

A Popular Snack

Potato chips – fried, thinly sliced pieces of potato – have become one of the world’s most popular snacks since their invention in the 19th century. Potato chips have gone through numerous production and flavor modifications over time. However, it is undoubtedly a result of their basic characteristics that they have enjoyed such a long life. 1) _____ This flavor has allowed potato chips to dominate the snacking world.

History

2) _____ At the time, fried potatoes were considered something of an upscale dish most often cooked and consumed in restaurants. The prevailing style called for thickly cut potatoes, lightly fried so as to be edible with a fork. According to legend, a successful businessman, Cornelius Vanderbilt, was not satisfied with the quality of fried potatoes prepared by Chef George Crum at Moon Lake’s House Resort.

3) _____ He sent the order back to the kitchen and requested a more thinly cut batch. Crum was offended by this criticism. He spitefully sliced a batch as thinly as possible and fried them to a crisp. The joke backfired, however. Vanderbilt actually really enjoyed the crisply fried potatoes.



The dish soon took off, earning the name “Saratoga chips” after the New York city where they had been invented. This name lasted well into the 20th century.

While this story may or may not be true, the use of the term “Saratoga chips” suggests that it may be. 4) _____ Specifically, an 1822 cookbook called *The Cook’s Oracle* by Englishman William Kitchiner mentioned a dish of thin potato slices or shavings fried in lard or drippings. American cookbooks published in 1824 and 1832 also mention the dish. Both of these cookbooks credit Kitchiner as their inspiration. Whatever their origin, potato chips remained a relatively popular restaurant dish until the 20th century. Then, growing demand and advances in technology encouraged production on larger scales. The Tri-Sum Potato Chip company, founded in 1908 in Leominster, Massachusetts, claims to be America’s first potato chip company. Meanwhile, the Mike-sell’s Potato Chip Company of Dayton, Ohio, calls itself the “oldest potato chip company in the United States.” Mike-sell’s, however, was founded in 1910, two years after Tri-Sum.

5) _____ These methods of storage were not ideal, though. Chips easily broke and became stale.

This problem was eventually solved by Laura Scudder of Monterey Park, California. She designed wax-paper bags that helped preserve freshness and prevent breakage.

As far as flavoring, potato chips were only ever flavored with salt until the 1950s. Joe Murphy, of the Tayto company, then created a method of applying flavoring to chips during production. 6) _____ Murphy's technology was instantly a hit. Countless other manufacturers were soon producing flavored chips of their own. The rest, as they say, is history.

Production

Today, potato chips are most commonly mass-produced in large factories. In the early days of mass production, potato chips were made using a "batch-style" method. Large batches were fried together before being collected and packaged. Modern production relies on a continuous, conveyor-facilitated process. This is similar to that seen in the production of countless other consumer items. In this process, there is a constant flow of chips, rather than separate, individual batches. After the chips are fried, they are seasoned with salt and other flavors. Finally, they are packaged in bags inflated with nitrogen to prevent breakage

- A) Vanderbilt found the potatoes sliced too thickly for his liking.
- B) Afterwards, modern baked potato chips can also become not only savoury, but a healthy snack.
- C) The first flavorings were salt and vinegar, cheese and onion, and barbecue.
- D) Potato chips have always been popular among common people.
- E) Chips produced by these companies were originally sold in tins or out of bulk bins at local grocers.
- F) The most common story of the origins of potato chips traces their invention to Saratoga, New York in 1853.
- G) Adding spices and sauces to whatever liking makes this dish special.
- H) Whether American BBQ chips, Japanese soy sauce chips, or British salt and vinegar chips, the basic combination of fat, starch, and salt creates a universally appreciated flavor.
- I) However, there exists much older evidence of potatoes prepared like chips.