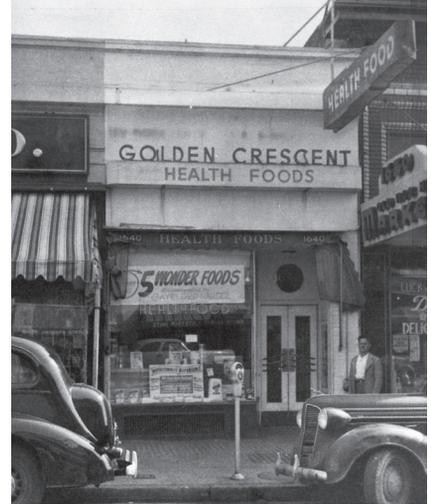




Pamela's Products: 25 Years and Still Going Strong



Pamela's Products began in 1988 with a credit card and the determination to create gluten-free products that actually tasted good. Pamela Giusto-Sorrells grew up in the health food industry. She didn't find it particularly fair that people following restricted diets "got stuck eating" whatever was available. Thus, she set out to create products that offered consumers tasty choices made with wholesome ingredients.

Surprisingly, neither Pamela nor her immediate family members have issues with gluten. With a vegetarian grandmother, Pamela grew up eating what she characterizes as "weird" foods, such as carob instead of chocolate. Pamela's grandparents owned one of the first health food stores in San Francisco in 1941 called The Golden

Crescent. In the back of the store was a wholesale bakery where they produced and packaged "diet" cookies and breads. Forty years later, they were producing the same tasteless products using the same recipes. While Pamela was working as a cookie packer, she wondered, "How hard can it be to make something that actually tastes good?"

Based on her experience in the health food industry, Pamela placed high importance on using whole grains, natural sweeteners (such as fruit juice, date sugar, and molasses), and nothing artificial in her products. She wanted her products to be sold on flavor alone; the fact that they were gluten-free was an afterthought.

Pamela's Products began with cookies: peanut butter, ginger, oatmeal raisin

walnut, and oatmeal date coconut. This line of cookies was the first I found in health food stores that was both flavorful and reasonably priced. To this day, I still love Pamela's Butter Shortbread and Pecan Shortbread cookies.

Pamela's Products was originally sold under the Delightful Alternatives brand for about a year, but the name didn't stick. Consumers were looking for "those cookies made by Pamela," so the brand name was changed to Pamela's Products.

Pamela's first flour mix – a baking and pancake mix – has been Pamela's number one selling product for 25 years. It was created to provide customers with a gluten-free alternative to Bisquick for baking purposes. From there, the line expanded to include a brownie mix as well.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: **Jennifer D. Harris** was diagnosed with celiac disease more than 16 years ago and has turned her diagnosis into a thriving career and an opportunity to help the newly diagnosed. She is a Gluten-Free Product Specialist and an Industry Consultant for her own consulting company. She also is the marketing coordinator for Pure Knead, a dedicated gluten-free and allergen-friendly bakery in Georgia. Email Jennifer at: jenniferharris326@gmail.com

The Company's Chunky Chocolate Chip cookies and Butter Shortbread cookies were eventually added to the line, as was their bread mix, which took eight years to develop.

Since then, the product line has expanded to include biscotti, single-serve mixes, bars, frosting mixes, and an array of 14 baking mixes to assist the everyday baker.

From the beginning, Pamela's goal was to create mixes that were easy to use, tasted great, and always turned out perfectly. She waited until she had the mix just right before finalizing the product. Pamela considers herself a lazy baker but one with a great palate, so in the product development process she would try all of the similar mixes on the market (even those with wheat) to see what she was up against, and then strive to craft something better.

Pamela's ready-to-eat chunky chocolate chip cookies and her famous baking and pancake mix consistently claim the number one gluten-free ranking in their categories. In 2012, the company made the move to a new 76,000-square-foot facility. The new facility spans more than one and a half acres, doubling the bakery's previous capacity to accommodate increased production of their full line of



135 products. All of Pamela's products are certified gluten-free by the Gluten Free Certification Organization (GFCO).

Operating Pamela's Products continues to be a very personal journey for Pamela and one that clearly showcases her passion to cater to those on restricted diets. Happy 25th Birthday Pamela's Products and here's to 25 more delicious years! 



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