



The fussy eater

Ariel Leve

I've lived through hurricane Irene – so I now know what to eat when facing the apocalypse

Manhattan's West Village was buzzing with pre-hurricane activity in late August as people began stockpiling emergency provisions. There were long queues to get into the hardware store for flashlights, the pharmacy for first-aid kits and, of course, at Murray's Bagels.

I ventured out in flip-flops to load up on supplies. Uncharacteristically, I'd never actually thought about what I'd eat if the world was ending. Who says I'm not an optimist?

I showed up at Murray's just as it was closing. One woman was having a meltdown. "Please," she whined, as she tried to hold open the door, "I just want some sliced lox!" The guy gave her a look that said, "Are you kidding me?" I don't blame him. No one will keep a store open on the eve of a natural disaster so that they can slice some smoked salmon to tide you over.

By late afternoon, all the upmarket shops were closed so the food snobs were forced to go to Food Emporium (the equivalent of Tesco) and that alone was torturous. "I'm not getting the radicchio here!" I heard one



disgruntled shopper call out to his partner. What's a hurricane without fresh radicchio? I watched as he settled on a bag of wilted mixed greens – tossing it into his basket with a sigh of resignation. Hopefully he survived.

I walked around, enjoying the pandemonium. Paper towels were running low. (Good to mop up with?) Canned foods were disappearing. I considered grabbing a can of sliced pineapple but I couldn't remember if I owned a can opener.

One woman was loading up on frozen pizzas. Even I knew that frozen pizzas would not be practical in a post-apocalyptic situation. I asked myself what would I be able to live on for weeks. Here is what I ended up with.

A bag of pistachio nuts. They won't

'I'm not getting the radicchio here,' one disgruntled pre-storm shopper called out

go bad, and should I find myself journeying across a desolate landscape, they're lightweight. I can fill my pockets with them.

Two bottles of lime-flavoured Perrier. I reluctantly went with the lime because that's all that was left. And it's good to try new things.

Dried roasted edamame beans. Protein. No cooking required.

Finally, red grapes, one green apple, half a dozen wheat-free Odwalla bars and an enormous bag of popcorn.

My friend Carrie's pre-hurricane food shopping was equally peculiar but stylish. She bought two packs of cigarettes, six cans of cat food, one litre of diet ginger ale, one loaf of raisin bread and one box of chocolate biscuits. "I figured that the worst thing that could happen to me was if my windows blew out, and in that case I would have hid in the bathroom with my BlackBerry, cigarettes, cookies and my diet ginger ale." I assumed the cat would be in there too.

A few of my friends indulged in end-of-the-world eating, consuming vast quantities of food they'd never eat under normal circumstances. One had been eating only raw salads and juices but on Saturday afternoon she bought three slices of pizza as well as a spinach and cheese calzone. It was fun giving in to the cravings but now she's on a strict post-storm detox.

All of which leads me to realise that if ever I needed to survive on what was in my cabinets – I'd end up losing a lot of weight. **OFM**

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Hugh's Fish Fight

What is it? Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall versus EU fishing rules has been

the food campaign of the year, turning a potentially tedious debate about regulation into drama on the high seas. EU rules mean between 40 and 60% of catches are discarded unnecessarily, with Hugh aiming to ban this. Inevitably there's an app, free iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch.

Key ingredient? The issue is getting the public eating less well known species currently dumped overboard. This nudges them towards flounder and coley rather than salmon and tuna via 50 sustainable fish recipes, drawn from his River Cottage books, complete with step-by-step video, which removes all the head-scratching.

What if you're a heartless pig? Works fine as a recipe collection. Perhaps the surrounding messages, such as Fish2Fork's maps of sustainable places to eat might sneak into what remains of your conscience.

THE PIE CHART

David Schuler of Mississippi's pizza-buying road trip last month

