

The sweet that went up Everest

From the sweeties.net wiki

Kendal Mint Cake is a bar of peppermint flavoured sugar from Kendal in Cumbria. It is almost pure sugar, which makes it a light, compact source of energy, and that has made it popular with explorers and climbers: see [Kendal Mint Cake](#)

To the Antarctic

Joseph Wiper is said to have made the first batch of mint cake by mistake in 1869. After he emigrated to Canada in 1912, his great nephew Robert Wiper took over the business and marketed mint cake as an energy food for expeditions. Wiper's Kendal Mint Cake went with Sir Ernest Shackleton's Imperial Trans Antarctic Expedition of 1914 to 1917, which helped it catch on with mountaineers and walkers: see [why is Kendal Mint Cake called a cake?](#)

Romney's

Other Kendal makers followed. According to Romney's, Sam T. Clarke began making Romney's Kendal Mint Cake in 1918, after being medically discharged during the First World War. It was Romney's that went up Everest.

Everest, 1953

The 1953 British Mount Everest expedition, led by Colonel John Hunt, was the ninth expedition to attempt the first ascent of the mountain. On 29 May 1953, at 11:30 in the morning, the New Zealander Edmund Hillary and the Sherpa Tenzing Norgay reached the summit. Romney's says its mint cake was carried on that first successful ascent.

The pair did not stay long. They took photographs, and before descending they buried some sweets and a small cross in the snow on the summit. Hillary found that after ten minutes without his oxygen set he was becoming clumsy and slow.

The news was sent back by runner and coded telegram, and was released in London, by coincidence, on the morning of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation, 2 June 1953.

The most popular ration

A member of the successful expedition wrote that the mint cake was the most popular item on the high altitude ration, and that the only criticism was that there was not enough of it. Romney's packaging still carries a line about sitting on the snow, looking at the country far below, and nibbling Kendal Mint Cake. Mint cake was not the only British sweet on the mountain: the Sheffield firm A. L. Simpkin also supplied glucose

sweets to the expedition: see [the sweets people take on holiday](#)

After Everest

Mint cake kept travelling. Chris Bonington took Quiggin's Kendal Mint Cake on his 1975 Everest expedition, and in 2004 Ewan McGregor and Charley Boorman packed mint cake for their motorcycle journey around the world, Long Way Round. For how the bars are made, see [how is Kendal Mint Cake made?](#)

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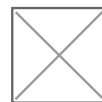
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