

Small Categories Series

Bread

The history of bread goes back at least 30,000 years [*That's even before me!*]. The first bread produced was probably cooked versions of a grain-paste, made from roasted and ground cereal grains and water, and may have been developed by accidental cooking or deliberate experimentation with water and grain flour. Descendants of these early flatbreads are still commonly made from various grains in many parts of the world, including lavashes, taboos, sangaks, Mexican tortilla, Indian chapatis, rotis and naans, Scottish oatcake, North American johnnycake, Jewish Matzo, Middle Eastern pita, and Ethiopian injera. Flat bread of these types also formed a staple in the diet of many early civilizations with the Sumerians eating a type of barley flat cake, and the 12th century BC Egyptians being able to purchase a flat bread called 'ta' from stalls in the village streets. The ritual bread in ancient Greek offerings to the chthonic gods, known as psadista was made of fine flour, oil and wine. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_bread]

Every time I think of bread, it invariably calls to mind Wonder Bread. I grew up in Los Angeles, and we'd often pass the huge Wonder Bread factory as we up and down the freeway. The category of Bread is very similar to such categories as Soda and Coffee. Not only are they all 'food' products, but we're all familiar with at least some of the old brands because we not only used them, but we also grew up with all the commercials for them on radio and television...so history and nostalgia are a big part of what this category has to offer.

Did you know...It takes 9 seconds for a combine to harvest enough wheat to make about 70 loaves of bread.



- Each American consumes, on average, 53 pounds of bread per year.
- An average slice of packaged bread contains only 1 gram of fat and 75 to 80 calories.
- Assuming a sandwich was eaten for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, it would take 168 days to eat the amount of bread produced from one bushel of wheat.
- A family of four could live 10 years off the bread produced by one acre of wheat.
- One bushel of wheat will produce 73 one-pound loaves of bread.
- Early Egyptian writings urged mothers to send their children to school with plenty of bread and beer for their lunch.
- Breaking bread is a universal sign of peace.
- Farmers receive approximately 5 cents (or less) from each loaf of bread sold.
- Bread is probably the one food eaten by people of every race, culture and religion.
- Superstition says it is bad luck to turn a loaf of bread upside down or cut an unbaked loaf.
- Legend has it that whoever eats the last piece of bread has to kiss the cook.

This is not an easy category. Understandably, most of the covers here are going to be old, which puts something of a premium on them from the get go, and then, although I certainly don't know how many there would be, there aren't many...so that means they're going to be hard to find. There are some new newer issues, to be sure, mostly parts of grocery store sets advertising their particular brands of bread that they handle. Come to think of it, this might add to the difficulty of the category, since, to get those covers, sets would probably have to be broken up.