



All Ears English Episode 171:

Learn How to Hack Your American Eating Habits with a Food Expert

Gabby: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 171: “Learn How to Hack Your American Eating Habits with a Food Expert.”

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, where you’ll finally get real, native English conversation with your hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’ and Gabby Wallace, the ‘Language Angel’, from Boston, USA.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Do you wanna (want to) to eat like a New Englander from the United States, but you’re afraid you’ll gain weight. Today, Grace Lentini, from Graceful Dining, will show you how to do it right.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Gabby, I heard you’re moving to Japan. Are you gonna (going to) leave me here in Boston?



Gabby: Yeah, it's true Lindsay. I'm going to Tokyo, but, (you know), the wonderful thing is just like our listeners can listen to our podcasts from anywhere, we can make it from anywhere. So it's gonna (going to) be okay. We'll continue All Ears English...

Lindsay: That's right.

Gabby: ...internationally.

Lindsay: That's right. Nothing's gonna (going to) change. You're going to continue to get Lindsay and Gabby four mornings a week, so keep showing up.

Gabby: So, are you listeners in Tokyo? Are you in Japan? If so, we want you to come to AllEarsEnglish.com/Japan, and sign up there if you would be interested in attending a live event with Lindsay and myself for All Ears English. So once again, AllEarsEnglish.com/Japan. Go sign up now.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Hey, Gabby.

Gabby: Hey Lindsay, what's up?

Lindsay: I'm doing great today. Thank you and you?

Gabby: Awesome. I am so excited because we have a special guest today. Her name is Grace Lentini, food blogger, editor, photographer and a lover of all things nature.

Lindsay: Wow!

Gabby: Grace, what's up?

Grace: Thank you so much for having me guys.

Lindsay: Thanks for coming.

Gabby: Yeah. We're really excited because, (ugh), I love food.

Lindsay: (Ugh), who doesn't love to talk about food, right?



Gabby: And we wanna (want to) share about food with our listeners.

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: We've had a lot of questions about food, (you know), "What is the food like in the United States? What is the food like in Boston?"

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: "How can I go to the US without gaining weight?"

Lindsay: Oh, that's a common worry of so many people...

Gabby: It's not only a worry...

Lindsay: ...in the US.

Gabby: ...but, (I mean), it's, it's a reality. I've seen...

Lindsay: Problem.

Gabby: ...exchange students who come here for three weeks, and...

Lindsay: In three weeks?

Gabby: ...in three weeks and they gain 15 pounds. That's like, that's like eight kilos. I'm not even kidding. So we're gonna (going to) get to that. But I wanna (want to) ask Grace, first of all, about, (you know), what are some special dishes that you really would wanna (want to) try if you have the chance to come to New England. Because Grace, you're based in Rhode Island, and that's part of New England. And, and you're (kind of)...

Grace: Yep.

Gabby: ...you're into the food scene here.

Lindsay: What is New England, first of all?

Gabby: Oh well, New England, (right).

Lindsay: Let's make sure we know.



Gabby: So, let's see. Was it Maine...?

Lindsay: New England.

Gabby: ...New Hampshire.

Lindsay: Vermont.

Gabby: Vermont, Massachusetts.

Lindsay: Rhode Island, Connecticut, right?

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Okay.

Gabby: Cool.

Grace: [indiscernible 03:19].

Gabby: So...

Grace: Yeah, (I mean)...

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: ...the first thing I think about, (you know), if, if anyone comes to New England, you have to have the seafood.

Gabby: Yes.

Lindsay: Yes.

Grace: Englishers are so connected to the ocean, there's been, (um), entire industries, (you know), based on seafood and it's just quintessential New England. (You know), first things that come to my mind if you're gonna (going to) be in Boston, for example, or Massachusetts, the fishing industry is huge. (You know)...

Gabby: Wow.

Grace: ...you've got to try the codfish.



Lindsay: Ooh.

Grace: If you're gonna (going to) be in Maine, you have to try the lobster. There's no...

Lindsay: Yes.

Grace: ...other place that you can get amazing Maine lobster than, (you know), than in New England.

Lindsay: Yes.

Gabby: (Mm).

Grace: And of course, in Rhode Island, (um), you have to try the squid, (um)...

Lindsay: Ooh.

Grace: ...which you can make, you can have calamari from that.

Lindsay: (Hm).

Grace: And actually, the official state appetizer is calamari.

Gabby: Oh.

Lindsay: Oh, I didn't know that.

Grace: Yeah.

Gabby: Awesome.

Grace: Thank god our legislature took time out of their day to, (uh), make sure we had an official state appetizer.

Gabby: Yes.

Grace: (Um), but aside from that, you also really have to try some of the amazing shellfish we have, like the quahogs which are really big clams...

Gabby: Oh.



Grace: ...or oysters on the half shell.

Lindsay: Oh.

Grace: Seafood, seafood, seafood.

Gabby: Oh, it sounds so good.

Lindsay: Makes me hungry.

Gabby: (You know), that's a lot of good vocabulary too. (Like) I don't think, (like), quahog is not...

Lindsay: I didn't know that before today.

Gabby: ...it's not very well known, right? Yeah. Actually, I was thinking, 'What's a quahog? Somebody tell me.' So you said it's a really big clam?

Grace: Exactly.

Lindsay: Okay.

Grace: Yeah. (I mean), if you, if you make a fist?

Gabby: (Mm-hm).

Grace: Imagine a clam being the size of your fist.

Gabby: Oh my gosh.

Lindsay: Whoa.

Gabby: Yum.

Lindsay: Sounds good.

Grace: So when you open that bad boy up, that's a lot of good meat and...

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: ...that's where you can make really good clam chowder, that's where you can make...



Lindsay: Oh, clam chowder. Oh!

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: [indiscernible 05:09] (Um), have you, have either of you ever had a 'Stuffie'?

Gabby: A what?

Grace: It's called a 'Stuffie'. So it's a stuffed clam.

Both: Oh!

Grace: So you take half of the clam, (um), half of the clam shell, you chop up the clam itself.

Gabby: (Mm-hm).

Grace: You, (you know), do a bunch of, (uh), like bread stuffing and you can put maybe, (like), some linguica or chourico, some, (like) Portuguese sausage in there.

Gabby: Oh.

Grace: And then you bake it with a bunch of spices and you serve it with a little lemon and Tabasco and it's amazing.

Gabby: Oh my gosh.

Lindsay: Wow.

Gabby: That sounds good.

Lindsay: I've been missing all these foods.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: I can't believe it.

Gabby: We have to get out more.

Lindsay: I know. We work too hard.



Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: You have to come down to Rhode Island and I will feed you all of the amazing things.

Lindsay: Sounds great.

Gabby: That would be great. Okay. So seafood and then, so you can have seafood just itself, but it sounds like there's (there are) different kinds of, (like), stews, clam chowder...

Grace: Absolutely.

Gabby: (Um), anything else that's really a must eats in New England?

Grace: Well, (um) do we wanna (want to) talk about, (like), how to have these things healthy or just, (like) (re-), or, or just things that you really wanna (want to) have?

Gabby: Well, why don't we talk about having them healthy, because I know there's...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...a lot of different foods that we can try in New England and we have all different categories too, but I like focusing on the seafood 'cause (because) that's really special. (You know), we are on the ocean. So let's talk about how can you try these dishes and not gain eight kilos.

Lindsay: Right. 'Cause (because) our listeners, they wanna (want to) come here and enjoy the food but that is a concern as we've said before. So...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...what's the magic formula?

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: So, so with, (you know), a-a-a-a big thing in the United States, New England, anywhere, is just portion sizes.



Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: (Mm).

Grace: (You know), people come here and you are just overwhelmed with the amount of food that comes on a plate in a restaurant.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Grace: And one of the first things that you can do is when you look at a plate, you can say to yourself, 'Okay, this could feed two people'.

Gabby: Right.

Grace: And so, 'I'm not going to eat the whole thing'. So it's portion control, the first thing.

Gabby: Okay. Perfect. And (ca-), (may-), maybe like decide that before you get your dish...

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: ...and you could split with...

Grace: Yeah.

Gabby: ...someone if you're eating out together or maybe take half of it home.

Lindsay: Or even ask before they serve the food, maybe, ask them to wrap up half of it.

Gabby: There you go.

Lindsay: Right?

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: (Like), (I mean), an-, another thing and, and one of you had suggested it is sharing. (You know), one of...

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).



Grace: ...the best things about going to a new restaurant is trying as many different things as possible.

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: And if each of you gets one dish and that's all you get, it's, (I mean), it's fun and it's delicious, but why not get a couple of smaller appetizers.

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: So you can try a lot of different things.

Lindsay: (Mm).

Grace: And then you share and you might eat less. Maybe, I don't know.

Gabby: That's a good tip, yeah. So...

Grace: Yeah.

Gabby: ...(I mean), for our audience, maybe we could give some phrases for, (um), eating half of, half of the portion. You could say, (um), "Can I get half of this to go?"

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: Or does anybody really say doggie bag anymore?

Lindsay: I say it.

Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: Maybe – what do you think, Grace?

Grace: I, I totally agree. (You know), say (um), "Could I have half of this wrapped up?" (Um), (you know), just immediately. (Um), and, and sometimes, (um), (you know), maybe, they'll just withhold half of it and then cook it fresh before you leave. That way...

Lindsay: Oh!

Grace: ...it's not sitting there the whole time. So I think that's a great idea...



Gabby: Great.

Grace: ...(um), to, to deal with portion control.

Lindsay: (Mm-hm).

Grace: (Um), and then a lot of places have small plates. You can order from the small plates menu.

Gabby: Oh yeah.

Grace: Or you can ask, (um), "Can I have this appetizer as an entrée?"

Gabby: Oh.

Lindsay: Oh, right. So, that's another great simple solution. Just order an appetizer...

Gabby: Right.

Lindsay: ...instead of an entrée and maybe a salad and an appetizer or something.

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: There you go...

Gabby: Cool. How 'bout (about)...?

Grace: And then...

Gabby: Yeah, go ahead.

Grace: Oh, and, and then, (um) also talking about (um), (you know), health-conscious meals...

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: ...(um), so much, so much of this New England seafood is, is fried...

Lindsay: Yes.



Grace: ...which is delicious, but there are healthier options. And really healthy options, instead of being fried, or you can ask, (um), if they have any of the seafood baked...

Gabby: (Mm).

Grace: ...grilled, broiled, or boiled.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: Oh, okay. Can we talk a little about the difference because I'm not completely sure – (um) maybe, we have to look these up, but what's...

Grace: (Uh-huh).

Gabby: ...the difference between like 'broiled' with an 'R', b-r-o-i-l-e-d, and 'boiled', b-o-i-l-e-d?

Grace: Yes. So when you *broil* something, with an 'R', you're taking something and putting it in an oven in a very hot portion of the oven, (uh), o-o-of the oven, excuse me.

Gabby: Sure.

Grace: And so, it's being cooked under direct heat...

Gabby: Okay.

Grace: ...as opposed to being, (you know), coated in a batter and fried in a fryer later in oil.

Gabby: (Mm).

Grace: And if you are *boiling* something, b-o-i-l, (um), you're putting it in water and cooking it until it's finished.

Gabby: Got it. Okay.

Grace: Yep.



Gabby: And then, 'grilled', is – I guess, where you – well, you might have a grill actually if you're cooking outdoors, but maybe, maybe you'd be cooking on a stove top in a pan.

Grace: Well, you are right. Typically grills are outside.

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: (Um), and I think in, in some, (uh), well, (act-), actually, I think most kitchens, (um), if you're in a professional kitchen, they'll have a grill top, (um), on top of the stove and there's direct heat under it. So...

Gabby: Okay.

Grace: ...typically if you're outside, you'll be grilling something...

Lindsay: Yes.

Grace: ...on a grill. But if you're inside, you will broil it under direct heat...

Gabby: (Uh-huh).

Grace: ...under a plank, under a fire in the oven.

Lindsay: Okay.

Grace: So it's sort of an inside versus outside option.

Gabby: Interesting. Okay. And then baked is just in the oven (kind of) in the bigger part of the oven, right?

Grace: Exactly.

Gabby: Okay.

Grace: Baked at a lower temperature.

Gabby: Ah-ha!

Grace: So when, when you bake something, (you know), fish or something, it's usually at about 350 degrees Fahrenheit.



Gabby: (Um).

Grace: If you broil something, b-r-o-i-l, then you're typically, (um), cooking it at a high heat, maybe in the 500s or, (you know), mid-400 range.

Gabby: Oh wow.

Lindsay: This is really good to know.

Gabby: I know.

Lindsay: **[indiscernible 11:32].**

Gabby: Grace, you're so good. This is, (uh)...

Lindsay: I'm being enlightened.

Gabby: Yeah. This is great info.

Grace: Thank you guys.

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: I could talk about this all day.

Gabby: Oh it's great. (Um), I know you wanted to share one other tip for, (kind of), eating, healthy but also enjoying these regional dishes.

Grace: Yes.

Gabby: (Um) we've been talking about...

Grace: So...

Gabby: Yeah, yeah, go ahead.

Grace: Oh. Yeah, so, another great way to experience local seafood is to have it raw...

Gabby: Ooh.



Grace: ...which may sound a little scary because, if its raw does that mean it's still alive? Well, I hope so, because that's how you want to eat it. If it's not alive don't eat it.

Gabby: Wow.

Lindsay: Ooh.

Grace: So you can have oysters on the half shell, which is really delicious. It's not for everybody...

Lindsay: (Um).

Grace: ...but, (um), some people think it's an aphrodisiac.

Gabby: Ooh.

Grace: And that's the reason enough for me to eat it.

Gabby: So...

Grace: So you'll take an oyster, which is a shellfish, it's (um) – and, and then they'll shuck it. So they'll cut it in half and they'll take the top half of the oyster shell off, and then sitting in the bottom half of the oyster shell is actually the oyster. And then what you do is you squeeze a little lemon on it and a little bit of cocktail sauce...

Gabby: (Um).

Grace: ...which usually is made of tomato, a little horse radish, (um), and a couple of other things that I can't remember off the top of my head, (um), and you just slurp it down.

Gabby: (Um) my mouth is watering.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: I'm hungry.

Grace: It's, it, it's really delicious. It's great as an appetizer. (Um), it's, it's great as a snack even.



Lindsay: Yeah.

Grace: It, it's great – (I mean), imagine sitting on a dock...

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

Grace: ...right on the ocean...

Lindsay: (Mm).

Grace: ...slurping a couple of oysters on the half shell.

Gabby: Yummy.

Grace: With, (you know), a couple of Coronas or something.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Oh.

Grace: Or just, (you know), a couple of seasonal beers, maybe – actually a Narragansett Del Shandy perhaps.

Lindsay: Ooh.

Gabby: Oh, very local.

Lindsay: Or a white wine even.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: That's good too. (Um).

Gabby: Wow. That's awesome. I'm just – Oh, I wanna (want to) try that right now. (Um), there's, there's one other thing I think – and a lot of (um), yeah, a lot of meals you'll have dipping sauces or, (like), (um), spreads or, (um), maybe dressings that are oil-based and we know oil – it can be good but it can add on some calories to your meals. So...

Grace: Yes.



Gabby: ...we were talking earlier about asking for those sauces or dressings or spreads or whatever it is on the side.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Grace: That's such a great idea, (you know), because (uh), (um), usually when, when they put it on the side, it's in a little container and you get to see it exactly how much you're putting into your body.

Lindsay: (Mm).

Gabby: Yeah. Ooh. That's a good point.

Grace: Otherwise, (you know), if – even, e-even a salad, if, i-if the chef dresses it, (you know), they put on what *they think* the right amount is. And, (you know), (some-), sometimes it's, (you know), a light amount, but sometimes it's really dripping...

Both: Yeah.

Grace: ...with all of that dressing, and it's too much. So if you have it on the side, it's a more controllable quantity...

Gabby: Definitely.

Grace: ...to put into your body.

Gabby: Definitely. Definitely.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: So you could either say, (you know), "Can I have the dip on the side," or...

Lindsay: Or the dressing.

Gabby: ...or "the dressing on the side?" And also if there's an ingredient like mayonnaise, you might say "Hold the mayo."

Grace: "Hold the mayo."

Gabby: "Hold the mayo", which means no mayo.



Lindsay: Right. That's a great phrase, very typical.

Gabby: Yeah. (I mean), you can say "No mayo." But it's more, maybe more natural, more native to say "Hold the mayo."

Lindsay: Right.

Grace: Yeah.

Lindsay: Right.

Grace: Negative. And I, and I thought of something else.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Grace: (You know), a-a lot of times, (um), when you're trying to watch what you put into your body...

Gabby: Yep.

Grace: ...just cutting out a hundred calories here or there can really make a big difference at the end of the week...

Gabby: Yeah.

Grace: ...ask for no cheese on a sandwich.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: (Mm).

Gabby: Yeah, and that's totally okay. I think that restaurants and the wait staff are very accommodating if you just ask. You can say, (um) "No cheese please." or "Hold the cheese." And it's totally normal.

Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: It's not going to offend anyone.

Lindsay: Yeah. It's really okay to ask for what you need in a restaurant.

Gabby: Yeah.



Grace: Yes. (You know), they're – people are there to really serve you, and...

Gabby: (Uh-hm).

Grace: ...(um) they want to make your experiences enjoyable as possible and if part of your experience is eating healthy while you're there, I have never had an issue with someone not accommodating that request.

Gabby: Ah, that's great.

Lindsay: Great. Great.

Gabby: Well, it's encouraging to me that I can still try all of these great foods in a healthy way.

Lindsay: Yeah. Now, I'm really hungry as well.

Gabby: I know.

Lindsay: I wanna (want to) go out and try some of this stuff.

Grace: You do.

Lindsay: Well, this is great.

Gabby: So just to recap, (um) you can try to just have half the portion, (um), have half of it wrapped to go and then eat half of a portion or share it with your friend. (Um), you can ask for grilled, broiled, baked, boiled, raw instead of fried and you could ask to hold, (uh), hold an (agreement), (uh), ingredient that's a little, (um), heavy or ask for it on the side. So those are three ways that you can stay healthy while you try some great food here in the US. Cool.

Grace: Absolutely.

Lindsay: Cool.

Gabby: So Grace, you have a great blog, (um), I don't know if you wanna (want to) share that maybe for people to check out some of your, your pictures and writing, (um), about New England foods.



Grace: I would love that.

Gabby: Great.

Grace: (Um), the website is www.gracefuldining.blogspot.com and, (uh), it's, it's, it's a combination of reviews of my favorite places. (Uh), it includes a lot of breakfast places, that's my favorite...

Lindsay: (Mm).

Grace: ...meal of the day.

Gabby: Yes.

Grace: Well, besides dessert, but dessert isn't really a meal. But that's for another topic. (Um) everything in, (uh), in, in reason and, (um), if you wanna (want to) follow me on Twitter, (um), I post all sorts of gardening adventures, food adventures, life adventures and my, (uh), handle is @gracie_nomnom, like you're eating.

Gabby: Okay so "Gracie", how do you spell that?

Grace: That's G-r-a-c-i-e underscore n-o-m-n-o-m.

Gabby: Got it.

Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: Got it.

Lindsay: Very cool.

Gabby: I'll make sure that I'm following you on Twitter because I wanna (want to) see these adventure pictures. It sounds great.

Lindsay: This has been fantastic.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Thank you so much for taking the time to come on today.

Grace: Oh my pleasure. Thank you for having me.



Gabby: Awesome. Thanks Grace, we'll talk to you soon.

Grace: Bye.

Gabby: Bye.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you wanna (want to) put your ears into English more often, be sure to subscribe to our podcast in iTunes on your computer or on your smartphone. Thanks so much for listening and see you next time.

