

# A foamy white dream

## Whipping up whips



**Those who know them nearly always love them: They throne atop small, crunchy waffles – those sweet, creamy egg-white domes covered with a glossy dark coating made from the finest chocolate. We’re talking about whips. Lined up seductively on the baker’s shelf or neatly packaged in the supermarket, these small delicacies are simply irresistible. But where does this magic come from that never fails to captivate sweet-tooths large and small?**

It all started in France. Toward the close of the 19th century, confectioners there created the first whips from a meringue-like dough that they covered with a chocolate coating. The name presumably stems from the whisk – or “whip” as it is also called – that was used to create the meringue. Or perhaps because the meringue itself is whipped stiff. In any event, this specialty wasn’t even available at German confectioners until the early 20th century. Commercial production of whips in Germany didn’t begin until around 1950. However the quality of this meringue confection did suffer from the introduction of modern production methods. Quality shortcomings, caused by long shipping and storage periods, were often encountered. And the growing competition promp-

ted several manufacturers to even try and skimp on the ingredients.

### Light, fluffy and sinful

There are even those who claim that the two major ingredients in this meringue confection consist of air and profit. But there’s more to the story than that. While air does account for a major portion of a

should absorb as little moisture as possible from the ambient air. The recipe consists of sugar, egg white, as well as additional ingredients that lend good taste and consistency to the finished product. These ingredients are foamed with the aid of a special pressure whipping method. The light and fluffy foam is then advanced through piping to the so-



whip’s volume, and also happens to be a highly affordable ingredient, it’s not all that simple to make whips. Food technologists first have to determine the optimum consistency of the meringue. In addition, the sensitive confection shouldn’t deform and

called dressing machine, where the foam is squirted onto the waffles (“dressed”). The next step is to cover the as-yet white whips on the conveyor belt with a high-quality chocolate coating. Temperature plays a major role in this process, as it governs the strength and gloss of the coating. After spending a precisely defined period of time in the cooling channel, the finished whips are then hand-packaged.



### Sensitive little delights

Anyone who’s ever had to scrape the smeary remains of whips from their shopping basket during the summer-time knows how sensitive they are to heat. That’s why whips aren’t shipped between June and August. But even

during the cooler months of the year, they're still extremely sensitive to shipping. Thousands of air-conditioned trucks are employed to get them to the customer. Shipping the fragile whips by air is out of the question, though, because the low air pressure at altitude would cause them to simply explode!

And whip storage is problematic as well: Ideally, they should be stored at a temperature of around 16 to 18°C at a relative humidity of from 50 to 70%. Higher or lower levels would result in considerable damage to the confection. Yet in spite of these difficulties, manufacturers are hard at work on new strategies for export. Because with the exception of a few European countries, like Holland, Belgium, Germany and France, this delightful confection is virtually unknown elsewhere in the world.



#### **Not just for kids**

Whip-eating contests at children's birthday parties, whip throws at summer parties and the ever-popular squishy whip sandwich during school breaks – many of these memories are evoked when adults encounter chocolate-smearing children's faces and sticky children's hands in countries in which whips are available. But it's these experiences, perhaps, that pose a quandary for confectioners. Because in contrast to the younger generation, many older consumers tend to

be shy about buying whips. A variety of packaging and advertising has been used to better appeal to this target group. And to satisfy further taste preferences, manufacturers have come up with mocha-flavored whips, whips with white chocolate coating and whips in a variety of sizes. This product variety shows the dimensions in which confectioners are producing today.

Germans eat a total of over one billion of these chocolate-coated meringue delights each year. First and foremost, of course, are children, with per-capita consumption of around 100 of them a year. At this point, though, some information to ease the concerns of worried parents: Whips contain relatively few calories, and their high percentage of dextrose and protein make them easy to digest. A 36-gram whip contains around 624 kJ (151 kcal) of energy. So even adults can succumb to these chocolatey whips with a clear conscience!

