

## BRITISH CUSTOMS

## What's for Lunch?

Nonostante la gastronomia britannica non goda di buona fama, alcuni dei suoi contributi sono stati adottati con successo in tutto il mondo. In particolare oggi che abbiamo appena il tempo di mangiare un boccone.

EXERCISES IN  
**Work It  
Out!**



PRE-INTERMEDIATE A2

ON CD 1

## GLOSSARY

- 1 **to find out:** scoprire
- 2 **bunch:** manciata
- 3 **midday meal:** pranzo
- 4 **noon:** mezzogiorno
- 5 **one in six:** uno su sei
- 6 **to complain:** lamentarsi
- 7 **although:** sebbene
- 8 **choice:** scelta
- 9 **at the bottom:** in fondo
- 10 **spicy:** piccante
- 11 **dishes:** piatti
- 12 **to spend long:** dedicare molto tempo
- 13 **earl:** conde
- 14 **over half:** più della metà
- 15 **desk:** scrivania
- 16 **health:** salute
- 17 **to advise:** consigliare
- 18 **busy:** impegnati
- 19 **statesman:** statista
- 20 **for whom:** per il quale
- 21 **Royal Navy:** Marina reale
- 22 **senior adviser:** consigliere senior

**T**wo food companies in the United Kingdom have been finding out<sup>1</sup> what people usually have for lunch. Results reveal what a boring bunch<sup>2</sup> the British are when they choose their midday meal<sup>3</sup>, which can take place as early as noon<sup>4</sup> and never later than 1.30pm.

## SAME SANDWICH EVERY DAY

One in six<sup>5</sup> people said that they had had the same food every day for the last two years. Some older people admitted they hadn't changed their lunch menu since starting work twenty or thirty years before. A man from Liverpool complained<sup>6</sup> that he always had the same sandwiches every day — although<sup>7</sup> his wife later explained that he made them himself!

## SALAD OR SOUP

Most people responded by saying that they are happy with their usual choice<sup>8</sup> — in first place, a cheese or chicken sandwich and in second place, a salad, or tomato or vegetable soup. At the bottom<sup>9</sup> of the list came spicy<sup>10</sup> lunches like chilli and more exotic food such as Indian curry or Japanese dishes<sup>11</sup>.

## THIRTY-MINUTE LUNCHES

People in Britain have been having lunch for centuries, but they have never spent very long<sup>12</sup> eating their meal. After all, the sandwich was invented by the 18th-cen-

ture earl<sup>13</sup> of Sandwich so that he could eat and play cards simultaneously! Today, they are spending less and less time having lunch — only thirty minutes for many people. Over half<sup>14</sup> of the United Kingdom's employees have their lunch at their desk<sup>15</sup> while they are emailing or answering the phone. Health<sup>16</sup> experts advise<sup>17</sup> that the result of such busy<sup>18</sup> lunches is increased stress — perhaps a longer, more exciting lunch would be good for us all! ☒



## THE EARL OF SANDWICH(ES)

John Montagu (1718-1792), 4th earl of Sandwich, was a British statesman<sup>19</sup> and the man for whom<sup>20</sup> the sandwich was named. He studied at Eton and Trinity College in Cambridge, and became a member of the House of Lords in 1739. He held various military and political offices, including First Lord of the Admiralty, which meant that he was the political head of the Royal Navy<sup>21</sup> and the government's senior adviser<sup>22</sup> on all naval affairs<sup>23</sup>. Montagu's promotion of British sea exploration caused the English Captain James Cook to name the Sandwich Islands in Hawaii after him<sup>24</sup>. Legend has it<sup>25</sup> that it was Montagu's addiction to gambling that led to his invention of the sandwich: one day in 1762 he had been playing cards for almost twenty-four hours straight<sup>26</sup>, and since he had no time to eat properly<sup>27</sup> on a table set<sup>28</sup> with cutlery<sup>29</sup> and all, he asked to be given some slices<sup>30</sup> of cold meat<sup>31</sup> between two slices of toast.



### ↳ GLOSSARY

- 23** **affairs:** affari
- 24** **to name after:** battezzare in onore di
- 25** **legend has it:** secondo la leggenda
- 26** **straight:** di seguito
- 27** **properly:** adeguatamente
- 28** **table set:** tavola apparecchiata
- 29** **cutlery:** posate
- 30** **slices:** fette
- 31** **cold meat:** affettati