

# ROSE SISTERS CHIPS

*A 100-Year-Old Family Recipe Spawns a New Business*

STORY BY TONY VENGROVE PHOTOS BY WINTER CAPLANSO



*“I wasn’t sure if I wanted to share our little secret with the world, but I’m glad we did!”*

**W**hen Goldie Rose immigrated to the United States in 1934, she possessed a strong affinity for baking and cooking. Born in Poland in 1904 and orphaned at an early age, she arrived in Brooklyn, New York, with her husband, Isidore, an arsenal of traditional Polish recipes, and a yearning to always have lots of family around her dinner table.

Goldie and Isidore went on to raise two daughters, Ann and Paula, who, to this day, treasure fond memories of growing up in Brooklyn, especially their special family dinner gatherings. As they listened with curiosity and pride to stories of the old country and their family’s history, they shared a bread basket filled with Goldie’s “chips,” a uniquely toasted bread seasoned with a secret family recipe, said to be over 100 years old. As stories and laughter filled the evening, the basket would make its way around the table, allowing everyone to break off pieces to enjoy.

When Ann and Paula were ready, Goldie shared the recipe and taught them how to make it. Eventually, Ann and Paula passed the tradition on to their children. Fast-forward to today, and Goldie’s chips have transformed from a family tradition to a full-fledged family business: Rose Sisters Chips.

Upper right: Rose sisters Paula (left) and Ann (right)

The idea to turn Goldie’s tradition into a commercial product came from Ann’s son, Jonathan Marcus. “I have to admit, I was a little shocked when Jonathan pitched his idea to me,” says Ann. “I wasn’t sure if I wanted to share our little secret with the world, but I’m glad we did!”

At the time, Jonathan was several years into a successful marketing career but was looking for his next move. “I was feeling a desire to do something really entrepreneurial that generated a lot of passion in me,” he says. “It dawned on me one day that the answer might be literally sitting on my dining room table.”



“Jonathan was persistent about turning the family tradition into a business. I’ve never seen him so excited about what he is doing,” says Paula. “We’re really grateful that he made it all happen. It has brought the family together, and we’re closer than we’ve ever been before.”

Rose Sisters Chips are a deliciously unique chip. Goldie’s secret blend of spices and ingredients are washed over a flour tortilla then baked until perfectly crisp and crunchy. The flavor imparts a mix of savory herbs with a slightly sour, tangy aftertaste that makes it almost impossible to enjoy just one piece.

“One of the first retail stores we pitched was Garelick & Herbs,” Jonathan recalls. “I asked their buyer if we could just put the chips out to let people sample it. They agreed, and literally within a day of sampling, they called me and said they were ready to order.”

The chips are flavorful and versatile. They can be enjoyed straight out of the package as a savory snack or dressed with other toppings to create a distinctive appetizer or small meal. “I love building a salad on top of them,” says Paula. “A nice, lemony arugula salad complements them quite nicely. Or, you can build a salad and crumble the chip on top, like you would croutons.”

When Jonathan started the business in 2018, he worked with a co-packer in New Jersey to produce and package the product. Distribution soon grew to over 1,000 stores from the east coast to the Midwest, which created an opportunity to move production to Connecticut. Today, Rose Sisters Chips are produced in the company’s own 8,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in Bridgeport, which employs 11 people.

Just as the business was growing and running smoothly, COV-

ID-19 hit and instantly created a sense of uncertainty. “Everything shut down,” Jonathan recalls. “The food distribution network stalled as distributors cut back on staff and focused on distribution of PPE, hand sanitizer, and other products that were in high demand. It was six weeks of not knowing what was going to happen.”

Despite this, Jonathan and his team remained focused and not only managed to continue to place their product in new stores, but also ramped up their research and development. “Our customers have shared great feedback and offered ideas for new flavors and different sizes. I’m pleased to say we’re getting close to announcing some exciting new products based on our consumer research,” Jonathan says.

The Rose Sisters Chips branding showcases sisters Ann (84) and Paula (74), who serve as ambassadors for and stewards of the family’s recipe and traditions. “For generations, these chips have been a consistent part of our family’s meals, through good times and bad,” Ann reflects. “We hope they not only delight our customer’s taste buds, but become a new family tradition for others.”

Bread is one of humankind’s oldest foods, steeped in thousands of years of tradition and etiquette. The passing of bread remains a simple gesture of inclusiveness, generosity, and conviviality, but is often taken for granted in today’s fast-paced culture. Rose Sisters Chips hopes its uniquely delicious chips can reignite appreciation for the small things in life that may seem basic but possess an ability to connect us and create long-lasting memories, one delicious crunch at a time. 🍷

> *Rose Sisters Chips: Bridgeport; 475-999-8115; RoseSistersChips.com*

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