

Flavour Fest



FOOD FOR THOUGHT: FOOD INNOVATIONS

On average we spend 32,908 hours eating in our lifetimes, but have you ever stopped to think about the origin of where some of your favourite meals come from?

CRISPS:

Crisps were invented by accident! The story goes that a gentleman dining at the Saratoga Hotel, USA, kept sending his chips back to the kitchen, complaining that they were not thin enough! Eventually the chef got fed up and cut the potatoes so thinly and then fried them in oil to 'crisp' them up. However, it is reported that this backfired as the diners loved them! In the early part of the 20th century crisps first came to Britain from France. It was an Edinburgh baker named William Alexander who started to make his own crisps in 1947, calling them Golden Wonder after the type of potato he used to make them. In 1957 the Golden Wonder company was founded.

MARSHMALLOWS:

Marshmallows originally come from the sap of the Mallow plant which grows near large areas of water. In around 2000BC the Ancient Egyptians made their sweet delicacies from the Mallow roots and used them as offerings to their gods or pharaohs. For many years the mallow plant was also used by civilisations for medicinal purposes to treat everything from toothache to coughs to diarrhoea. It was in France in the 1800's that marshmallows as we know them today were first invented as the confectioners whisked the mallow sap with egg whites and corn syrup. In 1927 the Girl Scout handbook published the first recipe for roasting marshmallows, with chocolate and crackers, to make the infamous s'more that we still enjoy around campfires today!

SANDWICHES:

Sandwiches are believed to have been the invention of a certain Lord Montague, fourth Earl of Sandwich (from 1718 – 1792). He was British Statesman and notorious gambler. He is said to have refused to leave his gaming table for 24 hours and therefore required a food that he could eat with one hand! It is important not to forget that the Earl would have travelled to the Eastern Mediterranean and no doubt saw pittas and flatbreads filled with meat, cheeses or vegetables! However, sandwiches did not appear in English literary text until the 1760's and even then were mainly eaten by men. Toward the end of the 18th century, Charlotte Mason included a recipe for sandwiches in one of her cook books and they continued to grow in popularity for use as a supper food for late night balls then onto lunches and picnics. Their popularity has continued to grow over the years as people's distance increased from home to work.



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FOOD FOR THOUGHT: FOOD COMBINATIONS

DOUGHNUTS

Doughnuts or Olykoeks (oily cakes) were first brought to America from Holland at the beginning of the nineteenth century. They are a deep fried flour dough, confection and the Dutch settlers brought them to New York. Although the origins date back to much earlier, as the Ancient Greeks and Romans also used to deep fry strips of dough mixture and coat them with honey or even fish sauce! In Medieval times, Arab cooks also made fritters, sweetened with blobs of sugary syrup and it is these that spread in popularity through Northern Europe. Hanson Gregory, an American Seaman claimed to have invented the ring doughnut whilst aboard a lime trading ship in 1847! It is said he was dissatisfied with the 'raw' centre of the doughnuts and punched a hole through the centre, he liked the doughnuts more without the raw inside! Did you know there is a National Doughnut Day on the first Friday of June each year? It is celebrated in America and is an event created by the Salvation Army in 1938 to honour their members who served doughnuts to the soldiers of the First World War.

ICE CREAM

Ice Cream, which is a semi frozen mixture of sugar, milk or cream and flavouring is said to have been an invented in some form, as early as 200BC by the Chinese. They used a milk and rice mixture which they packed in snow to freeze it. It is also said the Roman Emperors sent slaves to the mountain tops to fetch fresh snow which they brought back and flavoured before serving, as an early form of ice cream. Before modern refrigeration ice cream would have been a treat for only a very special occasion and in most cases not accessible to anyone but the very wealthy as making it would have been laborious and required access to your own ice pit! In about the mid nineteenth century ice cream became popular and more accessible in England, a Swiss gentleman called Carlo Gatti set up a stand selling ice-cream in a shell for one penny outside of Charing Cross Station in London.

