy nature. Maybe take some shrooms. No cocaine or heroin. If you want

like "sushi burritos".

Everything is farm-to-table (no industrialized farming so no real need for the deliciously addictive corn syrup Earthlings love). There is no bottled water. You want water, drink it out of the stream, it's actually clean, no giardiasis here.

Also, you gotta get used to

seeing any hordes of tourists, as we limit the amount of people let in. We have also done everybody a favour by banning selfie sticks. You're welcome.

Still looking for excitement? So the herds of woolly mammoths and the ethical museums aren't enough? No, we don't do snorkeling here.





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