

## Mints and S'mores

The word "mint" could mean a lot of things. It could pertain to something being in good condition, the garnish, or the flavor. But the typical 'mint' is the hard candy that it comes in different shapes, styles and flavors. The mint nowadays is an ingredient that is used in a wide variety of candies from jellybeans, to chewing gum, to chocolate. It was in the early 1900s that mint was first used as flavoring to candy, gum and toothpaste. However way before that, the mint, like licorice, has enjoyed a rich and long history which began with the early civilizations. Mint then was consumed not as the candy we know today but in many other forms. The word 'mint' comes from a story in Greek mythology. In the story, Hades, the god of the underworld, was having a romantic affair with a beautiful and spirited nymph by the name Minthe. The affair reached the ears of Persephone, the wife of Hades and was angered by it. As punishment for his actions, Persephone transformed Minthe into a sweet herb. In ancient Greece, the people would place mint leaves around dead bodies to hide the smell of decay. This is also a ritual to remind Hades of the wrong he had done. In other cultures and civilizations, the mint was used in different ways. The herb, then until now, was used in food recipes, as tea and as herbal medicine. The mint reached America when they were brought by the early Colonists. At that time, it was used as a form of medicine. Later on, it was made into homemade candy which became very popular. Commercial production of the mint candy was first done in Massachusetts in the late 1790s. Three centuries later, the United States became the leaders of peppermint production. The mint flavor soared in popularity by the turn of the century. The famous Lifesaver mints were created and marketed in 1912 by Clarence Crane which he named so because of its circular shape which is similar to the lifesavers that hung from the sides of boats. Europe started to participate in the mint candy manufacturing and marketing industry in 1927 and it started with the Austrian named Edward Hass. He had created the first adult mint candy which had an intense mint flavor. He called it PEZ. The term PEZ came from the word peppermint in German which is 'pfefferminz'. The S'more is a whole different story. The s'more is a typical marshmallow that is cooked and melted or marshmallows that are roasted then sandwiched between crackers or eaten directly. Roasting of marshmallows over an open flame is a tradition of many Americans, almost like a rite of passage. The S'more's history however, is a mystery and no one knows exactly how the tradition started. The first evidence of a s'more recipe was in 1927. A Girl Scout Handbook contained the recipe involving marshmallows with graham crackers and chocolate. The name s'more is also attributed to the Girl Scouts Organization. The name is a shortened version of 'give me some more'. Since then, the s'mores have been a popular addition to the campfire experience of children and throughout the years, it has been associated with singing around a camp fire and summer fun.

## About the Author

Each level of consumption in a food chain is called a trophic level. The table gives one example of a food chain and the trophic levels.

Source: <http://www.products herbal.com>