Popular Oreo cookie reaches century mark

Oh the kid will eat the middle of an Oreo first and save the chocolate cookie outside for last. Many of you will recognize that old familiar jingle for a common cookie, the Oreo.

Until the recent celebration, I had no clue the Oreo had been around so long, turning 100 years old on March 6, 2012. Wow!

Do you suppose there were Oreos on board the Titanic when it headed for the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean a month later? Doubtfully so. Although the favorite sandwich cookie sells in 100 countries around the world today, chances are it hadn't made its way to England yet.

First produced and sold in New Jersey by Nabisco, the worldwide popular treat reached a reported $2 billion in sales last year, the top-selling cookie in the world. Now that's one whale of a lot of cookies! A report of the process indicated one of the 21 bakeries produces a million cookies per eight-hour shift.

Twist, lick and dunk became an advertised concept. I recall the commercial with a little boy teaching his dog how you twist the Oreo to separate the two chocolate pieces, lick the inside frosting, then dunk the remaining cookie in milk and take a bite. Oh how that dog longed for a taste after his master's demonstration.

Lick or scrape? Some would challenge the lick step as they have always scraped the frosting off with their teeth. Over the years, there's definitely been much analyzing of how people eat their Oreos.

Amazingly enough, there's been very little change in the century-old cookie, with Kraft acquiring the Nabisco brand in 2000. Although variations have been tried like lemon flavor, fudge covered and the double stuff frosting in the middle, the good ol' recipe with a thin layer of white frosting between the two chocolate wafers remains the most popular.

I understand that a green tea variety is available in China as well as a blueberry selection in Indonesia. Oh and there's a special "birthday cake" option right now with multi colored candy sprinkles in the center.

Agreements were reached with fast food operations to mix the Oreo with ice cream for blizzards and cyclones. Oreos are a common ingredient in many dessert recipes. One of my childhood favorite desserts had crushed Oreos on the top and bottom with a mixture of lime sherbet and vanilla ice cream in between.

An Oreo snack break seemed to be common on various news casts on the cookie's birthday. One reporter indicated his grandson won a promotion and gets a package of Oreos every month for the next year. Grandpa already agreed to supply the milk, evidently assuming that his grandson would share.

Happy Birthday, Oreo! You've provided pleasure for multi generations.

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