

# Cotton Candy

## History

It is unclear who was the first person to invent cotton candy. Four people, Thomas Patton, Josef Delarose Lascaux, John C. Wharton, and William Morrison, have all been named as the inventors of the candy.

Wharton and Morrison received a patent for the cotton candy machine in 1899. They created the first electric cotton candy machine to melt and spin sugar through tiny holes using centrifugal force. After the two candy makers from Tennessee received the patent, Wharton and Morrison took the invention to the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904.

Patton received a separate patent in 1900 for his process of making cotton candy. He was experimenting with caramelizing sugar and forming threads using a fork. Patton used a gas-fired rotating plate to spin the cotton candy threads. He introduced the candy at Ringley Bros. Circus and it became popular with children.

Around the same time, a Louisiana dentist, Lascaux, introduced cotton candy at his dental practice though he never received a patent or trademark for the confection.

The early machines proved to be unreliable at times. Some simply broke and others would make loud rattling sounds. In 1949, Gold Medal Products introduced a more reliable model with a spring base. This helped to revolutionize cotton candy making.

Today, cotton candy is a great treat to enjoy at a circus, amusement park or fair. Even though its beginning can be debated, it has become a favorite summertime candy.

## How is Cotton Candy Made?

Cotton candy is very simple to make. First sugar is melted into a liquid state and then spun in the cotton candy machine. The machine forces the liquid through tiny holes that shape and cool the liquid sugar. After it cools, the sugar becomes a solid again. The center of the machine is filled with thousands of tiny threads that are collected and served on a stick.