



Origin of Chocolate... it all started in Latin America

Chocolate has a 4,000-year history that began in ancient Mesoamerica, present day Mexico. It's here that the first cacao plants were found. The Olmec, one of the earliest civilizations in Latin America, were the first to turn the cacao plant into chocolate. They drank their chocolate during rituals and used it as medicine.

Centuries later, the Mayans praised chocolate as the drink of the gods. Mayan chocolate was a revered brew made of roasted and ground cacao seeds mixed with chillies, water and cornmeal. Mayans poured this mixture from one pot to another, creating a thick foamy beverage called "xocolatl", meaning "bitter water."

By the 15th century, the Aztecs used cocoa beans as currency. They believed that chocolate was a gift from the god Quetzalcoatl, and drank it as a refreshing beverage, an aphrodisiac, and even to prepare for war.

Vocabulary

- **Baker:** responsible for breads, cakes and breakfast pastries
- **Confectioner:** responsible for candies and petits fours
- **Decorator:** responsible for specialty cakes and show pieces
- **Glacier:** responsible for cold and frozen desserts



Invention of the Chocolate Chip Cookie

The chocolate chip cookie was invented by American chefs Ruth Graves Wakefield and Sue Brides in 1938.^[1] Wakefield invented the recipe during the period when she owned the Toll House Inn, in Whitman, Massachusetts. In this era, the Toll House Inn was a popular restaurant that featured home cooking.

A myth holds that she accidentally developed the cookie, and that she expected the chocolate chunks would melt, making chocolate cookies. That is not the case; Wakefield stated that she deliberately invented the cookie. She said, "We had been serving a thin butterscotch nut cookie with ice cream. Everybody seemed to love it, but I was trying to give them something different. So I came up with the Toll House cookie.

"She added chopped up bits from a Nestlé semi-sweet chocolate bar into a cookie. The original recipe in *Toll House Tried and True Recipes* is called "Toll House Chocolate Crunch Cookies". Wakefield gave Nestle the recipe for her cookies and was paid with a lifetime supply of chocolate from the company.

* Carolyn Wyman (2013). *The Great American Chocolate Chip Cookie Book: Scrumptious Recipes & Fabled History from Toll House to Cookie Cake Pie*.

* All content for Real Talk on the History of Food sessions are provided by Chef Onyx.