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AUSSIE ICON TURNS 75

Age wearies most of us, but not Kit Kat, it seems.

Kit Kat has survived a World War, seen 18 Australian prime ministers come and go and was around when man took his first steps on the moon. And in all that time it's had very few calls for a facelift.

One of the world's most iconic chocolates celebrates its 75th birthday and it's made right here in Australia.

Around 540 Kit Kat fingers are eaten every second somewhere in the world and more than 17 billion fingers sold every year.

Here in Australia, we eat 317 million Kit Kat fingers a year and if you lined up all the Kit Kat Chunky's consumed in this country annually, you'd be able to travel from Sydney to Alice Springs!

The Kit Kat was developed in the mid 1930s when an employee from confectionery company, Rowntree in the UK, decided the world needed a chocolate bar that a man could take to work in his pack. The name Kit Kat was taken from a London-based literary club run by pastry chef Christopher Caitling in the late 17th Century.

In the last 75 years, Kit Kat has virtually remained unchanged and is now sold in 72 countries and is a market leader in the snack industry having created more than 100 new flavours and textures.

Andrew McIver, Head of Confectionery for Nestlé in Oceania, said Kit Kat has enjoyed 75 years of success because of its consistent recipe for quality all around the world.

"75 years is a long time for any product to be loved and enjoyed around the world and still be going strong," Andrew said. "We are confident that Kit Kat is in good shape to stick around for another 75 years."

For more information:

Anita Catalano

External Communications Manager

Nestlé Australia Ltd

Tel: (02) 8756 2388

Mobile: 0406 403 397

Anita.catalano@au.nestle.com.





Kit Kat's 75 year milestones

1935 – Kit Kat is invented by London confectionery maker Rowntree after an employee places an idea in the suggestion box for a chocolate bar that a man could take to work in his lunchbox. They call it 'Rowntree's Chocolate Crisp.'

1936 – Advertising gurus think the name's too long so the chocolate wafer is re-branded as Kit Kat Chocolate Crisp. 'Break' is also used for the first time in advertising campaigns.

1942 – At the height of World War II, the recipe is drastically changed due to food shortages. A chocolate is produced using less milk and wrapped in blue in an effort not to confuse customers. The explanation on the advertisement read: "No More Kit Kat Chocolate Crisp Till After the War"

1949 – Kit Kat returns to its original milk recipe and iconic red wrapper. The words 'Chocolate Crisp' are dropped from the packaging.

1949 – Production begins in Australia at a Rowntree factory in Victoria. Kit Kat costs 6 and 1 (or about 85 cents) in today's currency.

1940s and 50s – The brand expands to South Africa and Canada.

1958 – The arrival of television brings the first commercial with the classic slogan; "Have a break, Have a Kit Kat."

1964 – Rowntree moves production of Kit Kat to Campbellfield.

1970s – Kit Kat expands into Central, Western and Eastern Europe.

1988 – Nestlé acquires Rowntree.

1990s – Kit Kat begins production in Malaysia, China and India.

1999 – Kit Kat Chunky is launched.

2000s – Kit Kat begins production in Bulgaria, Russia, Turkey and Venezuela.

2010 – Kit Kat is the world's number three chocolate brand and is available in 72 countries. It's also 75 years old....Happy Birthday!

Fun Facts

- Dubai Duty Free sells an average of one tonne of Kit Kats every day.
- In Japan, the Kit Kat is considered a lucky charm. Kit Kat sounds very similar to the phrase 'Kitto Katsu' which means 'You Shall Surely Win!' That country boasts 80 flavours of Kit Kats that include pickled plum, sweet potato, bubble gum, lemon vinegar, camembert cheese, cucumber, green tea and strawberry cheesecake.
- Around 540 Kit Kat fingers are consumed every second throughout the world and 17.6 billion fingers sold every year as recorded in the Guinness Book of Records this year.
- At full speed a Kit Kat Chunky can be wrapped at the blistering pace of 0.03 seconds.





MEDIA RELEASE

Oldies but Goodies

Here are some of other Nestlé favourites which have stood the test of time.

Violet Crumble – launched in 1923.

Freckles – first manufactured in Sydney nearly 60 years ago.

Marella Jubes – have been sold here since the 1930s

Jaffas – named after a town in Palestine where oranges were grown for export

Lifesavers – first available in Australia in 1922 when Sweetacres started importing from the USA. Local production began soon after when demand skyrocketed.

Fantales – available in Australia for more than 50 years.

