

Sonic, Buoyed by Success of the Pickle Juice Slush, Seeks to Corner the Market on Wacky Menu Items

Delighted by the response to the pickle juice slush, *Sonic* now plans to offer up a variety of other shocking food options. Here are some of their more inspired creations:

Trash Burger – Employees literally walk out to the dumpster, grab some trash, slap it between two buns and deliver it to your car. Delicious!

Brown Bag Extra Special – 9/10 chance you will get a regular brown bag special. 1/10 chance you will get a brown bag full of mustard and ketchup.

Burnt Tots – Just like Mom used to make. The tots are engulfed in flames until they are smoldering ashes, then they are served directly to your taste buds. Yum!

Decent Chicken Sandwich – Nothing weird about this one, except that they just haven't been able to crack the code on the chicken sandwich yet. Adequate!

Lunch Burrito – Tired of breakfast burritos? Ready to level up? Get ready for a lunch burrito, which is basically any

regular lunch menu item lazily wrapped in a burrito shell. It costs twice as much, but you'll love it.

Flat Dr. Pepper – They bought a two-liter of Dr. Pepper, opened the cap, put it back on and left it in the cooler for a month. Who will be brave enough to drink it?! FLAT!

Tap Water – It's tap! GROSS!

Hamburger Sundae – Nothing says "frozen treat" like a big chunk of steaming hot burger slapped down right in the middle of it. Eat it up, meatheads!

Bacon Peanut Butter Shake – Basically just a peanut butter shake with what seems to be a solitary, torn up piece of bacon at the very bottom. Surprise!

Mystery Food – Someone found an unmarked food item with an expired date on it in a dark corner of the pantry. Nobody seems to know what it is, or what it used to be. You know you want to eat it though! Comes with a mystery drink.

In Undying Devotion to the Royal Fork

Last February when I related the manifold greatnesses of the [mighty spoon](#), I made fun of the fork a little bit. My forky friends were a little hurt. They wept long and hard right to the tips of their prongy, prong, prongs. Just kidding. I don't really have any forky friends. That being said, I still love forks. Last year I said that, along with knives, forks have their own superior clique. While this is true, they kind of deserve their superior snootiness. Here are five great things about forks:

The Table Fork is the King of Eating Utensils

At home we have two kinds of eating forks: Table forks and salad forks. I don't know how or when in the history of my family we picked up the salad forks, but I have grown to greatly loathe them with a deep and abiding hatred. I am convinced that they are Satan's personal utensil of choice and this is what he uses instead of a pitchfork. A more effeminate utensil than the salad fork has never before graced the table of man. I want nothing to do with its fat, stubby, losery prongs. I suppose they are the proper tool for salads, and there are forks for fish, and there are forks for desert, and there are forks for this and for that. I think there is even a fork combing your hair before dinner. I think. It's all snooty, pretentious stuff, so I don't care. Pretentious paupers, all of 'em. Long live the table fork, I always say, may its prongs always remain long and shiny. May the Man Fork of our hearts ever be true.

The Blue Raja is the Ambassador of the King Fork and His Kingdom

If you are not familiar with the Blue Raja of Mystery Men fame, you are missing out on one of the greatest superheroes of all time. Girded with his spoons and forks, he seeks to rid the world of evil. According to Old Blue, himself his weapon of choice is the trusty fork. In the midst of his busy and daily good guy living and bad person fighting he has ascended to become the perfect ambassador of the forky king and its cutlery kingdom. I will never–never!–forget the immortal words of this giant of forkdom: “May the forks be with us!”

The Royalty of the Special Royal Fork is Nostalgic

About 100 or so years ago when I was growing up we had a very rare fork in our utensil drawer. We called it the royal fork. It was rare because I thought so; and, if something is rare, dude, that makes it way more special. In actuality, it was probably just picked up at Kmart or Sears or something. Anyway, it was extra special to me and my siblings because the handle was all flowery, totally unlike the plain peasant forks that we used every day. There was always loud jubilation and heavy boasting on the part of the happy person who happened to get this prized utensil.

Its Worthy Name Lends itself Beautifully to Several Different Sayings

Some of the greatest sayings in history owe their existence to the fork. I’m looking at you “A fork of in the road”, “fork it over”, and “stick a fork in it.” We have no idea what a great debt of gratitude we owe to this little silver invention. Without it, these sayings (and maybe others) would be forced to use another less effective utensil. It is possible that

another utensil could have taken its place, but somehow it seems morally and ethically and confusingly wrong to say “a knife in the road” or “spoon it over” or “stick a ladle in it.”

It is the Finest Eating Utensil Know to Civilized Mankind

Although the spoon and knife are both older, the fork was a much more civilized eating utensil and has been used at the dinner table in some form or other since around 400 B.C. You will notice that normal civilized people these days don't stick food in their mouths with a knife. (Plus, it's stupid since you might accidentally stab your tongue.) The spoon is often used for the whole plate/bowl to mouth routine, but the fork is used by grownups most of the time. Most of the time. The modern fork is totally cool if you just want to use your hands like a caveman.

Rambling Ever On Presents: Overrated/Underrated

We're back with more infallible opinions on those things in our culture that are a little too respected and things that need more love.

Ben Plunkett

Overrated – Big Toe

Everyone thinks he's the cool guy on the foot campus because he's this big old Hoss fella and he's the only piggy that

actually does any work by going to market. All that is well and good, but he is also the only piggy that gets hurt. You ever think about that? So you're getting up in the middle of the night. Nine times out of ten, you are going to stub a toe and every single one of those times it the big toe and his bulbous ways.

Underrated – Pinky Toe

This is the dude that went wee, wee, wee all the way home. Okay, that does seem pretty lame, but people aren't asking about the context. It's all because all the other toes are so mean and stuff. So really, it all comes down to his sorry family life: His miserable brothers. There's the hifalutin biggest brother, the second eldest who stays at home all day playing video games, the third oldest who always eats all the food, and the pretentious fourth brother who constantly preaches on the many excellences of veganism. All in all, the poor guy has sorry role models and therefore has good reason to wee, wee, wee all time. Bless his heart.

Mike Lytle

Overrated – [Funyuns](#). I am not a fan of these artificial, processed, disgusting things that are made to look like the letter "o". They are a disgrace to the chip family as well as the onion ring family. It is really hard to bring shame to two different types of food, but Funyuns pull it off easily. The fact that the word "fun" is in their name when they are opposite of fun is the cherry on top of this failure sundae. When most of your main ingredients sound like the names of villains in Harry Potter[2. Ferrous Sulfate would be exhibit A] then you have a problem.

Underrated – Pork Rinds. NOW WE ARE TALKING! Sorry about yelling, but I get excited about frying pork skin. They are natural, they are low in carbs, they are a great source of

protein, but most importantly they are delicious. Whether you prefer plain, bbq, or hot and spicy, there is a pork rind for you. They are great served fresh at a state or county fair, but they are also great in a bag from your local Walmart or gas station convenience store. Sure they are high in sodium and fat, but most of us need more sodium and fat in our diet anyway so that is not necessarily a negative[3. This is completely false as most of us do NOT need more fat or sodium in our diets.]. In Spanish, they are called chicharrones which makes them sound even more scrumptious.

Gowdy Cannon

Overrated: Deep Dish Pizza from anywhere

Underrated: Frozen \$2.29 Pizza from [Aldi](#)

Oh, do I get made fun of for this in my church in Chicago. But I must keep it 100 since the movie *Creed* taught me to. For pizza, I prefer a balance of ingredients. Deep dish has far too much sauce, which I assume is the point. The tomato sauce is a role player on a good pizza to me, not the Allen Iverson of tastes. Hogging the ball.

I can, and have, eaten the big frozen Aldi pizzas five times in a week. They are simple yet thoroughly satisfying. I still remember when they raised the price from \$1.99 to \$2.29 at my local store. I wept for days. Because 30 cents over thousands of pizzas really adds up.

Phill Lytle

Overrated: Candy Corn

In 2016, [USA Today](#) conducted a survey to determine the favorite candy for each state. The people of the great state of Tennessee, my state, picked Candy Corn as their favorite.

Candy Corn.

I don't want to speak ill of my state, but this might be the dumbest thing Tennessee has ever done. Candy Corn is vile. It is a disgrace to candy. It is a disgrace to corn. It is sickly-sweet with the consistency and texture of hardened ear wax.

Underrated: Corn

Corn is the most underrated of all vegetables[1. I realize there is a lot of debate on this point. Some consider corn a vegetable, a fruit, and a grain. Basically, it's the holy trinity of food.]. It is versatile: you can put corn in just about anything and it makes that dish better. Corn on the cob – particularly grilled corn on the cob – is about the tastiest thing in the world. Other great examples of corn usage: Corn Casserole. Cornbread. Corn tortillas. Corn chowder. Cornhole!!!

Corn is king.

Ben Plunkett

Overrated – White Coffee (Overcreamed coffee)

This is what I call cups of creamer/milk with a little bit of coffee added. A lot of people apparently consider this the greatest thing since the invention of goat yoga. I have no problem with milk. I love milk. Milk is good people. But when I drink milk, I drink milk. When I drink coffee, I drink coffee. A wise coffee drinker once told me that you should never trust coffee drinkers who corrupt their coffee. I think there might be something to that.

Underrated – Black Coffee

And that brings me to the underrated king of coffees. It ain't just me, folks. There are dozens of us! Dozens! I'm thinking about starting a Black Coffee Matters movement. I think such a

group has potential to make a true difference in the Java world. Who's with me?!

Phill Lytle

Overrated: Sleeping in

Sleeping in was fun when I was 13. Sleeping in stopped being fun when I became a man. Sleeping in is painful now that I am nearly 40. If I sleep in (basically any time after 9:00 AM) I feel like death the rest of the day. Plus, I feel like I wasted a good portion of my day.

Underrated: Naps

Naps were awful when I was a kid. Naps were essential when I was in college. Naps are glorious retreats to the world of slumber now that I am nearly 40! As much as it drives my wife crazy, I am able to take a nap every day at work on my lunch break. As a teacher, she is unable to do that, and so she resents my happiness and sleep.[1. She doesn't resent it. That was a joke. Or maybe she does resent it a little. I don't know. I'm too relaxed and rested to really notice or care...due to all the naps.]

Mike Lytle

Overrated – Day old sushi. I am going to get very personal with this one. I once ate day old sushi that I purchased at a grocery store. I ate half of it the day I bought it and it was fine. I ate the other half the next day and it was not fine. Or perhaps I should say I was not fine. I have a pretty impressive record of stomach issues during my lifetime. This was especially true when I was younger. The sushi I ate that day messed me up for over a month. Most every topic covered in

this article is a matter of personal opinion, but this one is fact – DON'T EAT DAY OLD SUSHI!

Underrated – Day old chili. I love fresh chili. I have had the honor and privilege of being judge/scorekeeper for several chili cook-offs and have tasted hundreds of chili varieties that were entered for competition. I have savored every moment. That being said, there is just something about eating chili the day after (or even a couple days after) it was first prepared. The flavors have more time to coalesce. The spices and seasonings have much needed time to meld with all the other ingredients and produce something truly special. Take your time, don't rush...you will thank me later.

Gowdy Cannon

Overrated: Pronouncing 'gif' with a Hard G

Underrated: Pronouncing 'gif' with a Soft G

"Gift" is an exception to an English pronunciation rule. "Giraffe" is the rule. I'm not even going to argue this. As a Level 1 ESL teacher I already spend way too much time trying to explain why OU has six pronunciations, why "both" and "bother" have completely different O and TH sounds and why "February" and "Wednesday" have the most random, ridiculous silent Rs and Ds (and if you think about it, the second E in Wednesday is silent as well...you can't make this stuff up). All words we add henceforth need to be consistent. Think of the children! (And the immigrants)

The Five Best Reasons To Go To Peru

Warm hearted welcomes, the ruins of the greatest pre-Columbian Native civilization, sunsets on the beach, mountain hikes, and jungle adventures—these are all great reason to take to trip the heart of Spain's former Empire in South America. As attractive as these may be, I offer five even better reasons to go to Peru. Because, after all, just about every country has nice people and cool things to see. Only Peru has:

1. Lomo Saltado



This is the nation's signature dish. It's a beef stir-fry with tomatoes and onions, served over garlic rice and crispy fries. Just about anywhere you go, Peruvians know how to season this dish perfectly. It's the perfect fusion of Latin American tastes like cilantro and garlic with soy sauce borrowed from Chinese immigrants. Perhaps even better is Lomo Saltado's cousin Tallarin Saltado, which is basically the same stir-fry

mixed with noodles instead of rice and fries.

2. El Chicharron



Like so many words in Latin America Chicharron means something different everywhere you go. In Peru, it is not simply fried pork rinds, but rather the most delicious sandwich you've probably never tasted. It begins with crisping up some slow cooked pork belly, but the outcome is much more meat than fat. You place this bit of magic on a nice French bread roll along with some slices of boiled sweet potato. You have sweet, you have salty-fatty, and now it's time for something bold: **salsa criolla**.



Salsa criolla is a condiment that's ubiquitous in Peru and makes everything taste better. Criolla is thinly sliced red onion, cilantro, key lime, and some aji (spicy yellow pepper). Make sure whoever serves it to you applies plenty of the salsa on there. These three flavors placed in-between the French bread roll unite to form something truly special. Peruvians eat it for breakfast, which sounds to me like the best way to possibly start your day.

3. Tallarin Verde



The Chinese were not the only immigrant population to make Peru taste better. The Italians brought pesto and Peruvians perfected it. Peruvian pesto is creamy, making genius use of traditional Latin American cheese, queso fresco. You can find generous portions of Tallarin Verde at just about any Menu del Dia restaurant where it is served with a thinly pounded, breaded chicken breast cutlet and salsa criolla. If you are lucky, you may even be able to get an over-easy egg on top to make your pasta sauce even more incredible.

4. Empanadas



Sure, these are not unique to Peru, but Peru does them better than anyone. (I mean, my Peruvian wife does them better than anyone.) Sometimes on the street, you can find some pretty subpar empanadas in Peru, but you don't have to look hard to find a good bakery or sandwich place that makes the empanadas that will change your life. A beautiful little pastry with ground beef, onions, and olive inside. What makes Peruvian empanadas so unique is that they are savory but sprinkled with powdered sugar and garnished with key lime. The result is a great flavor combo that makes a great snack.

5. Anticuchos



One of the best foods in any country is usually grilled meat on a stick. This is certainly true of Peru. Anticuchos are made with beef heart, which has a texture that is a cross between tenderloin and calamari. Peruvian Anticuchos are marinated in vinegar, cumin, garlic, and chilies. They are a tangy and succulent street food that is often served over crisped-up slices of boiled potato. Although just about all Peruvian food boasts bold flavors, Anticuchos are a delicious cut above.

Easter Poll: What Is Your Favorite Easter Food?

Eating is fun. Food is good. Is there anyone out there that is going to argue with those two statements? As Americans, we love to eat. We will use any event as an excuse to eat. Here

at REO, we respect and honor that tradition. So, in light of our shared love of food and eating, we have prepared a poll to determine the most important part of the Easter dinner. Every family will have its own unique spin on what you eat at Easter, so in an attempt to keep this as simple as possible, we have decided to use the most common dishes found in Easter dinners all over the country. You only get one vote. Vote for your favorite. Some of the options are as general as possible to include the most possible responses. See “potatoes” for instance. If you have a specific potato dish that is your favorite, vote for “potatoes” and then post your dish in the comment section. If you can’t find any option that works for you, select “other” and explain your selection in the comment section. If that is too difficult for you, then you are very lazy.

Let’s hear it people! What is your favorite part of the Easter dinner?

Favorite Easter Dinner Food

- Ham
- Potatoes
- Pie
- Other Dessert
- Casserole
- Vegetable of some sort
- Deviled Eggs
- Alternative Meat option
- Candy (Who cares about the food when you have candy?)
- Other

[View Results](#)

500 Words or Less Reviews: The Jack in the Box Taco

Dear Jack in the Box,

Your tacos are cheap and delicious. Never change them.

Now, I hear the precious foodies sputter and stammer, as they shudder in disgust at the description of the aforementioned tacos. "They are loathsome!" they bemoan. "How dare they call these monstrosities food?" they rage. I have no problem admitting that the *Jack in the Box* tacos leave something to be desired from a purely aesthetic perspective. They are rather ugly. I would even go one-step further and posit that broken down into each ingredient, these tacos should not work. Allow me to elaborate.

Examine the shell. It is a corn-like substance that is one part hard as a rock—risking dental injury if you bite down too aggressively—and one part oily mess. Typically, I avoid foods that are dripping in grease and this taco is a major offender in this regard. Somehow, on the Jack in the Box taco, the grease is inviting and seductive. It is a siren call that unexpected pleasure is waiting just inside the soft and soggy center. I have repeatedly succumbed to the call and am not remotely ashamed.

Next, consider the "meat." We are all adults here, so I will be as frank as possible: I am dubious of Jack in the Box's claim that there is any meat in this substance. At my most generous, I can only call it a brownish paste. I say brownish because I rarely even see the "meat" when I am shoveling one

of them in my mouth. The deep fried, hard and soggy shell does a fantastic job of hiding the meat from plain site. From a biological standpoint, I believe that Jack in the Box uses this meat paste in an effort to assist in the digestive process. The meat paste needs no additional digestion to work its way through the body.

Finally, we have the toppings: American cheese, lettuce, and sauce. American cheese is the Ringo Starr of cheese. Yes, we all know who he is. We hear him play on most Beatles' songs. Yet, nobody loves Ringo. He's just there. It is pretty clear the shredded lettuce comes from scraps they use for other food items, tossed on the tacos to make them appear a little more legitimate. And the sauce is just their pre-packaged taco sauce—mostly bland and innocuous.

Based on this description, you would think the Jack in the Box taco is unpalatable. You would be utterly mistaken. The disparate ingredients, all more unbecoming and repulsive than the last, form a scrumptious and supremely satisfying delight.

Jack in the Box; do not bend to modern whims. Do not attempt to “jazz” up your taco recipe. Do not make it healthier by using fresh ingredients. Flee from any requests to take it off the menu because it is probably killing people. A death by the Jack in the Box taco would be a worthy death.

Long live the Jack in the Box taco!