



HISTORISCHES

The history of honey. The oldest food in the world.

THE PREHISTORIC AGE

Bees are older than humans. They evolved 40 to 50 million years ago. Bronze Age finds show that their physical make-up is the same today as it was 35 million years ago.

And Stone Age honey is known as the oldest type of food. As early as the Stone Age humans gained a taste for honey.

Honey gatherers are depicted on cave paintings dating from 9000 AD. From the earliest time humans looted wild bees' nests. After 7000 BC humans began to systematically make use of bees, caring for them and propagating them. Apiaries gradually appeared when humans formed settlements.

ANTIQUITY

Old advanced civilizations in history prized honey as a sweetener and a natural medicine. The Old Testament reports in detail on the care of bees. And for good reason Palestine is praised, described as a land in which "milk and honey flow".

In the graves of the Egyptian Pharaohs honey is a valuable burial gift. In the Greek and Roman eras apiaries were widely distributed and well developed.

THE MODERN ERA

For hundreds of years honey was the only sweetener available. It was a precious pleasure traded for a high price. 1 kg honey was exchanged for 1 slave. Sugar from sugar canes was available from the Middle Ages onwards but this luxury could only be enjoyed by the wealthiest in the country.

With the extraction of refined sugar from sugar beets at the beginning of the 19th century, the sweet taste finally became affordable for everyone. Yet today honey remains the only completely natural sweetener around.

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