

# Last meal

If you could place an order for your final bite to eat, what would it be?  
**FRAN LEBOWITZ** talks us through her choice.



**Without question, the worst food in New York is in my apartment.**

I hate to cook but I love to eat. I happen to have, maybe not wholly by chance, a number of friends who are fantastic cooks but I am not to be counted among them. So, my last meal could be in a restaurant.

**I would prefer to be oblivious to the fact it was my last meal.** The only people in this country who know it's their last meal are people on death row.

**I had a fantastic meal the other night at Kappo Masa, one of the best meals I've ever had.** And I'm old, and I've eaten a lot of meals. It's basically a sushi restaurant. We had something that I never order: caviar. I don't mean a few little eggs, I mean mounds of caviar, and that was fantastic. Someone said to me, "Do you go there a lot?" and I said, "Only if someone invites me." It's one of the most expensive restaurants in New York and there's never an empty seat, which just proves to me, aside from how good the restaurant is, there are so many rich people in New York.

**My mother's parents owned a restaurant and my grandfather was the cook.** This was not in any way a fancy restaurant. They lived in what was, at that time, a mill town in Connecticut and it was the only restaurant in town.

**My grandfather happened to be the Albert Einstein of potato pancakes.** They were so good that I never eat them



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because both my mother and her sister tried to make them after he died and they just weren't the same. They would say, "But it's exactly his recipe." My mother and my aunt used a Cuisinart, but my grandfather grated the potatoes by hand over newspaper. It must have been the newsprint that made them so delicious.

**Taste and smell are the most evocative things.** Even Proust thought this – not just me. My father, for instance, smoked a pipe. Men don't smoke pipes anymore, you very rarely see it, but every once in a while, I'll be walking the street and smell pipe tobacco and instantly think of my father.

**I'm a very formal eater.** Even if I'm just going to eat an apple, I set the table. I put napkins, a knife, a plate. I sit down. And I live by myself, so this is not for the pleasure of anyone else. I have friends who eat in their bedrooms. I would never do that. I don't enjoy it.

**The only thing I actually prepare myself is coffee.** I happen to make fantastic coffee. I've hardly ever had coffee as good as my own. You see, everywhere in the world, people walking around with cups of coffee they buy. I would do that if I was stranded outside of my own home. But to me, it's horrible.

**The two kinds of people who provide the most pleasure to human beings are good cooks and good musicians.** There are other things that interest me more in certain ways, but those are the greatest sources of pleasure. You don't need the cooperation of other people to eat or to hear music.

*An Evening with Fran Lebowitz* is touring Australia and New Zealand, May 19-28.