28 Foods Named After People - mental_floss on YouTube (Ep. 23)

List Show
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Hi, I'm John Green, welcome to my Salon. This is Mental Floss.

1. (0:03) Have you ever wondered what part of the cow Salisbury Steak comes from? The answer is many parts and not just cow. Recipes have changed over time but today, the USDA says that Salisbury Steak must contain a minimum of 65% chopped meat (25% of which can be pork, the rest has to be beef) and the other 35%, veggie filler. I believe sawdust is technically a vegetable.

That is the first of many foods that are named after people you're going to learn about today.

(Intro)

2. (0:39) What do German Chocolate Cake, Volkswagen and Heidi Klum have in common? Nothing. German Chocolate Cake is actually named after an American named Sam German, who developed a pre-sweetened dark baking chocolate in 1852.

3. When Queen Consort Margarita visited Naples in 1889, renowned Pizza chef Raffaele Esposito prepared 3 special pies for her dining pleasure. Margarita's favorite used Basil, Mozzarella and Tomato to create an edible version of the Italian flag - green, white and red - so the chef named it in her honor.

4. In the 1920s a man named Rudolph Boysen developed a berry hybrid that took the world by storm... eventually. He developed the berry back in 1923 but he was unable to drum up support for it until 1932 when Walter Knott brought several plants and started selling them at Knott's Berry Farm.

5. Legend has it that in 1984, stockbroker Ramule Benedict drank some Tequila and ended up with a hangover. He wondered into The Waldorf Hotel and requested poached eggs, buttered toast, bacon and Hollandaise sauce and then constructed what is now know as Eggs Benedict.

Oh... did someone mention bacon? [John drops a coin into a piggy bank] We are ever closer to our staff pork chop party!

6/7. History has all but forgotten Australian Opera Singer Dame Nellie Melba but her toast lives on. The thin crunchy toast was created for the diva by Savoy Chef Auguste Escoffier who also contacted Peach Melba in her honor.

8. The phenomenon of naming food after Opera stars is more common than you might think. Like Luisa Tetrazzini aka "The Florentine Nightingale" inspired the American pasta dish known as Tetrazzini. However who she inspired is still uncertain because at least 2 chefs have laid claim to the original recipe.

9. Pasta with cheese and butter is certainly nothing new but when Roman restaurateur Alfredo Di Lelio added extra butter to his recipe in 1914 to please his pregnant wife, the rich dish Alfredo became the talk of the town.

10. In 1943, Ignacio "Nacho" Anaya was working at a restaurant in Texas. A few women from the local army airfield asked Anaya to make them a snack, while they indulged in cocktails, so he fried up some tortilla pieces and grated cheese over them. When asked what the dish was called Nacho replied "They're Nachos Especiales".

11. We have an accident by Brother Clément Rodier to thank for Clementines. In 1902, the Monk made graphs from an uncultivated Mandarin tree on the grounds of an orphanage that his Order ran. He was pleasantly surprised when the delicious fruit sprung forth from this hybrid plant.

12. And while we're talking about fruit, lets talk about Granny Smith, who yes was a real person - Australia's Maria Anne Smith was surprised when she discovered a seedling that spawned a new green apple hybrid. The fruit bearing her name wasn't commercially available until 1895 though - 25 years after her death.

13. There are a few stories about the origins of Chicken à la King but the most repeated one references George Greenwald, Chef at Brooklyn's Brighton Beach Hotel Restaurant. He created a dish using left-over chicken that the resort's owner E. Clarke King II absolutely loved, so Greenwald named it after King, who was after all the boss, and put it on the Hotel Restaurant's Menu. Mark, make me some Chicken a la Green - that looks delicious.

14. The Hot Brown Sandwich, made with Turkey and Bacon, was named after the Brown Hotel in Louisville where it was created in the 1920s. The Hotel was named for its owner James Graham Brown. The fact that the broiled sandwich turns brown is a coincidence.

15. Being Chairman of the New Orleans Crime Commission in 1951 was no piece of cake but it was a dish of Bananas Foster... please forgive the pun. BTW, "No Pun Intended" is a pun on unintended. (Mimes "Mind Blown") Chairman Richard Foster would often head to Brennan's Restaurant after a hard day of work so that Chef Paul Blangé could conduct something special for him. When the chef's flaming banana invention became a hit, he named it after Foster.

16. Giuseppe Cipriani, who also invented the Bellini Cocktail, was also inspired by an artist when he created a dish for a woman on a Doctor prescribed diet. Contessa Amalia Nani Mocenigo's regiment included raw beef so Cipriani served her some Beef over Mayonnaise with Mustard and a bit of Worcestershire. He thought the color of the beef resembled the red pigments used by the Venetian painter Vittore Carpaccio. How do I get this awesome Doctor who prescribes raw beef? Context is everything. You know, its easy to get you a Doctor who'll prescribe you raw beef, its hard to get a Doctor who'll prescribe you the Hot Beef injections I desperately need.

17. Had history gone a little differently, then you'd be eating a PB&J Portsmouth for lunch. You've probably heard this story - John Montague, the 4th Earl of Sandwich, was playing cards with friends and asked for some meat between bread slices so he could eat with one hand and keep playing with the other. What you may not know is that when Montague was given his Earldom, he had a choice between Sandwich and Portsmouth.

18. This is hotly debated, but most people agree that the Cobb Salad is named after Hollywood Brown Derby owner Robert Cobb. Supposedly, Cobb threw together a bunch of ingredients for a midnight snack for himself and his pal Sid Grauman and afterward, whenever Grauman would eat at the Brown Derby, he would request one of Cobb's Salads.

19. Kung Pow Chicken is named after a late 19th Century Qing Dynasty Governor named Ding Bal Jen. Gong Bow was his title - no one's sure exactly why although some say that the chopped chicken schezwan dish was invented for him because he had bad teeth and difficulty chewing.

20. Created in New Orleans in 1899, Oysters Rockefeller was named after America's wealthiest person - John D. Rockefeller. The recipe came about because the chef had to substitute inexpensive local oysters for pricey French snails. Why call it Rockefeller? Because of the 'rich' sauce used in the recipe. Man in 1899 they would laugh at anything.

21. Sara Lee is daughter of the company founder Charles. W Lubin.

She was 8 when he started the company in 1949. She says that her Father told her "the product had to be perfect because he was naming it after me". The product in question may have been perfect but the advertising wasn't - the company's slogan "Nobody doesn't like Sara Lee" contains a double negative. Oh Charles W. Lubin, should have watched our grammar episode.

22. Mrs Paul's Fish sticks is named after the Mother of one of the company's founders - John Paul. Mrs Piszek, the mother of the other founder, was not pleased. By the way, I love fish sticks. They are made usually of Cod or Haddock, not of Anglerfish.

23. Oscar Meyer was a German immigrant who opened up a small Butchers shop in Chicago and became one of the first people to apply a brand name to meat products, which had previously been known as, you know, MEAT!

24. Even though it sounds like a made-up name, Orville Redenbacher was a real man which is what he told legions of popcorn fans who thought that he was an actor paid to play the fictional Orville Redenbacher. He was really a brilliant agriculturalist and spent years developing his namesakes strain of Popcorn who's kernels popped more fully than others. Also he eventually died in his hot tub and he bears a striking resemblance to my Brother, Hank.

25. Traveling salesmen eat on the road a lot and one particular traveler thought that a ratings system might benefit others who did the same. So he turned it into a book featuring 167 restaurants and called it 'Adventures in Good Eating'. This eventually led to a line of high quality foods including delicious powdery cake mixes that I have definitely never eaten directly out of the box with a spoon. That traveling salesman's name by the way - Duncan Hines.

26. Premium Chocolate company Ethel M is owned by Mars Incorporated, which as we pointed out in our acronyms video, is one of the M's in M&M's. Ethel was the Mother of Forest Mars Senior and the wife of company founder Frank Mars.

27. Before Famous Amos became famous he had clients who were. Talent Agent Wally Amos managed stars like Helen Reddy and Marvin Gaye and wooed potential clientele with bags of his homemade baked goods. Reddy and Gaye were so impressed with his crunchy cookies that they gave Amos $25,000 in start-up capital to start his cookie company in 1975.

28. Alright, you want more cookies? Mrs Fields. No longer Mrs Fields because she divorced Mr Fields in 1997 but Debbie Fields Rose is indeed a real person.

And now we return to the Salon so I can tell you about some people who aren't real like Betty Crocker, Aunt Jemima, Mrs Butterworth, Count Chocula... that's right, your entire childhood is a lie.

Thanks for watching Mental Floss here on YouTube which is made with the help of all of these nice people.

Every week, we answer one of your mind-blowing questions and today's question comes from DrexCam8 who asks "Who were Merriam and Webster?" Noah Webster wrote the first American Dictionary and Merriam was the name of the family who eventually took over the rights after his death.

Of course, Mental Floss isn't just a YouTube Channel, its a real life Magazine and there's an online store where you can get 15% off if you enter the code "YouTubeFlossers".

Mark, is that Tiger about to attack me? I have tamed him Mark... Thanks again for watching Mental Floss on YouTube and as we say in my hometown, Don't Forget To Be Awesome.