



PRETZELS

A HISTORY

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STORY

- **610 AD**
- A popular story is that an Italian monk invented pretzels in 610 AD to reward his pupils for learning their prayers. The monk twisted leftover dough into a shape that resembled two arms praying, and named his invention pretiola, which means "little reward" in Latin.





HISTORY

In the Beginning

You might have heard that the pretzel has a German background. The truth is, well - complicated! It really has embedded its twisted roots in Germany. However, the oldest and most accepted story of the invention of early pretzels goes back to the beginning of the middle ages, in 610 A.D. It involves a monk and is not the only time monks are involved in these twisted roots!

The Italian Monk

A monk from Italy teaching children in Northern Italy is said to have invented soft little pretzels and called them pretiola or little rewards, to reward children for learning their prayers. He is said to have made the treats with little arms forming the 'knot', to resemble little arms crossed of children in prayer.

More Possibilities

There are other claims to the pretzel's fame, although less reliable perhaps. One tells the story of a monastery in Southern France being the origin. In Germany, the story is of local officials or dignitaries holding bakers hostage, the bakers inventing the brezel for their captors out of desperation.



Fun facts

Pretzels resemble children folding their arms

Pretzels are thought to have been invented before bagels

Soft pretzels were invented before hard pretzels

Pennsylvania is the pretzel capital of the world

National Pretzel Day is on April 26

October is National Pretzel Month.

Where it got its name

The earliest pretzels were called “pretiolas,” meaning “little rewards,” and given out by the monks when their young pupils recited their prayers correctly

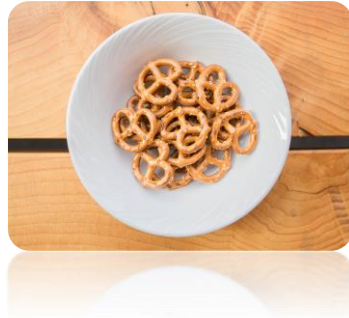


Types of pretzels

Pretzel crisps:



Hard pretzels:



Chocolate covered pretzels:



Pretzel dogs:



Peanut butter pretzels:



Soft pretzels:



Pretzel sticks:



Cinnamon pretzels:



Recipe

1. In a stand mixer add the warm water and yeast. Allow the yeast to proof and become bubbly about 5 minutes. With the dough hook attached, mix in the sugar, salt and flour one cup at a time with dough hook attached. If dough is too dry add in 1 tablespoon more of water. Remove the dough out of the bowl and knead into a ball. Place dough into a large bowl and add the oil on top. Cover and let rise until doubled.
 2. Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Divide the dough into 6 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a long rope and twist into a pretzel shape.
 3. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper. Add the hot water and baking soda together in a medium sized bowl. Dip the pretzel into the bowl and place onto the baking sheets. Sprinkle the top with coarse sea salt.
 4. Bake for 8-10 minutes or until the tops are golden brown. Serve with cheese dip.
- 12 pretzels

Ingredients

1 cup warm water
2 teaspoons active dry yeast
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt
3 cups flour
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
2 cups hot water
1/4 cup baking soda
coarse salt for topping
Cheese Dip

Hard pretzels

Julius Sturgis, the owner of one of the first commercial pretzel bakeries in Lititz, Pennsylvania, is credited with inventing hard pretzels in 1861:

How he invented them

Sturgis reduced the amount of water in his pretzel recipe and increased the baking time to create a drier, more brittle pretzel that would last longer.

Why he invented them

Sturgis wanted to extend the shelf life of his pretzels so they could be sold further away from the bakery and stay on shelves longer.

How they became popular

Hard pretzels became more popular than soft pretzels because they were more durable and could be kept in an airtight container.

Pretzels today

Today, pretzels are a popular snack in the United States and Germany, and are often seasoned with salt, cinnamon, sugar, nuts, and seeds. They come in many shapes and sizes, including sticks, rods, loops, braids, and letters.



THE END

References:

[Soft Pretzels vs. Hard Pretzels: What's the Difference?](#)

[The Pretzel: A Twisted History](#)

[The History of Pretzels – Bell Tower Brewing Co.](#)

[The Pretzel: A Twisted History](#)

[How Did the Pretzel Get Its Shape? –Wonderopolis](#)

[Pretzels.com Official Site](#)

[Soft Pretzels vs. Hard Pretzels: What's the Difference?](#)

[History of Pretzels](#)