

Carrot Museum Origin and Background

Here is how The World Carrot Museum came about. Mountaineers are asked why they climbed Everest and the usual answer is "because it was there". The World Carrot Museum was created "because it wasn't there!"

Basically, at a time when the web was in its infancy, I wanted to learn web design and create a web site, but needed a tangible and interesting topic for it to motivate me to do it properly.

Me and my family love to travel and always make a point, wherever we go, to visit all local museums, castles and churches. We were always fascinated by the unusual items people collected over the centuries which usually end up being bequeathed to the local museum. There was also a fascination with those individuals whose passion has prompted a vast personal collection.

We reckoned we'd seen or heard about a museum or collection for just about everything and that any subject could be made into a successful museum - even an innocuous item such as a carrot.

Then we got thinking some more and on further investigation could not find one related to carrots so decided this was it - the ideal project to learn about web design and to create something interesting and worthwhile. We always know how healthy carrots were and decided to spread the word.

It is a virtual museum whose fundamental mission is to educate, inform and amuse visitors through the collection, preservation, interpretation and exhibition of objects relating to the Carrot. The Museum is divided into these main areas of interest: History, Wild Carrot, the Carrot today, Nutrition, Cultivation, Recipes, cooking advice and more fun and trivia than you ever realised existed about the humble carrot. World Carrot Museum dedicated to all aspects of the Carrots, including the history, nutrition, cultivation, recipes, craft items, trivia, jokes, puzzles, activities. Everything you need to know about the humble carrot is here

The site started in 1996 with just a couple of short pages, giving a brief history and nutritional guide. 3 years on it had metamorphosed from very much a personal website into a world famous site with its own dotcom presence - www.carrotmuseum.com

What started out as a bit of whimsy turned into a very absorbing interest which has brought me in touch with lots of interesting people around the world and I have made many good friends from all points of the globe. I regularly correspond with several people who have collections of carrot items in their thousands. One lady has 36 carrot tattoos! (see web site for details). I regularly visit the carrot festivals held all over the world, including the US, Canada, New Zealand, France, Spain and Turkey.

History is an immense part of the information available and several academic papers have been published in prestigious academic journals. These are constantly referenced by others in the carrot research world.

Research, particularly into ancient manuscripts, proceeds at a pace. An especially thorough amount of research has looked into the role of carrot in World War Two during food shortages. This will probably result in the publication of a book.

The Museum regularly gives visitors advice on all aspects of carrots and in particular advice on growing, variety selection and tips on juicing, storage and uses for surplus carrots and uses for carrot greens. There is also plenty of activities for the kids including a Mr Carrot Face where children can create a unique Mr Carrothead!

As the Museum's fame grew so did contact with other people interested in the Museum.

It has been featured in several tv shows, radio broadcasts from USA to Australia. Also featured in glossy magazines and many newspapers. I do travelling road shows of Museum artefacts and regularly give talk to local societies, women's institutes etc.

The Museum started firmly as a virtual museum, attempting to be a storehouse for all information about carrots around the world.

As interest has grown I have met the people with private collections, and I now have quite a collection "carrotabilia"! – Items with a carrot icon, motif or connection. I like the bizarre or unique items. Like a carrot corkscrew I had specially made for me! – because there wasn't one. There are probably over 1500 items in the collection.

John Stolarczyk, Carrot Museum Curator

www.carrotmuseum.com