

# Sirens in the Grocery Aisles

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## *The Huffington Post:*

On his long sea journey back home following the fall of Troy, the Greek war hero Odysseus sailed perilously close to the Sirens. The Sirens were beautiful and seductive creatures who used their enchanting songs to lure sailors into shipwrecks on the rocky coast. Odysseus yearned to hear the Sirens' song, but he also knew that his weak will was no match for their potent temptation, so he ordered his crew to plug their ears and lash him to the ship's mast — and never to untie him no matter what he pleaded. He did plead to be released, and his crew did ignore his pleas as ordered — and only in that way did Odysseus control his desires and avoid destruction.

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Recently, a team of psychological scientists devised a field study to see if a pre-commitment strategy might help people eat better on a large scale. Janet Schwartz and her Tulane University colleagues joined other scientists at Duke and at South Africa's Discovery Vitality project to see if grocery shoppers might take voluntary pre-commitment steps to boost the amount of healthy food they purchased every month — and if such a strategy actually would result in healthier eating. Here are the details, from a forthcoming article in the journal *Psychological Science*

Read the whole story: [The Huffington Post](#)

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