

Grand Saline's Morton Salt Co.

You are probably familiar with the little girl holding the umbrella on Morton Salt products, but what you may not know is that this salt mining company found its beginnings in Grand Saline, Texas. The mining operation was known as the Grand Saline Salt Company before it evolved into Morton Salt in 1920. In 1931, the company produced was up to 5 tons of salt daily. That amount of salt equals the average weight of three American cars combined! Mining was a vital industry and quickly led to the city's label as the "Salt Capital of Texas."

The salt is recovered from ancient salt deposits which dried up during an extremely arid period in Earth's history approximately 250,000 years ago. The top of this immense salt deposit now lies 213 feet below the surface in Grand Saline and has a thickness of over 20,000 feet.

The operations in Grand Saline, Texas produce all major grades of evaporated salt including dendritic salt, a form of table salt. It is the sole producer of shaker products and potassium chloride, or salt substitute, for Morton Salt. Grand Saline's Natural Salt is a 100% natural. The multipurpose, coarse grain is excellent for use in preparing many foods because it brings out their pure, natural flavor. Natural salt is ideal for roasting meats, fish and seafood and as a topping for bagels, pretzels and breadsticks.

For nearly four decades, the Grand Saline Salt Festival has been celebrated in the city every year in the beginning of June. The festival includes concerts, rodeos, various venues, and great food -seasoned with salt, of course. The Salt Palace was built in 1971 for the festival and is a modern building constructed entirely of salt blocks; aligning well with the city's salty heritage. In recent years, the original building has been reconstructed and made larger in scale, making it a must-see attraction. Visitors to the Salt Palace will receive a complimentary salt crystal to take home.

Scientists say that the salt found here can supply the world's craving for the next 20,000 years, but after that, we'll need to find a substitute. You can take this statement with a grain of salt, or develop a new gratitude for this famous zest. Either way there is no denying that salt has seasoned our lives for many years, especially those in Grand Saline, Texas.

Source(s):

Grand Saline, Texas. (2008). Texas Escapes. Retrieved February 10, 2011 from http://www.texasescapes.com/TOWNS/Grand_Saline/Grand_Saline_Texas.htm

Grand Saline Natural Salt. (2010). Morton Salt, Inc. Retrieved February 10, 2011 from http://www.mortonsalt.com/products/foodsalts/Grand_Saline.htm

Kleiner, D. (2011). Grand Saline, TX. Handbook of Texas Online. Retrieved February 10, 2011 from <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hgg04>

Salt Festival Heritage Association. (2010). Retrieved February 10, 2011 from <http://www.saltfest.net/>

Salt Palace Museum. (2009). Retrieved February 10, 2011 from <http://www.saltpalacemuseum.org/index.html>

Author(s):

Written by Maggie Pottkotter, Intern with the Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences at Texas A&M University, as part of a National Park Service Trails and Rails project funded by Amtrak, 2011.