

A Short History of the Cucumber Sandwich

[A2]

Inventato in India durante la colonizzazione britannica, questo tramezzino semplice e fresco nell'immaginario popolare inglese è considerato come uno spuntino dell'alta borghesia.



A [cucumber](#) sandwich might sound [bland](#) to some, but Britons absolutely love them! This English [staple](#) is usually served as a light snack and almost always made with [sliced](#) white bread. In films and plays such as Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, this elegant sandwich is often used to identify [upper-class](#) people. But who [came up with](#) the idea of slicing [cucumber](#) and putting it in a sandwich?

[COOL AS A CUCUMBER](#)

Cucumbers are an ancient vegetable that have been grown in India for around three thousand years. They were probably [brought](#) to Europe by the Romans, and are documented to have been [harvested](#) in England since the 14th century. It is said that the 16th-century queen Catherine of Aragon, Henry VIII's first wife, loved to eat them in her [salad](#). It wasn't until the 19th

century, however, that the [cucumber](#) sandwich was invented. At the time, India was colonised by Britain but many Britons there [had a hard time dealing](#) with the [heat](#). Looking for a refreshing snack, someone decided to put [cucumber](#) between two slices of bread, creating the [cucumber](#) sandwich. The snack was a massive success, and it soon [caught on](#) in England, too.

A POSH SNACK

In Victorian England, [cucumber](#) sandwiches were consumed with afternoon tea, when, at around four o'clock, the [well-to-do gathered](#) for tea, sandwiches, [scones](#) and cake. Victorian elites lived primarily sedentary lives so they didn't need to eat food with substance, like [labourers](#) did. Cucumber sandwiches are quite low-calorie, so they were perfect for them. In the Edwardian era (from 1901 to 1910), [cucumbers](#) were so popular that farmers started [growing](#) them all year round in [glasshouses](#). The abundance of [cheap labour](#) and [coal](#) to [heat](#) the [glasshouses](#) made the production of [cucumbers](#) quite [profitable](#).

UPDATING THE CLASSIC

The classic [cucumber](#) sandwich is made with white bread, lightly [battered](#) and with the [crusts cut off](#). The [cucumber](#) is thinly [sliced](#) and salt and lemon juice [added](#). The sandwich is then carefully cut into triangles. Nowadays, there are some other interesting [fillings](#): in the US, cream cheese, mayonnaise, [dill](#) and salmon are [added](#), while other combinations include mixed herbs, yoghurt and olive oil. The [late](#) Queen Elizabeth II [reportedly](#) ate her [cucumber](#) sandwiches with [mint](#) for an even-more refreshing effect. Whatever your preferences, [thought](#), just make sure not to forget the [cucumber](#)!!

Glossary

- **reportedly** = a quanto si dice
- **mint** = menta
- **though** = comunque
- **salad** = insalata
- **labourers** = operai, braccianti
- **growing** = coltivare
- **dill** = aneto
- **late** = defunta
- **buttered** = imburrare
- **crusts** = croste, bordi
- **bland** = insipido
- **upper-class** = classe alta
- **had a hard time** = avere difficoltà
- **gathered** = riunire
- **profitable** = redditizio
- **cut off** = tagliare
- **cucumber** = cetriolo
- **scones** = dolcetti, biscotti
- **coal** = carbone
- **dealing** = affrontare
- **came up with** = inventarsi
- **harvested** = raccogliere
- **caught on** = prendere piede
- **fillings** = farciture
- **brought** = portare
- **glasshouses** = serre
- **thinly sliced** = tagliato a fette sottili
- **added** = aggiungere
- **staple** = alimento classico, tipico
- **sliced** = tagliare a fette
- **heat** = calore
- **well-to-do** = benestanti
- **cheap labour** = manodopera a basso costo