

# LAST MEALS OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS

*Warning: These stories are morbid...but fascinating. By looking at their final meals, we catch an eerie glimpse into the everyday lives of these larger-than-life figures...whose worlds were about to end.*

- **ELVIS PRESLEY.** The King stayed up most of the night of August 15, 1977. He was restless. Between midnight and 6:00 a.m., he went to his dentist to have a cavity filled (he did this at night to avoid mobs), then he returned to Graceland and played racquetball with friends, talked about marriage plans with his 20-year-old fiancée, Ginger Alden, and belted out some gospel songs at the piano. Around sunrise Alden went to bed, but Presley, still unable to sleep, ate one of his usual early-morning snacks: four scoops of ice cream and six chocolate-chip cookies. After that he went to bed, then got up a few hours later to go the bathroom, where he suffered a heart attack and died.
- **MAHATMA GANDHI.** On the evening of January 30, 1948, Gandhi enjoyed one of his standard healthy dinners of goat's milk, cooked vegetables, oranges, and a concoction of ginger, sour lemons, and strained butter mixed with aloe juice. He then took his nightly walk at Birla Bhavan in New Delhi, where followers often greeted him. Among the followers was an assassin, who shot the spiritual leader at point-blank range.
- **ERNEST HEMINGWAY.** By the time he reached his 60s, author Hemingway was suffering from severe depression. Several electroshock therapy treatments had left him frazzled. After a failed suicide attempt in the spring of 1961 at his home in Idaho, Hemingway tried again on July 2 by putting a shotgun to his head. But first, he ate his favorite meal: New York strip steak, baked potato, Caesar salad, and a glass of Bordeaux.
- **JOHN F. KENNEDY.** On the morning of November 22, 1963, JFK ate breakfast in his room at the Hotel Texas in Fort Worth. According to the hotel's executive chef, Otto Druhe, he served

the president “coffee, orange juice, two eggs boiled five minutes, some toast, and marmalade on the side.” The president’s entourage then left for downtown Dallas, where they were scheduled for a 1:00 p.m. luncheon directly after Kennedy’s motorcade made its way through town. Kennedy was shot at 12:30 p.m.

- **SADDAM HUSSEIN.** The former Iraqi dictator was allowed to eat his favorite meal before he was executed: boiled chicken and rice, along with several cups of hot water laced with honey.
- **JOHN BELUSHI.** The Rainbow Bar & Grill in Los Angeles was well known for its lentil soup. A very inebriated Belushi stopped in there on the night of March 5, 1982, after being told by concerned friends to “get your act together, or at least eat something.” Belushi scarfed down a bowl of the soup in the Rainbow’s kitchen, then returned to his bungalow at the Chateau Mar-mont. (Robin Williams and Robert DeNiro were there, too, but they left because of the “extremely” heavy drug use.) Belushi’s girl-friend injected the 33-year-old comedian with what turned out to be a fatal dose of heroin and cocaine. When doctors examined the contents of Belushi’s stomach the next day, the only food was the lentil soup.
- **PRINCESS DIANA.** By the evening of August 31, 1997, the day of her fatal car crash in Paris, Diana and her wealthy boyfriend, Dodi al Fayed, were so fed up with being stalked by photographers that they decided to end their vacation early and return to England the next day. Their plan: eat dinner at the Espadon, a restaurant in the Ritz hotel, and then take a half-hour drive to the Duke of Windsor’s former mansion in the Bois de Boulogne, where they would spend the night. Diana ate a mushroom and asparagus omelette, Dover sole, and vegetable tempura. Around midnight, after sending out two decoy cars to fool the paparazzi, Diana and Fayed climbed into a black Mercedes S600, but they never made it to the mansion.
- **ADOLF HITLER.** The German dictator’s last meal came on April 30, 1945, the day that he finally realized he had lost the war. Holed up at the “Führerbunker” in Berlin, Hitler ate lunch with his secretaries. According to most accounts, Hitler, a vegetarian,

ate spaghetti with “light sauce” (although some biographies say he had lasagna). Either way, Hitler wanted a simple meal without any mention of the fall of Berlin, so the conversation consisted of dog breeding methods and “how lipstick was made from sewer grease.” Shortly after the meal, Hitler and Eva Braun, whom he’d married less than 40 hours earlier, went into a private room and took their own lives.

- **JAMES DEAN.** The “rebel without a cause” was known for living life on the edge. It’s ironic, then, that the last thing he ate during a stop at a roadside diner on September 30, 1955, a few hours before he crashed his Porsche Spyder, was a slice of apple pie and a glass of milk.

- **JOHN LENNON.** Sometime during the afternoon of December 8, 1980, Lennon ate a corned-beef sandwich before going to a New York recording studio to work on one of Yoko Ono’s new singles. At around 10:30 p.m., having just received the happy news that their album *Double Fantasy* had gone Platinum, they decided to quit working for the night. Ono suggested stopping for dinner, but Lennon wanted to go straight back to their apartment at the Dakota to see their five-year-old son, Sean. Who knows what would have happened had Lennon gone out to eat? Instead, he went home, where a deranged fan was waiting for him.

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### SOLDIERS OF LOVE

In 1994 scientists at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base were assigned the task of creating non-lethal weapons that would affect enemy combatants but leave civilians unharmed. Among their ideas: a “gay bomb.” A strong aphrodisiac would be sprayed on the enemy, who would become so overwhelmed with desire that they would drop their weapons and start kissing each other. The project died when the scientists couldn’t find any hormones or chemicals that did the trick. (They also proposed spraying the enemy with bee pheromones, then hiding beehives in combat areas, resulting in attacks from amorous bees.)