

Big Purple Marble
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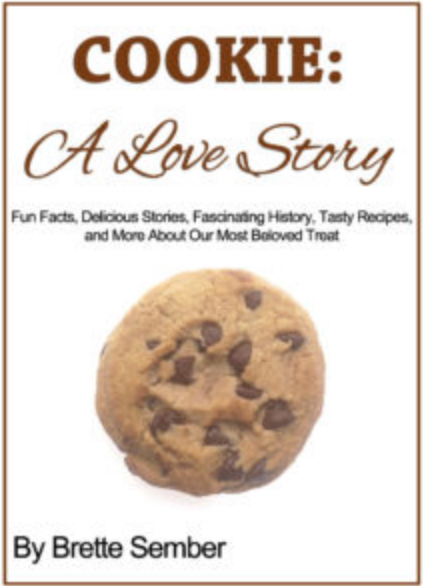
National Homemade Cookie Day and Cookie Month

Posted on September 30, 2017 by Endeavour

The cookie has existed long before the computer cookie (a segment of information about a user) came into our world. Those sweet little baked bits of dough usually send a message of love. We pair them with [coffee](#), milk, or ice cream – or we enjoy their individual deliciousness.

Homemade Cookies Day is celebrated on October 1st, followed by an entire month recognizing the beloved treat. We asked **Brette Sember**, author of [Cookie: A Love Story: Fun Facts, Delicious Stories, Fascinating History, Tasty Recipes, and More About Our Most Beloved Treat](#), to tell us about the incredible, edible cookie.

“Cookies are an endless, fascinating subject for me. There is a very strong emotional link for so many people which is why cookies are a comfort food,” says [Sember](#). “They are a true American food – the modern concept of them was born here and is an expression of American ingenuity.” In fact, Sember tells us that the fortune cookie was not from China at all – they are an American creation (read the story in her book).



Where was the first cookie created?

“Cookies actually go back to prehistoric people who cooked gruel cakes on hot stones next to fires.

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They might not be the same as our cookies, but they were likely sweetened with berries and probably cooked in small round shapes,” explains Sember. “Greeks and Romans later made shaped cakes they sweetened with honey. Sugar was first cultivated around 7000 AD in Persia and small shaped cakes sweetened with it were baked there. A cookie maker’s guild was established in France in 1270. None of these were actually called cookies though – they were still really small cakes.”

Sember says that settlers survived on hardtack biscuits aboard ships. “Jumbles were probably the earliest identifiable cookie made in America – there’s a written recipe from 1585 for these cookies that were shaped then boiled and then eventually years later they were baked. The word cookie does come from a Dutch word (*koekje*) which means small cake. Most countries don’t use the word cookie at all. Biscuit is a better known word, spread by the British empire.”

What inspired you to research the cookie?

“I was inspired to research cookies because I love them and making them are some of my earliest and fondest memories. Cookies bring people together and for most people there are many happy childhood memories associated with them,” explains Sember. “They are so deeply imbedded in our culture that I wanted to find out where they came from and how they evolved. When I started I really had no idea how far back their history goes and what a huge cultural impact they’ve made.”



What is your favorite cookie?

“I’m a fan of chocolate chip cookies. I like the Tollhouse recipe, but I make them gluten-free and I refrigerate the dough for 24 hours before baking which stabilizes it and prevents spreading,” says Sember. And she is not alone: in an informal poll, Big Purple Marble found that chocolate chip cookies were the overall favorite of pollsters – with and without a nut addition. But following close behind were snickerdoodles, oatmeal raisin, and several modifications of the original chocolate chip version. Visit [Sember’s FB page](#) to find recipes and discover more about cookies.

What’s the most popular – chewy or crispy?

“There’s no consensus on this one! Although generally homemade cookies tend to be soft(er) while commercial cookies tend to be crisp,” Sember says.

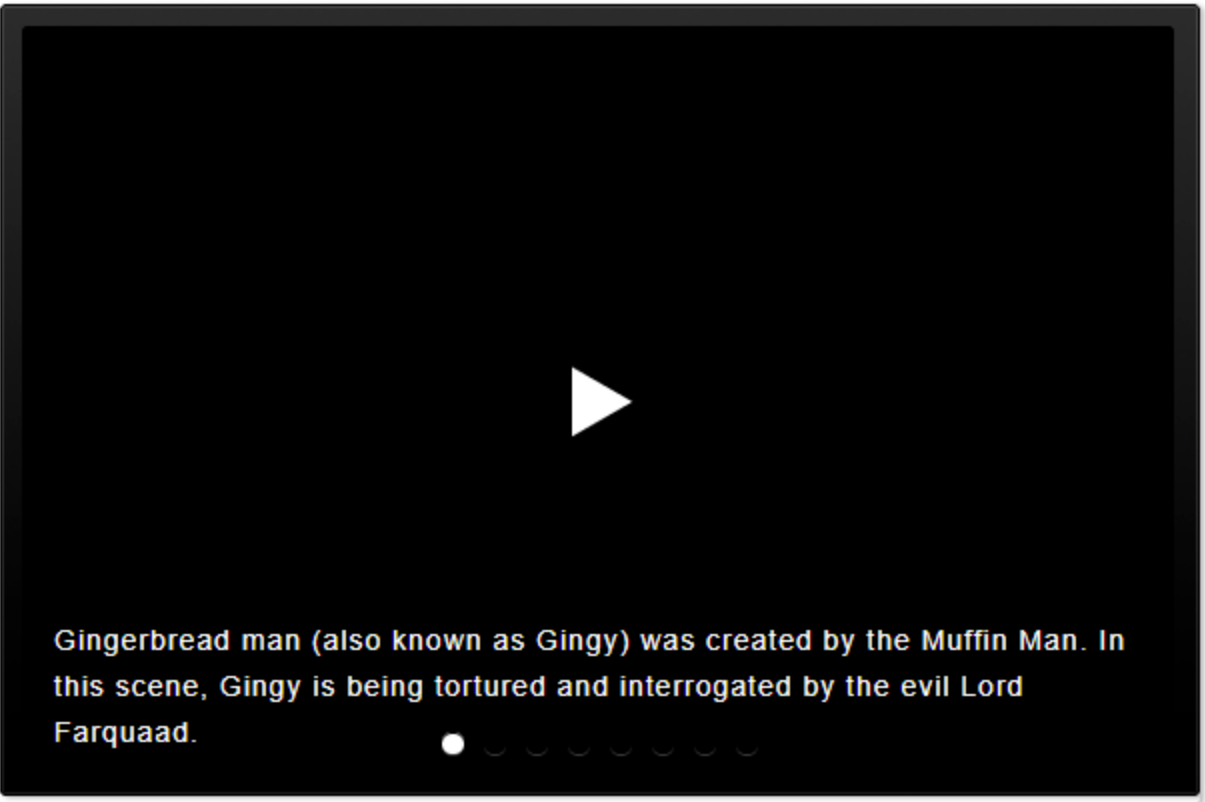
Has anyone really died from eating raw cookie dough?

“Not that I know of. There was an outbreak of E. coli in Nestle Tollhouse refrigerated cookie dough in 2009.” says Sember, adding that female teens and pre-teens make up the majority of dough-eaters. “However, it’s just not a good idea to eat a lot of it. The eggs and the flour are both of concern. There are now specialty restaurants/chains that serve just cookie dough (and it’s safely made so you can eat it raw).”

Is the Gingerbread Man in the movie *Shrek* a cookie or a cake? Have cookies played a part in other films or television shows?

“A gingerbread man is a cookie since it is a formed, stand on its own cooked piece of dough. Gingerbread cake is cooked en masse in a pan. So the Gingerbread Man in Shrek is definitely a cookie. And a pretty darn cute one too,” says Sember.

Here are a few examples of cookies that landed some screen time:



Fun Facts About Cookies:

- The world’s largest cookie weighed 40,000 pounds and was created by the Immaculate Cooking Company in North Carolina in 2003.
- Americans eat 6.5 million pounds of manufactured cookies PER DAY, Sember says. “That’s about 12 lbs per person per year and 35,000 cookies per person in a lifetime.”
- The world’s most expensive biscuit was probably the one that was bought at auction in 2015. A biscuit saved by a passenger on the Carpathia, the vessel that saved some passengers of the Titanic, was sold to a collector for \$23,000.
- 92.5% of American households eat cookies. We feel sorry for the remaining 7.5%.

Feature photo by Jennifer Pallian of Unsplash

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