

# the origin of gingerbread

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**GINGERBREAD** is traced back to Europe in the 11th century. Crusaders returned from the Middle East and brought back a spice called ginger. At the time that ginger was introduced to Europe, a pound of ginger was of the same value as a sheep!

Soon after its arrival, different varieties of gingerbread appeared throughout Western Europe. They were sweet or spicy, soft or crusty. The only common characteristic was the ginger spice.

The name Gingerbread comes from the Latin word “Zingebur” and was not used until the 15th century. By that time, gingerbread had gained great popularity, especially in Germany and France. Gingerbread was so popular at the already famous “Christkindlesmarkt” in Nuremberg, Germany that it was named the “Gingerbread Capital of the World.”

Gingerbread was cut into shapes such as boys, girls, animals, patron saints, and even royalty... King George on his horse was a favorite design during this time! The cookies were sold at country fairs and were especially popular during religious feast days.

