

The History of the Secret Formula 1886-2011

1886

May 8. The formula for Coca-Cola is created by pharmacist Dr. John Pemberton, who first sells the beverage at Jacobs' Pharmacy in Atlanta for 5 cents a glass.

Thinking "the two Cs would look well in advertising," company accountant Frank Robinson suggests the name Coca-Cola and pens the now-famous trademark in Spencerian script; the script is still used today.



1887

Pemberton registers his "Coca-Cola syrup and extract" label as a copyright with the U.S. Patent Office to protect the formula from being discovered or imitated.



1891

Asa Candler, an Atlanta businessman, becomes the sole proprietor of The Coca-Cola Company.

To protect the secrecy of the secret formula, Candler scratches off the labels of ingredients on containers and instead uses numbers to identify them.

1893

Candler proclaims Coca-Cola is sold and consumed in every state and territory of the United States.

1895

A new headquarters for The Coca-Cola Company opens on Edgewood Avenue, in Atlanta. There, the secret formula is made in a triangular shaped room secured with a combination lock.



1895

The Coca-Cola Spencerian script trademark is registered in the U.S. Patent Office.

Early 1900s

Asa Candler teaches his son, Charles Howard Candler, to make the secret formula.



1915

The contour bottle is created to combat copycats, and ensure consumers are getting the "real thing."

1925

The loan is repaid and Company President Robert Woodruff reclaims the secret formula. He places it in a vault in the Trust Company Bank in Atlanta where it remains for 86 years.



1919

Ernest Woodruff and a group of investors purchase The Coca-Cola Company from the Candlers.

To serve as collateral for a loan for the purchase, Woodruff has Charles Howard Candler write down the formula for the first time.

The formula is placed in Guaranty Bank's vault until the loan is repaid.

2011

During its 125th anniversary year, The Coca-Cola Company brings the secret formula home to the World of Coca-Cola.

125