

Food Fight Adds Spice To Marriage

I am possibly the world's most reluctant cook.

When 5 o'clock rolls around, and my husband bursts through the door with the unspoken question universal to men everywhere (What's for dinner?), I sigh inwardly and glance over at the kitchen counter, where hopefully I have put out meat to thaw.

My husband — who after two years of marriage is beginning to suspect his wife is not exactly an inventive, creative, apron-bedecked cook — gamely holds his tongue, mulling over his strategy to extract dinner information. He knows my reaction can border on irritable, and proceeds carefully, as past responses include:

1) Deep sigh. "We're on our own tonight. I'll boil you some eggs if you want. Besides we just got deli meat from Wal-Mart. Can't you fix a sandwich?"
2) "Oh man! I forgot to put out meat for dinner. Ummm — I was hoping you would bring home a pizza." Imploring gaze, eyes wide, arms outstretched helplessly.

3) His personal favorite, which is a freshly lipsticked, fluffed and perfumed wife in front of the stove stirring something, entrée smells tantalizingly through the air. Background music fills the house and I am humming. This does not happen often.

4) "Wanna grill tonight?" This is the compromise approach. I have had the foresight to actually thaw the main dish, and figure he can cook it, and I'll toss a salad. Doesn't matter that it may be below zero outside.

My husband is what I refer to as a 'foodist' and I am of the 'non-foodist' persuasion (food is fuel and a bothersome necessity). A 'foodist' is strictly concerned with quality of the food, and does not care or notice aesthetics. A 'non-foodist' is more concerned with atmosphere and warm conversation around the event than the actual food.



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We are still learning about each other in this area.

For instance, if my husband walks through the door after work and notes I have not started dinner, he may good-heartedly attempt a restaurant venture. The conversation goes something like this:

Husband: "How about we go out for dinner tonight?"

Wife: Standing indecisively in kitchen, hoping that a tornado or an earthquake will prevent another evening of cooking and cleaning up. "Okay." Crosses arms. "Where?"

Husband: "Well, I'm in the mood for seafood (or steak or chicken pot pie or pig's ears or whatever — fill in the blank).

Wife: Nodding, keeping face neutral. He has put the ball in my court, and I toss it back like a hot potato. "What place did you have in mind, honey?"

Husband: Shoulders slump, face assumes cautious expression. His hopes that I would select a restaurant are dashed, possibly rendering twin objectives of dining out and making wife happy at the same time impossible. "Ahhh — I was thinking about Restaurant A."

Wife: Face squinches in disapproval. "Eww! I would not go there if you paid me! Besides you KNOW I don't like their (fill in the blank).

Husband: Feeling hopelessness slither up his spine. "How about Restaurant B?"

Wife: Huge eye-roll. "I heard their portions are too small and their prices are too high. Besides, they don't have any atmosphere!"

Husband: Shrugging, walks down hallway and decides to shelf the idea, thinking, "Who cares about atmosphere? I just wanted some-

thing different."

I sigh and resign myself to slinging food around in the kitchen. I pull the ever-present chicken breasts out of the freezer as my husband returns to the kitchen, in stay-at-home clothes.

Husband: "But we had chicken last night. Stops in mid-sentence as he notices wife's face begin to redden.

This is the classic tug-of-war between a foodist and a non-foodist. The foodist is always looking for new food attainment peaks. The non-foodist is always looking for the easy way out. If the non-foodist actually pulls out frozen chicken and

makes an effort to cook, they figure the foodist should not complain. This drives foodists crazy. They not only want the non-foodist to cook, they want VARIETY as well.

My husband, confused, notes by my expression that he has caused more harm than good in the last few minutes and grabs me in a bear hug, alertly offering to clean up after dinner.

A bear hug always

brings speedy resolution to a food fight. And the clean-up offer was good for 100 husband-points. It was a win-win. At least for me.

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