

Beastie Boys' Mike D Feeds Hurricane Sandy Victims With Free Food Truck

Rapper steps up to help locals displaced by the storm



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After Hurricane Sandy left tens of thousands of Brooklyn residents without power or heat, [Beastie Boys' Mike D](#) wasted no time extending a hand to his beloved hometown. The rapper quietly began a free food truck called the Rockaway Plate Lunch, which it is still in operation today – and has served over 19,000 meals to disadvantaged residents.

As Mike D explains to [Good](#), his gratis food service developed after he and restaurateur Robert McKinley viewed the devastation in the Rockaways, a coastal neighborhood of Brooklyn, shortly after the October storm. "We saw right away all these people living without any power, without any businesses being open and therefore, no food. We saw the immediate need for warm food, but we didn't have time to put together a long-term cohesive plan; we just had to react quickly," he said. "Rob comes from the hotel and restaurant business, and with myself, being involved in a couple of restaurants and just knowing all the friends in that world, we were able to draw on a bunch of these contacts and start bringing food out from restaurants in the city."

The Rockaway Plate Lunch menu emphasizes healthy options such as chicken and vegetables – "a very complete, warm, flavorful meal, and certainly a lot more nutritious and balanced than a fast-food option," as Mike D explains – and is now offered on a reduced schedule. Mike D and McKinley are now evaluating how to transition the free truck to a sustainable community project. "There's still the need for warm food out there, but our real goal for this summer is to help revitalize the local economy," Mike D explained. "So we're trying to switch the truck over from giving away food, to charging for food but having it become staffed, run and operated on every level by citizens of the Rockaways."

As the Rockaway Plate Lunch evolves, Mike D expects the same restaurants to remain involved in a mentoring capacity. If the menu does evolve into other cuisines, though, the Beastie Boy seems open-minded. "I'm lucky, I grew up in New York City, so we grew up on the idea that you have different foods from different cultures any night of the week," he said. "The only constant was that Sunday night we got Chinese food. That is some New York shit."