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Flatbreads: A thing of the past or the future?

There is an old saying, "if you wait long enough, what was once old will become new again." In the case of flatbreads this seems to be the case.

For the past decade, the baking industry has been in a state of turmoil created by the "low carb" diet obsession in the mid nineteen nineties. Traditional white bread which was the staple bread in the American diet fell out of favor. Although it has recovered to a certain extent, the public began to look for alternative products that were able to be used as sandwich bread, yet had taste, texture and flavor over and above that of white bread.

The artisan movement took hold and what for years was considered peasant or old world bread has found a rebirth. The origin of these breads can be traced back some six thousand years. With a higher price point and difficulty in handling the product at a restaurant has limited its use in the food business.

Traditional Middle Eastern and European flatbread was still relegated to large cities with ethnic population groups using it as they had for thousands of years. This ethnic cuisine was for many years overlooked as the American consumer made soft white bread the standard of the sandwich in most restaurants.



As the century ended and the new millennium began, an aging public became more and more concerned with health issues and along with that resurfaced the "low carb" craze. For several years "bread" became a bad word. White pan bread as well as soft rolls and buns took a tumble and several major bakeries have yet to recover from this.

With this heightened drive for a healthy diet, the fact the low carb bread left quite a bit to be desired as far as taste was concerned, and white soft bread was suffering an image problem; flatbreads once again entered into the spotlight.

Chefs began to experiment with the new versions of flatbread and discovered that with imagination and innovation they could create new ideas and stimulate the palates of the dining public.

In the early part of the 1980's we saw Tex-Mex cuisine gain in popularity. With it tortilla became popular on the American dining scene. Corn tortilla had for centuries been an essential part of dishes south of the border but flour tortillas had been limited to the west and southwest areas of the country. Innovation, being a strong suit in the restaurant business, the taco and Burrito soon evolved into the "wrap" which continues to be a mainstay in most restaurants.

Today at Grecian Delight Foods we are striving to use the innovation from our R&D team along with our resources and capabilities to provide our customers with the latest trends in flatbreads. Our most recent flatbread family additions include multi-grain flatbreads, naan, focaccia-style flatbread, lavash and pizza shells. Take a moment to review our flatbread products that are rising in our bakery.