



# \* BeaverTails Pastry \*

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA

What's more Canadian than a beaver? A BeaverTail! Not the back end of the furry mammal, BeaverTails pastries are doughy snacks first fried up in Ontario and now found across Canada.

## What is It?

Taking their name and distinctive shape from the oblong tail of Canada's official animal, these pastries start with balls of whole-wheat dough that are flattened and stretched until they resemble their namesake. They're quickly fried and served sizzling hot, sprinkled with a blend of cinnamon and sugar and – if you like – a squeeze of lemon.



## Finding It

There are stands in Ottawa's ByWard Market and, in winter, along the Rideau Canal Skateway. The pastries cost from C\$3.25 to C\$5 (US\$3.25 to US\$5) each.

## Origin

Grant Hooker, who founded the BeaverTails company with his wife, Pam, says that his grandmother used to make a similar doughy treat – a yeasted, cracked-wheat pastry that both Canadian and American farm families commonly prepared. The Hookers opened their first BeaverTails shop in Ottawa's ByWard Market neighbourhood in 1980, and later trademarked the name.

## Tasting

A comforting cross between a doughnut and buttery cinnamon-sugar toast, BeaverTails pastries mix savoury dough with sweet toppings. Many countries have similar fried-dough snacks, but what distinguishes these is the wheaty pastry; it's more substantial than a fried bread made from white flour. And seeing as they are always cooked to order, you can eat them while they're hot and slightly crisp. The best way to sample one is while ice skating along Ottawa's Rideau Canal, a 7.8km (4.8 mile) waterway that freezes in winter to become the world's longest skating rink. The tasty snack not only fuels you up for skating or other outdoor activities during the freezing winters, it also warms up your hands as you balance the warm pastry on your napkin.

**\* VARIATIONS \*** You can slather your BeaverTails pastry with all sorts of sugary toppings, from chocolate hazelnut spread to maple butter to crumbled Oreo cookies, or pretend to make them more like a meal by adding bananas (with chocolate) or apples (drizzled with caramel), but purists stick with the traditional cinnamon-sugar mix. Just be careful not to get too much sugar on your mittens!

• By Carolyn B Heller •

PHOTO: JAMES HARRIS