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Mess-less Eating Etiquette

At a business lunch last week, I noticed that everyone avoided the cherry tomatoes--why? No one was sure how to eat them. We all know not to order spaghetti with tomato sauce at a business meal but what about the more "unusual" eating challenges?

If a food item is served on a plate, you use a knife and fork. That includes "finger foods", e.g. french fries, pizza, sandwiches and hamburgers. Otherwise, you may be remembered as the person wearing mustard and ketchup rather than eating it.

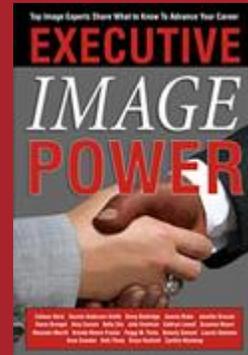
Other "rules" to eat by:

- For sushi, use chopsticks and eat in one bite.
- Asparagus? Use a knife and fork--fingers are no longer acceptable.
- Bunches of grapes on fruit platter? Remove a small bunch with your fingers or grape scissors (yes, these exist).
- You have a choice with shucked oysters. You can eat directly from the shell or hold the shell in your left hand and spear the contents with a fork. To chew or not to chew? Connoisseurs maintain that you must chew an oyster to savour the taste. It's up to you but you definitely have to drink the juice from the shell.

And now for more advanced eating challenges.

- Banana? Cut off both ends with a knife and fork, split down the middle, slice neatly into disks then eat the pieces with a fork. Afterwards, tell the host never to serve bananas again.
- And what about cherry tomatoes? Hold the tomato against your knife, spear it with your fork and eat it whole. It takes practice but once you've mastered it, everyone will be really impressed and remember your dexterity. And if you miss, you've shared your tomato with the person next to you.

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