

Shmanners 396: Brunch

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[theme music plays]

Travis: Hello, internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

Teresa: And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

Travis: And you're listening to Shmanners.

Teresa: It's extraordinary etiquette...

Travis: For ordinary occasions! Hello, my dove.

Teresa: Hello, dear.

Travis: How are you?

Teresa: Why do you always ask me that first? How are you? I wanna know. How are *you*, sir?

Travis: Can I tell you what's—uh, I'm, uh, old. And I can't remember the last time I sprang out of bed.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Um... I believe that I've given myself neck pain.

Teresa: No, I can remember the last time you sprang out of bed. When our child screamed... the screams of all screams at four AM. That's the last time.

Travis: And then I went and I said, "What's wrong?" She said, "Nothing."

Teresa: [laughs] Yeah. That's the last time you sprang out of bed.

Travis: I said, "Oh, cool, man." But I meant spring out of bed like in joy, and not spring out of bed like, "A banshee! A ghost! Oh no!"

Teresa: Oh, you mean like where, like, the birds are singing—

Travis: Yeah. [singing]

Teresa: And you throw your covers off and take a deep breath and go, "Ahh. Good morning!" And spring out of bed. One of those.

Travis: Yeah, no. Instead I'm at a point now in my life where I look down at my Steam Deck for a I guess a second too long the day before and I wake up with neck pain.

Teresa: Oh no.

Travis: So... I'm doing great.

Teresa: Well, could be like me. Bruised my tailbone.

Travis: You bruised my tailbone, and I've bruised my old soulll...

Teresa: But the question that I get when I tell people that I bruised my tailbone is, "How?" And the answer is sitting on the floor for too long, playing with my children.

Travis: Aww, man. Being old is so cool.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: All the experience and the memories is—is great. Um, anywho, we're not talking about getting old today, though that would be the greats of getting old.

Teresa: Hey, but you know what?

Travis: What?

Teresa: If I had the opportunity to sleep in and eat breakfast later...

Travis: Uh-huh?

Teresa: AKA brunch...

Travis: Oh, I see.

Teresa: I might feel more well-rested.

Travis: Can I just say, since you brought it up—

Teresa: Segue!

Travis: Yeah, great segue. Um, having children—but even before children—I would say that at some point—I think it was from working at the theater, and you worked at the—you were doing, like, lifeguarding and stuff.

Teresa: Yeah, I was doing the early—the early shift at lifeguarding.

Travis: We got into the habit of being up at, like, 6:30, seven in the morning.

Teresa: Well, I was up earlier than that, but yes.

Travis: Sure. And even now, though, we have friends our age and I'm like, "Ugh. I don't wanna contact them too early. I'll wait until, like, nine AM." And then they sleep till noon.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Okay. Now.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Brunch.

Teresa: Brunch.

Travis: It is a combination of two words.

Teresa: Yes it is.

Travis: Brunchfast. No. It's breakfast and lunch. Why can I not remember... my favorite thing...

Teresa: Portmanteau.

Travis: Thank you! Thank you. It's not a good portmanteau. It's a bad portmanteau. Do you wanna know why?

Teresa: Why is that?

Travis: Because breakfast doesn't have a U in it.

Teresa: But lunch does.

Travis: Okay, but what I'm saying is... it's not a good—it's not—you're just forcing a portman—it is a, uh, sideways portmanteau. It is a, uh—

Teresa: A poor man's portmanteau. [laughs quietly]

Travis: Yes. A bastardized portmanteau. Can I say that word? Anyways. Because if it was bruckfast and lunch, brunch, that makes sense. Otherwise you're just taking lunch and switching the first two letters to make it brunch. You know what I mean?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: I didn't know that there were so many rules around portmanteau, that it had to share a vowel sound?

Travis: No, I'm just saying. Like, you can still do it, right? But it's not as good of a portmanteau. It's a poor portmanteau. A poor-manteau.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Right? That's... how you do it. Um, okay. So brunch is late lunch. Thanks, everybody, for listening. That's gonna do it for us this week.

Teresa: No. No. No. No. You got it the wrong way. It's not late lunch. It's late breakfast. Early lunch.

Travis: Oh, you're right. Okay. You know what? Let's erase everything we've said for the last four minutes. None of it matters.

Teresa: [laughs] Okay. But the question is, right? It has become part of our world, right?

Travis: [singing] Part of your world.

Teresa: I'm not gonna say around the world's world, but certainly here in the United States, and also, you know, places like the UK. Brunch is a thing that people do.

Travis: Yeah. But I feel—

Teresa: Why? The question that we will answer today is why, and how, and who?

Travis: I'm betting millennials.

Teresa: You know, I can see why you would say that. But the correct answer goes way, way, way further back than that.

Travis: Yeah, I thought that might be the case.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: I'm willing to bet that the UK has a much longer history of meals not at the times we think. 'Cause, like, supper is the—

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: No, you're right, you're right. It definitely was over there first. Um, okay, here we go. It seems like a recent social phenomenon, but it is in fact quite old. Because it is believed that many of the first brunches were English hunt breakfasts.

Travis: See, I knew it!

Teresa: Which were enjoyed by the leisure class in the 1890s.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Not the 1990s.

Teresa: No. 1890s.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: A hunt—

Travis: But they didn't call it brunch.

Teresa: No, not yet.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: But we do know when brunch first appeared in print.

Travis: Was that the 1990s?

Teresa: I shall get to it.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: So here is what happened. If you were a gentleman with a delightfully sprawling forest estate...

Travis: Am I a gentleman with a delightfully sprawling forest estate?

Teresa: Nope.

Travis: Oh man.

Teresa: It was customary for you and your fellow gentleman friends to rise very earlier, like before the sun, to spend your day fishing and shooting at birds and hunting or whatever. Right?

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Because that is when the animals are awake. You gotta be awake.

Travis: I think the animals are awake through the rest of the day, but that's when they're eating?

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: And so you probably didn't have the opportunity to eat much, maybe cold breads or whatever. Like, cold cut sandwiches or something before you left. But, like, to get up early enough to actually eat an expansive breakfast and then go hunting, I mean, you basically just wouldn't go to bed, right?

Travis: And you'd be sluggish!

Teresa: Yeah. So by the time you came back—

Travis: Because you would have to eat what you'd killed, so that's the important part. Can you imagine? Okay, listen. I know that's not what they were doing, but now I'm picturing these, like, 1890s, like, British gentlemen

on an expansive forest... estate or whatever, just going completely feral and jumping onto the quail they've just shot and devouring it right there. Like, "Yes, onward gentlemen! More!"

And that makes—is great. I love it.

Teresa: It's like you're writing a zombie fanfic or something.

Travis: More like werewolf. Uh, it's animalistic. They're fully cognizant.

Teresa: Oh, okay.

Travis: Like Lord of the Flies, except, like, it's actually—they're Lords. They are Lords. Duke of the Flies.

Teresa: So you would come back in late morning or early afternoon, right? Um, and you would be ravenous.

Travis: Yeah. 'Cause you couldn't eat any quails. Not while everyone's looking.

Teresa: [laughs] So the hunt breakfast was also, like you said, reliant on what was available, and obviously the taste of the owner.

Food historians can't really reach a consensus on what might have been served at the OG brunch. Many believe there were definitely eggs, but also stews, fruits, and sweets, along with pieces of meats of the things that you find at your estate, right? So... fowl, sheep, pigeons, hams, woodcocks, thrusses—thrushes, sorry—which is a bird. That's like a robin. Um, and, you know, if you caught something small enough that morning while you were hunting you could cook that up too.

Travis: Sure. But I imagine a lot of it—when you say, like, stews and hams and stuff, a lot of it was probably things that either, like, you started when you woke—like, the cook started, you know, when they woke up and it was like, it'll be ready by the time they get home, or stuff that's like, cured and ready to go so that the second they walk in, right?

Teresa: Or easy enough to make that morning, like drop biscuits and eggs, right?

Travis: Right. But what I'm saying is it wouldn't be like a normal breakfast where you would make it all in the time before they woke up, right? It's like, I'm not 100% sure when they'll be back, so I don't want something that timing-wise finishes cooking just in time for breakfast. I need stuff that is, like, ready to ladle out whenever they get back. So it's already cooked, but it keeps, you know, in the pot until it's ready, like a stew or cured meats and stuff like that.

Teresa: Yes, exactly. Um, this is a great theory. It all makes sense when you lay it out like that. But there's also another theory that—

Travis: They love mimosas!

Teresa: [laughs] Not yet.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: That you wouldn't have brunch if it weren't for Catholicism.

Travis: Okay?

Teresa: Because some historians believe that Catholics began to enjoy an after Sunday services meal. Uh, that was more of a late morning breakfast than it was an early dinner.

Travis: They have a little snack during Mass.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And then they go home and they eat brunch.

Teresa: Yes, but they would fast before Mass. Right?

Travis: That's why they're so cranky!

Teresa: To remain—

Travis: Everybody's showing up to Mass hangry!

Teresa: —pure.

Travis: Eat some food! Come on! This is 101. This isn't even like "Do germs exist?" This is like—you know they were all sitting there during Mass like... "I hate this." [wheezes]

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: "I should've had, like, a protein bar or something before I came."

Teresa: It does often remind me of hanger, some of the behavior. Um, okay. But whatever—

Travis: If I had been there, I would've said—I'd've been like, "Hey. Can we all agree? Jesus doesn't want us to all feel like this. Let's have a pancake breakfast. That's a very Southern Baptist thing. Have a pancake breakfast. We'll all fall asleep during the service."

Teresa: Did you have pancake breakfast before Mass? I mean, before the service? Or was it after?

Travis: Um... during.

[both laugh]

Travis: I dunno.

Teresa: Because I remember—

Travis: I have not attended church in 22 years. I do not remember.

Teresa: So, I was raised Catholic, and we would do those sorts of community building events after church, which usually there were several services so, like, there was probably, like, a nine o' clock, and then a 10:30,

and then, like, a 12:30 or something like that. So we would do those things after. But still, I mean, if you didn't eat before you went at nine o' clock, that's still a lot.

Travis: We had a cafeteria and, like, kitchen and stuff, so I'm willing to bet they were, like, serving breakfast, and somebody brought Jolly Pirate Donuts in almost every Sunday morning, so. [clicks tongue] There was that. You just had to hunt around the church and find 'em. Which my brothers and I got really good at.

Teresa: I'm sure you did. Okay. I promised to tell you about the actual word brunch.

Travis: Yeah. And I can't wait. But first... how about a word from another Max Fun show?

[theme music plays]

[music plays]

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Ross: Yes ma'am?

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Ross: A spirit of boredom?

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Ross: [simultaneously] Oh No Ross and Carrie.

[music plays and ends]

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: So it's a combination of the words breakfast and lunch.

Teresa: Yes it is. It wasn't coined until 1895.

Travis: I thought it'd be way later.

Teresa: Really?

Travis: Yeah!

Teresa: Well, they were doing in the 1890s, right? They had to have a word for it.

Travis: Yeah, but... there's just something about it that feels like such a modern word. When I think of, like, names for—right? That I'm thinking, there's breakfast, there's lunch, there's supper, there's high tea, there's afternoon tea.

Teresa: There's morning tea.

Travis: There's morning tea. Right? And so when I think—

Teresa: Elevenses.

Travis: Them calling it just, like, a combination of two words, just a portmanteau, feels so... I don't know. Like, modern and 90s to me. You know what I mean?

Teresa: Nope.

Travis: 1890s. Okay.

Teresa: So it was written by Guy Beringer wrote a famous article for *Hunters Weekly* entitled *Brunch: a plea*.

Travis: Huh. A plea!

Teresa: A plea!

Travis: "Please, everybody! Eat brunch!

Teresa: [laughs] I mean, kind of? So he talks about how—well, first he makes fun of gourmands. Always, always fun. And says that—

Travis: That's people who are, like, foodies, right? Foodies.

Teresa: Yeah, yeah.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Foodies to the extreme. Not just people who will eat one bite of the good thing. They eat the whole of the good thing.

Travis: I love eating the whole of a good thing.

Teresa: I know. I know. But sometimes that's all—that's everything, and that's a lot.

Travis: Alright.

Teresa: Um, says that dinner can be as fulfilling if not more fulfilling... than adult times.

Travis: Oh, I see.

Teresa: And straight up calls eggs and bacon a depression meal.

Travis: Okay! See, this is feeling very '90s. Isn't this feeling 1990s? Of, like, "I'd rather eat a good meal." Or like, "Ugh. I'm feeling so sad. Bring me a lot of eggs and bacon."

Teresa: Um, I mean, I guess so? I really equate '90s with, like, Kate Moss, right? "Nothing... tastes as good as skinny feels?"

Travis: I don't know. Gross.

Teresa: Nobody was eating.

Travis: Gross.

Teresa: Anyway. Here are some really great quotes. "Apart altogether from animal considerations, the arguments in favor of brunch are incontestable."

Travis: Ooh!

Teresa: "In the first place it renders early rising not only unnecessary but ridiculous. You get up when the world is warm, or at least when it is not so cold. You are therefore able to prolong your Saturday nights, heedless of that moral, quote, 'last train.' The fear of the next morning's reaction."

Travis: Okay, now, hold on. Now, hold on. Okay.

Teresa: Yeah. So at this point we're not getting up extra early to do things before we eat. Now we are staying in bed until it is brunch time.

Travis: But let's talk about the cycle of things, right? Because I know up till now I've said this a bunch of times but I'm gonna say it again. Change, like, the word choice, and this sounds like a blog post from the late 90s about, like, partying and, like, why brunch rules.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Of, like, "Don't worry about catching the train. You wake up hungover, who cares? Just sleep in and then you have brunch."

Teresa: Totes.

Travis: Right? Like... the cycle of things. The cycle of things.

Teresa: Here's another one. "Is any busy workaday man in a becomingly religious frame of mind rising after eight and nine o' clock on his only off morning?"

Travis: Thank you!

Teresa: "If he went to bed in good time the night before, well and good, but Saturday is Saturday and will remain so. More especially from seven onwards."

Travis: "Also, I hate Mondays!"

Teresa: [laughs] Yeah. "To a certain extent, I am pleading for brunch from selfish motives."

Travis: And let thou not talk to me befor'st I've had my coffee.

Teresa: [laughs] "I submit it is fully time that the old regime of Sunday breakfast made room for the 'new course' of Sunday brunch. PS: Beer and whiskey are admitted as substitutes for tea and coffee."

Travis: See?!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: The cycle of things.

Teresa: Indeed, yeah. So, you know—

Travis: "We've had this new idea, my love. It's called bottomless. [laughs] Bottomless whiskey. No? Okay, we're going to change that slightly. Maybe not whiskey. Um, maybe something we'll pretend that has fruit in it. Hmm... we'll work on it."

Teresa: We'll work on it. Bellinis. Um, Beringer provides a hilarious but earnest argument that the meal should replace the more formal Sunday supper, saying brunch is cheerful, sociable, and inciting. It is talk-compelling. It puts you in good temper. It makes you satisfied with yourself and your fellow beings. It sweeps away the worries and the cobwebs of the week.

So we're arguing for it to be—

Travis: Day drinking.

Teresa: Well, yeah. Yeah. But what we're arguing for it to be is the social event, where we're replacing the Sunday dinner, right? The formal dinner with this kind of... I mean, with this brunch.

Travis: It is interest, 'cause when I think about it, right? Like, if I'm somewhere, be it a time difference thing or, like, I'm at a convention where I slept in or something, I... if I have breakfast at, like, 11 AM, I don't think of it as brunch if I'm by myself. You know what I mean?

Teresa: Hmm, yes.

Travis: I'm not like, "Ahh. A single brunch." [laughs]

Teresa: [laughs] It is a social event.

Travis: I'm not saying it can't be. If you think of it that way, that's awesome. I'm just saying, like, I've never thought of myself—a solo late breakfast as brunch.

Teresa: Movies and TV shows tell me that you have to have at least three people.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: And the fifth character is New York City itself.

Teresa: Ahh! We'll talk about that. So although we've started in the UK and England at least, in 1890s, it really didn't become popular in the US until the 1920s.

Travis: Oh, with the—oh, is it the bright young things? Is it—

Teresa: Sure.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: I mean, it was kind of the age of excess in America, right? Um, the haves and have-nots, indeed.

Travis: The flappers and the flap-nots.

Teresa: Um, and Chicago is the first place I want to talk about. We'll get to New York. Why Chicago?

Travis: Why?

Teresa: You may ask—you do ask. Because it's the halfway point on the trans-continental train, this journey made by, like, Hollywood celebrities and other elite people from New York and California.

Travis: Not... not geographically halfway.

Teresa: No. Not geographically. But, like, um...

Travis: Socially.

Teresa: Socially halfway. By the time that fancy people arrived in Chicago, they were hungry for their late morning meal. But if you were traveling on a Sunday, most restaurants were closed so that the owners could go to church.

Here is where brunch happens. 'Cause the local hotels were like, "What? Did you say that Josephine Baker's coming to Chicago and wants a gin at 11 AM? We'll set up some tables!"

Travis: Zoey Deschanel?

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: What a get. I didn't know we got Zoey on our podcast.

Teresa: [laughs] So in lieu of restaurants, many hotels like the Pump Room at the famous Ambassador Hotel, which is now called the Public, were happy to create their own menus to draw in this upscale crowd. And, you know, you had to be upscale to get away with day drinking in the 1920s.

Travis: Sure.

Teresa: Um, and so that's the reason why brunch in this country especially is associated with wealth and leisure. It was glamorous. It was exclusive. It took place in hotels that looked more like castles, right?

Travis: It does—it also, though, has... I don't know. Maybe this is a, uh—a... the Catch-22 of it, I guess. But it has a certain feel of excess and, like, rich and stuff, because you wake up late, you eat a bunch and drink a bunch. You're not doing much for the rest of the day either, if we're being honest.

Teresa: That's true! Um, in the 1930s cookbooks began to offer recipes and tips for hostesses across the country about brunch. One of the tips was to make alcoholic beverages available for your, ahem, male guests. But it was still unsightly for a woman to be day drinking!

Travis: They probably needed it more, if we're being honest.

Teresa: So some of these—[wheezes]—some of these cookbooks cite some delicious mocktails for the ladies. Which I think is... BS. Anyway.

Travis: You know they were getting spiked, right? Like, "Ah yeah, this is a mocktail. And I'm just gonna add a little whiskey to it." Right?

Teresa: But this is where we get, like, the clamato. Right?

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: It's this time period. Anyway. Lucky for us, by the early 1950s the middle class brought brunch to the mainstream, and also began to smash the bad press surrounding weekend day drinking. One article cited that brunch got more popular in the '50s because women were working now, and needed a weekend respite.

I'm not sure about that. Women have always been working.

Travis: And definitely always needed a drink.

Teresa: [laughs quietly] Now, I'm not saying that the way to solve your problems is alcohol. I'm just saying one way that some people relax is to have an alcoholic beverage.

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: Um, brunch, like I said, becoming more popular in the 1950s. 1980s is where we start to think about brunch as, like...

Travis: Culture?

Teresa: Culture, exactly. Um, as it turns out, Reagan's America was really into this idea, right? Of over consumption and lavish brunch buffets and—

Travis: Anything you could do to show, um, class difference.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And as we moved in the '90s and early 2000s, brunch got more popular. And this is where we see it hit its kind of, like, pop culture pinnacle in... you said it earlier...

Travis: Sex and the City?

Teresa: Sex and the City! The show was probably even the reason that Food and Wine magazine named New York City as the best brunch city in the US.

Travis: Eh.

Teresa: Probably.

Travis: No, I'm saying it probably is. I'm just saying—and no offense to New York—I just don't think New York City is the best brunch city in the US. I'd rather go to New Orleans.

Teresa: Ohh! That's a good idea.

Travis: I'd rather go—I would rather go—[sighs] If it's up to me, my ideal brunch—thank you for asking.

Teresa: Okay, I guess. [laughs]

Travis: I want something a lot more Scandinavian-based for me. Uh, where it's lots of bread. Give me some, uh, pickled fish. Uh, well, I was about to say, like, on the other hand I also love, like, a bagel and lox, at which point New York City is where I would go. You know what? I think I just like brunch. I've come around on it.

Teresa: [laughs] You've turned 180 degrees. You love it. You know what I thought you were gonna say? I thought you were gonna talk more about, like, Atlanta, right? With the chicken and waffles.

Travis: Oh, I do love that as well.

Teresa: Yeah, you do.

Travis: I also like German food, so I'm happy to be here in Cincinnati where I can get, you know, some goetta. I love that as well.

Teresa: Goetta and hash browns.

Travis: Oh. Yes please.

Teresa: Um—

Travis: Some sauerkraut? Ooh.

Teresa: Yeah. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. And, I mean—

Travis: I'm really hungry.

Teresa: Listen, if you want all of this you should just go to Vegas, where you can get one of those buffet brunches.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: You could even have crab legs and lobster and oysters.

Travis: Yes. Yeah. Okay. Yes.

Teresa: Yes? [laughs]

Travis: Are you asking if want to go to Vegas today?

Teresa: No, it's not the weekend.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Teresa: As the dowager empress would—the—[laughs]

Travis: "[British accent] It's not the weekend."

Teresa: "What is a week end?" [laughs] Anyway. There are lots of times when people even make their own brunch at home. Mother's Day—

Travis: What?!

Teresa: Mother's Day is a big time for brunch at home. Easter. Other kind of, like, spring-ish holidays, right?

Travis: So let's talk about some etiquette.

Teresa: Yes. If you are going out to brunch, I think that it is imperative that you are patient. There are lots of people who like to do this, especially if you don't get there early, right? And who wants to get to brunch early?

Travis: Well, and isn't that, like, the whole point? Like, I feel like a big part of brunch is that it is not... going back to the hunt breakfast, right? Where it's just like, we're not gonna rush before we go. We'll come back and then have a leisurely meal. You know, a lengthy meal. Right?

Teresa: This is a leisurely time. People do like to take their time. A lot of restaurants understand this and they—you know, you have to wait.

Travis: Especially if it's a social thing. Where—I've been a server at places before. It's hard to gauge, like, "Do I want to go over? They seem to be in the middle of a conversation. I don't want to interrupt the flow of whatever they're talking about. They still seem to have, like, half full glasses and, you know, they haven't finished their plates or whatever."

And meanwhile you're sitting there thinking like, "We're talking till the waiter's coming over or whatever."

We don't know.

Teresa: Yeah. Here's another thing. Stick to the menu. Because, again, brunches can be a very, extremely busy time for restaurants, so they often have a pretty set, pared-down menu. There are usually three or four

selections of sweet-type breakfast-y things, and then there are three or four selections of savory-type lunch-y things. Right?

Travis: Yes.

Teresa: And they serve these things only at this time. Uh, because, you know, it's not like dinner, right? It's not quite lunch. It's not quite breakfast. Um, so a lot of these things can be a little more time consuming for the kitchen to make. If you're gonna order a frappuccino, now is not the time. Maybe stick to your latte. Keep things a little more simple.

Travis: Streamlined.

Teresa: And obviously—I... I have seen this on TV on movies. And it pains me to say that I can't believe that there are people who actually do this. They seat themselves at brunch. You see an empty table and you walk up and sit down? That's not how this works.

Do not seat yourself, because restaurants have their own specific plan to get through this brunch rush. Not to mention, it's probably sectioned in a specific way to make sure the servers get an equal amount of tables. The hostess or host will seat you.

Um, and do your best not to special order. Things like "No sour cream, no onions," that's—that's one thing. But if you're trying to cobble together "Well, I want pancakes and a side of bacon, but that's not an option. Can I just just blah, blah, blah?" No, not really. You can't. Try not to special order, because a lot is going through the kitchen.

Travis: I would say—I would push back a little bit.

Teresa: Hmm...

Travis: Just to say there's never... if the question is, "Is it possible to, like, substitute this for this?" And they say "No." Take that answer, right? Because if you're like, "But I'm not really wild about bacon. Uh, is there any way I could get a side of the fruit instead?" And they're like, "Ah, we can't really do substitutions," or whatever, there's your answer.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Right? But... then tip better. You know what I mean?

Teresa: [laughs] Um, here is a good rule for those bottomless mimosa brunchings.

Travis: Put some pants on!

Teresa: [laughs] Yes?

Travis: What are you doing? You're at a restaurant.

Teresa: There should be no more alcohol glasses on the table than there are people. Brunch is famous for having several beverages, I get it. But no one person should have more than one alcohol drink. If you want your water and your coffee and your mimosa, that's fine. That's fine.

Travis: It's encouraged, especially if you're neurodivergent.

Teresa: [laughs] But if you're having your water and your coffee and your coffee-with-Bailey's or then a mimosa and then a Bellini and then a—like, all this stuff, right? You don't want so much of that stuff.

Travis: Not at the same time.

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: There's nothing against you finish one drink and you're like, "I would like to try a different kind of drink." That's fine.

Teresa: Yes. I'm talking about the number of drinks—like, alcoholic drinks on the table. One per person at a time.

Travis: I would also say, as a 40-year-old old person, if you're going for this to be a social occasion and enjoy time with your friends and make memories... do not drink so much so fast at the beginning that you miss out

on the chance to form said memories and enjoy the company of others. I trust you to have a gauge on that yourself. But it's just something about there's a different between relaxing and overindulging.

And, good idea to have either a designated driver that will be taking you home safely, or engage in some kind of ride service that you trust and feel safe.

And, you know, I personally push for when the behavior of the table starts to move from "We're having fun" to "We are going to act like we're the only people in the whole restaurant... "

Teresa: Hmm.

Travis: Maybe it's time to hit the road.

Teresa: That's true. Um, do please tip as much as you would during dinner service, okay? Make sure that your server knows that you appreciate them. Maybe in case something like you just described happens. Tip accordingly for that as well.

Travis: And also keep in mind that because brunch is usually a lengthier endeavor, it means less table turnover for those servers, right? So maybe during a breakfast or a lunch they might have 20 tables in the time that they're there, or whatever. And during brunch it's more like 10 to 12, right? So if your meal ends up going past, I would say, an hour and a half, two hours, you know, as it continues on and you guys sit around and hang out, maybe start clicking up from, like, 20%, 22%, you know? Up in your head.

Especially if it starts to be like, "We're not ordering any more food," right? "We're just sitting here sipping our coffee." But it was, like, another 30 minutes of being at the table hanging out and, like, enjoying time together. That's less table turnover for the servers, which means less tips for them.

Teresa: There are some that would argue that once you are finished eating that it is time to move on and maybe socialize at a different venue.

Travis: I agree. But if you don't end up doing that, then just tip accordingly.

Teresa: Yes. Tip accordingly. Um, it is well known throughout the restaurant industry that brunch is a nightmare shift to work. Um, and it is so notably bonkers at some places that chefs almost all despise it. Anthony Bourdain himself actually has a hilarious quote about how much he hated working brunch, saying "Brunch is nothing but a horrible, cynical way of unloading leftovers and charging three times as much as you ordinarily charge for breakfast. It's the least possible shift for cooks. I personally hate it. I have all sorts of deep, highly traumatic memories of my years cooking brunch. Hideous."

Travis: That's how I felt about Black Friday.

Teresa: Oh yeah? [laughs] All that being said, brunch can be a beautiful, wonderful, leisurely time to spend with your friends, and a lot of places go out of their way to make you comfortable and to make it look beautiful and luxurious.

Lizzie Post recommends that you can take all the pictures you want when the food and the drinks arrive, and then stow away your phones for the rest of the meal so that you can enjoy each others company.

Travis: There you go. Hey, everybody. Thanks so much for enjoying our company. Um, we want to thank our editor, Rachel, without whom we could not make this show. We want to thank our researcher, Alexx, without whom we could not make this show. And we want to thank you for listening. We could make this show without you, but it would feel so hollow. So empty.

Teresa: [laughs] We don't want to.

Travis: We don't want to. We want to let everyone know, we do want to tell you that My Brother, My Brother, and Me and Adventure Zone are coming to Chicago. Speaking of Chicago, we're going to be there for both some live shows and C2E2 in April. April 24th we're doing My Brother, My Brother, and Me. April 25th we're doing The Adventure Zone, and April 26th through the 28th we're going to be at C2E2. The schedule is to be announced.

Um, you can get your C2E2 badges now, but you do not need a badge to attend the live show. Tickets for those go on sale today if you're listening to this on Friday, March 1st, at 10 AM local time.

Um, so they should be on sale now! Go, you fools! What are you waiting for? Bit.ly/mcelroytours. And because it is March 1st, that means new merch over at the merch store, mcelroymerch.com.

What else, Teresa?

Teresa: We always thank Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Also, thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group, Shmanners Fanners. If you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans, go ahead and join that group today. As always, we are always taking your topic submissions, your questions, your queries, your idioms!

Send those to shmannerscast@gmail.com, and say hi to Alexx, because she reads every one.

Travis: And that's gonna do it for us, so join us again next week.

Teresa: No RSVP required!

Travis: You've been listening to Shmanners...

Teresa: Manners, Shmanners! Get it?

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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