

READER'S DIGEST

PLEASANTVILLE, NY
MONTHLY 15,086,000
MARCH 2003



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First Aid for Meals Gone Wrong

T⁷⁵⁹¹RY THESE TRICKS before turning to takeout:

Burned rice Turn off the burner, place the heel of a loaf of bread on top of the rice, cover the pot, and wait for five minutes. The bread will absorb most of the rice's burned aroma, say Marina and John Bear, authors of *How to Repair Food*.

Stale bread Wrap the loaf in a damp towel and bake in the oven at 350° for 12-15 minutes to restore the

moisture, says Elizabeth Briggs, an instructor at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York.

Salty soup For every half-gallon, add two thinly sliced potatoes while the soup's simmering. Once the spuds are cooked (slices will go from clear to opaque), remove them and serve the soup. "Potatoes are bland and porous, so they absorb the salt without affecting the soup's flavor," says Briggs.

Blistering chili Add a teaspoon of sugar per half-gallon of chili (or more if necessary). The sugar counteracts the spice, says Jorj Morgan, author of *At Home in the Kitchen*.

Crystallized ice cream Blend a tablespoon of liqueur (like amaretto) into a half-gallon of ice cream. The alcohol will lower the freezing point just enough to melt the ice crystals, says Briggs, so it's creamy and ready to eat.

JUDY DUTTON

