

Interviewee 1: Pretty much every day I have 2 whole sandwiches dipped in tomato soup

Presenter: Always the same and as John Humphries discovered last Monday commoner than you think.

JH: There's a new survey come out that says that more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of office workers have eaten the same midday meal for the last 9 months

Presenter: Does the British lunch have a future? Not so long ago we got together with BBC Good Food magazine and commissioned some research into the great, or not so great, British lunch. What we found just might shock you. You won't be surprised to hear that the "lunch hour" is no more. It's shrunk to "lunch 25 minutes and 24 seconds". Not quite so catchy.

Presenter 2: We're now in the basement of Broadcasting House with Rachel Mailer, who has written a book called "Made in the Office". Tell us what you are going to make us.

Rachel: I'm going to make chili and honey salmon with noodles and broccoli

Presenter 2: So we figured that you could make this and we could eat it in 25 minutes and 24 seconds so I thought I could time you from the off. (OK, perfect)

Presenter 1: We'll be back with Rachel later to find out if the lunch becomes a reality but first our serious sandwich habit. It's something Bee Wilson wrestles with in her recently published

"This is not a diet book", a book that tries to make sense of our daily eating habits.

Bee Wilson: based on data from 2012, a quarter of us eat a ham or a bacon sandwich every day and another 22 % have a cheese sandwich for lunch every day. If you look back over British history, sure, we've always had sandwiches but they were what you had in an emergency, on a long train journey, it was a kind of makeshift lunch when you couldn't get anything better whereas now we're treating all of our weekday lunches as an emergency. On average in the UK we eat about 200 sandwiches per person per year so we're eating them more days than not. It's almost as if we see lunch as this everyday thing that has to be got through and maybe you might devote a bit more attention to dinner. You know, life's too short to have 365 bad lunches a year.

BBC presenter: It's time for lunch. Time for a break. Time for 1000s of people to go in search of food. Time to take a breather and relax, whether it's an hour or even 2.

Presenter 1: When I was presenting a food programme and Derek Cooper was the producer, we had to have a proper lunch and he did not mean a sandwich. Not in a million years did he mean a sandwich. He meant something with a knife and fork where you stopped and had a glass of something. (and company) And talked.

Rachel Mailer: Sandwiches are very solitary food. There's a study done in the 1950s based on 4,000 people if we can trust that data, 6 out of 10 British men went home for a hot lunch every day

BBC presenter: You walk home (Yes) and Mr Daley, what is for dinner today?

Mr Daley (Lancashire accent): Potato pie- potatoes, chutney, meat, onion, and then a bit of liver or something like that and then there's the crust.

Rachel Mailer: But someone had to cook those hot lunches and I'm not sad that women work and are not staying at home cooking meat and 2 veg and potatoes. On the other hand, it was in some ways a better way of living and the question is now how do we invent new rituals that fit into our business?

Presenter 1: That archive clip was Lancashire weaver Frank Daley, recorded by the BBC in 1958. I remember the pie shops clustered round the mills in my home village in Lancashire

and I'm not sure the journey from freshly made hot pies to factory made packaged sandwiches is one of the higher developments in our culinary culture. But what about those serial sandwich eaters? Philosopher Julian Bejeanie thinks they say a lot about how we got to 25-24.

Julian: Nobody is shocked when you say you have the same breakfast every day. We appreciate the fact that when we are eating, there's a certain value in having routines, in certain things being easy, meals taking care of themselves and most people have a balance where breakfast is pretty much the same every day, lunch has a bit of variation and perhaps dinner is the time to spice it up. If some people want to have the same thing every day, in some ways that's a very efficient and sensible choice.

Presenter: What does our lunch say about us?

Julian: What lunch says about us is that we're still very much stuck in this kind of functional, efficient, utilitarian attitude of how we should construct our daily lives and that for all our embrace of this great food culture and everything, we haven't managed to make this an everyday thing, it's still only for special occasions.