

# FOOD

## RAISING THE BAR

Elaine — Hey, you wanna hear something weird? Mr. Pitt eats his Snickers bars with a knife and fork.

Jerry — Why does he do that?

George — He probably doesn't want to get chocolate on his fingers. That's the way these society types eat their candy bars.

— Seinfeld, episode 89

BY ROY GREEN  
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**W**e are *how* we eat, not *what* we eat, says an anthropologist. Especially when it comes to chocolate bars.

It's no longer enough to say how you like your coffee (Crisp), but whether or not you prefer your Mars bar in chomps, small bites, nibbles or you swirl it around in your mouth.

Or frozen. Or fried.

Believe it or not, the way you eat a chocolate bar can reveal some very telling things about you, according to Krystyna Sieciechowicz, an associate professor of anthropology at the University of Toronto and an expert in the relationship between people and food.

"Eating a candy bar is a very personal experience," Ms Sieciechowicz said.

"When you reach for a candy bar, do you examine it or immediately rip open the packaging? Do you eat it layer by layer or enjoy it all at once? These can be little clues as to whether the person is methodical or impulsive; and how much they value the nature of the experience."

Apparently, I'm a bit of a chocolate-bar dullard, unwrapping my bar in the normal fashion and consuming it in several regulation-size bites.

According to a survey conducted by Effem Foods, the makers of Mars bars, that's the way the majority of Canadians do it.

That compares to 38 per cent of males, who pretty much inhale them in one or two massive chomps.

Women are more than twice as

likely as men to break the bar into smaller pieces before indulging.

Thirteen per cent of Canadians let each bite melt in their mouths before moving on to the next, 4 per cent nibble tentatively around the edges, 2 per cent freeze them first and, in spite of the Seinfeld legend, only 1 per cent admitted to eating their chocolate bars with a knife and fork.

And apparently — and this is something I don't even want to think about — people in Scotland fry their Mars bars.

For more rational people, Ms Sieciechowicz says, the first bite is the most fascinating.

"The lead-up to the first bite creates a level of anticipation that is reflected in how it is bitten and

chewed or swirled around in the mouth. The way a person eats a candy bar speaks to how he approaches other aspects of life; at work or at play."

Still, I'm thinking of going against type and becoming more of a society type.

Knife and fork, anyone?



STAFF PHOTO /MIKE BARRETT

### THE BAR FACTS

*Are you more bar than bite?*

35 per cent of Canadians surveyed eat their candy bars in several small bites or nibbles, indicating they are methodical types

25 per cent fall in the impulsive category, gulping down their candy bars in large bites

13 per cent lean to extravagance, letting each bite melt in their mouth

11 per cent are a bit on the fussy side, separating the individual layers

4 per cent bite around the edges, indicating they could be, well, mice

2 per cent freeze it first, meaning they particularly don't like a gooey mess; and,

1 per cent eat their candy bars with a knife and fork, meaning they are Seinfeld fans

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