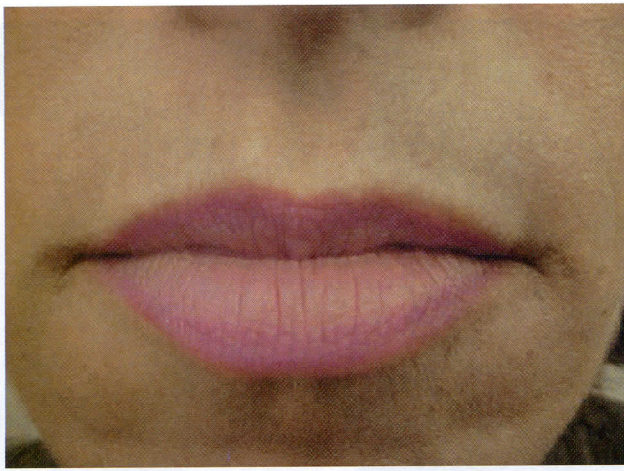


Tue., 18  
July 2000  
17:21:36 EDT  
Subject:  
digital summer.  
She is  
Italian and  
works across  
the street.  
—Bill



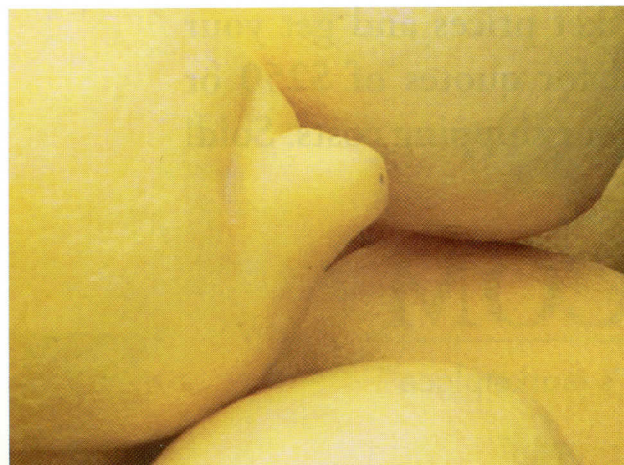
Wed., 5  
July 2000  
20:32:39 EDT  
Subject:  
the 4th of July.  
I decided  
not to send the  
14+ images  
of everything I  
ate over  
the 4th of  
July weekend  
because it  
would crash  
people's  
computers.  
So I'm sending  
a Ritz cracker  
I ate. —Bill  
Owens



Sun., 16  
July 2000  
14:36:08 EDT  
Subject: digital  
summer.  
On Sunday I  
went to the  
antique flea  
market. For  
lunch I ate a  
sausage. —Bill  
Owens



Sun., 16  
July 2000  
16:11:23 EDT  
Subject:  
none. To a  
glass of  
Hefe-weizen  
you can  
add a slice of  
lemon and  
think about  
women. —Bill  
Owens



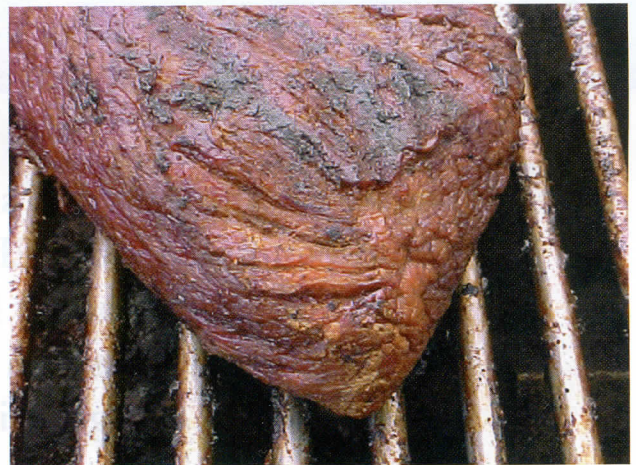
## DIGITAL SPOTLIGHT

What Bill Owens ate  
last summer

# Virtual Picnic

**B**ack in June, we started to get e-mails from Bill Owens. Attached to each message was a JPEG image file. It seems Owens—whose *Suburbia*, a cult-classic 1972 photo essay on middle-class American life, was rereleased last year—had bought a Sony Mavica digital point-and-shoot.

The camera is part of Owens' reentry into the photographic world after a two-decade hiatus, during which he opened his own brew pub and launched a beer enthusi-



Mon., 24  
July 2000  
10:43:55 EDT  
Subject:  
digital. Sunda  
afternoon,  
a 22 oz. tri-ti  
on the grill.  
—Bill O.

asts' magazine that he still publishes. But as we see it, it's also a natural extension of Owens' gustatory passion. This is because the files attached to his e-mails were pictures, all made with the Mavica, of the different things he was eating on his summer outings—from Ritz crackers slathered with Cheez Whiz to colossal tri-tip steaks, all the rage on grills in Owens' native Hayward, California. And each image was annotated with one of the deadpan captions that tempered *Suburbia's* irony so beautifully.

Here we share some of our favorites of Bill Owens' digital delicacies. "The beauty of digital photography," says Owens, "is that you can just shoot and keep on eating." ■

BY RUSSELL HART