

A Short History of Chips [B1]

Irresistibilmente salate e croccanti, le patatine fritte sono l'aperitivo più richiesto al mondo. Nonostante la loro popolarità, il mondo anglosassone non riesce a mettersi d'accordo sulle sue origini e nemmeno sulla terminologia che le riguarda.



Americans [munch through](#) around 1.85 billion pounds [839 million kg] of potato chips every year; that's some 6.6 pounds [2,99 kg] per person. That is a lot of potato chips! But few would argue that potato chips, or 'crisps', as they are called in the UK, are irresistible. Producing one of the most extensively-consumed snacks in the world, the potato chip industry is expected to reach \$43.8 billion in [turnover](#) by 2028. But who invented this [crunchy treat](#)?

A FUSSY GUEST

The origins of the potato chip are disputed. The person usually credited with their invention is George Crum, a 19th-century chef of Native American and Black [heritage](#), who worked at Moon's Lake House in Saratoga Springs, New York. [Legend has it](#) that one day in 1853, the railroad baron Cornelius

Vanderbilt was [dining](#) there and was served some [thick, soggy](#) fried potatoes. Vanderbilt [sent them back](#) and demanded a more [crunchy](#) version. Crum, [annoyed](#) by the [fussy diner](#), [sliced](#) some potatoes as [thin](#) as he could, fried them [to a crisp](#), and served them to Vanderbilt. Surprisingly, the magnate loved them — and that is how potato chips were said to have been born.

A DELICIOUS ACCIDENT

Saratoga chips became a local delicacy and the snack began [to spread](#) all over America. Crum, however, never [claimed](#) that the Vanderbilt story was true, and [according to](#) some [sources](#), it was his sister, Catherine Adkins Wicks, who actually invented potato chips. Apparently, while working with her brother, Wicks accidentally [dropped](#) a [thin](#) potato slice in [boiling fat](#), [fished it out](#), tried it, and thought [it would make](#) a great snack. At least three others have been credited as the creators of potato chips. One of them was an English doctor named William Kitchiner, who, in 1817, published a cookbook that included a recipe for ‘potatoes fried in slices’.

CHOOSE YOUR OWN FLAVOUR

In the 20th century, many potato chip brands appeared, and by the late 60s Lay's was America's favourite. Nowadays we can find all kinds of flavoured potato chips at the supermarket; from all-time favourite flavours such as salt & pepper or cheese & onion, to quite surprising ones, like vegetable soup, and even cappuccino! And if you ever wondered why potato chip bags come half empty, there is a good reason for it: the space adds [cushioning](#) to prevent the chips from being [crushed](#).

Glossary

- **annoyed** = infastidito
- **sliced** = tagliare a fette
- **claimed** = affermare
- **munch through** = mangiare masticando in modo rumoroso
- **heritage** = ascendenza
- **thick** = grosse
- **soggy** = inzuppate, mollicce
- **sent them back** = dare indietro
- **according to** = secondo
- **dropped** = buttare
- **boiling fat** = grasso bollente
- **crushed** = schiacciare
- **crunchy** = croccante
- **to a crisp** = fino a bruciarla
- **it would make** = sarebbe diventato
- **treat** = delizia
- **dining** = cenare
- **sources** = fonti
- **fished it out** = pescarlo, tirarlo fuori
- **to spread** = diffondersi
- **cushioning** = imballaggio, protezione
- **turnover** = fatturato
- **Legend has it** = secondo la leggenda
- **fussy** = schizzinoso
- **diner** = commensale
- **thin** = sottili