

## Potato Chips

A New York chef invented potato chips by accident one night when he was trying to make very thin French-fried potatoes for a customer who thought the chef's regular fried potatoes were too thick. It all happened in 1853 at the Moon Lake Lodge in Saratoga Springs, New York.

The lodge's chef, George Crum, offered diners thickly cut fried potatoes, as was the style of cooking then. One night, a diner refused to eat an order of Chef Crum's fried potatoes, saying they were too thick. The chef prepared a second order, this time cutting the potatoes thinner. These were also rejected. The chef grew angry and decided to cut the potatoes paper-thin, thinking that the customer wouldn't even be able to pick them up with a fork. The customer loved the potatoes. Soon, other diners were requesting them. Eventually, "Saratoga Chips," as they were called, were packaged and sold in New England.

When the mechanical potato peeler was invented in the 1920s, it meant more potato chips could be produced quicker. This opened up a new market for the salty spuds. About the same time, a traveling salesman named Herman Lay introduced the chips to people in the South. Lay's Potato Chips<sup>®</sup> eventually became the first successfully marketed national brand. The company later merged with a Dallas corn chip company called Frito. The result was the Frito-Lay<sup>®</sup> Company. Today, potato chips and other snack foods are immensely popular treats in America.

## Unit 13

- Potato chips were a result of a dissatisfied patron and an example of good coming out of bad. Describe another negative situation you are familiar with in which the end result was positive.
  
- Would you have accommodated the patron as the chef did? Explain.
  
- As Americans, do you think that we need to acknowledge that we are a “snack food” culture? Why or why not?