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SHORT ORDERS

The Common touch

In 1828, the Cross brothers of Montpelier invented the Vermont Common Cracker, originally known as the Montpelier cracker. It soon became a staple of the average Vermonter's diet; people would gather to gossip around the country store cracker barrel. Today, nearly 200 years later, Vermont Common Crackers (\$4.79-\$4.99 for a 7.5-ounce tin) are still manufactured with the same machinery. Their subtle flavor and crunch make them an ideal base for any snack. They're equally good crumbled on chowder or served with spreads, dips, or cheese, especially cheddar. But one thing has changed: the recipe. Since October 2006, the crackers have had no artificial colors, flavors, or preservatives, and no hydrogenated oils or trans fats. The modern, healthier crackers still come with a dollop of nostalgia; they're packaged in a retro green tin. *Vermont Common Crackers are sold at DeLuca's Market, 11 Charles St., Boston, 617-523-4343, and Cardullo's Gourmet Shoppe, 6 Brattle St., Cambridge, 617-491-8888.* - MONICA BOLAND

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