

## The History of the Wedding Cookie Table

Preparing a bountiful assortment of cookies for a wedding reception is a time-honored tradition stemming from the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the greater Pittsburgh, greater Youngstown and northern WV region.

The population of the area was largely blue collar, with many having European immigrant roots in an area described as a melting pot. People of many different nationalities learned to live together, gaining an appreciation for each other's backgrounds, customs, and foods.

Life wasn't easy for people who were drawn to the area by the promise of a better life. Men worked in the mills and the mines and women tended to hearth and home and they became family to each other. They didn't have a lot in the way of material goods, but what they had, they shared.

The people of the region marked life's milestone events together, both the happy and the sad. When a baby was born or a family member died, without being asked, they delivered food representing their own heritage.

For weddings, the family often prepared a complete dinner menu with cake, but friends and relatives would add to the offerings by bringing cookies representing their own background. Cookies prepared for weddings were especially fancy and plentiful and people looked forward to the grand assembly which covered an entire table. A new, regional tradition was born where people don't ask, "How was the wedding"? They ask, "How were the cookies"?

The Wedding Cookie Table Community was created in 2015 and has carried the tradition to many parts of the US and to corners of the world.

