



**Your on the
Street Reporter**



Uyless Black

**Food Follies!
Ritz Bits**

Ritz Bits

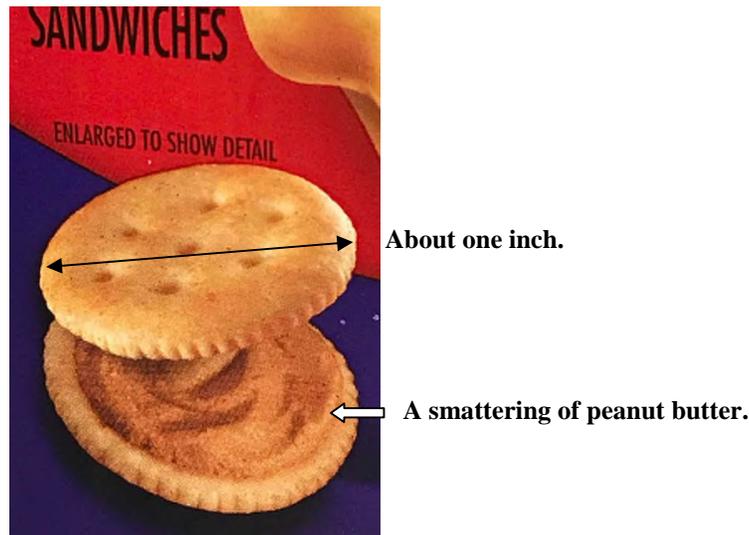
October 24, 2017

The staple of life for some people is peanut butter. This food is not my primary staple, but high on my list; just underneath saltine crackers. Another staple for some eaters is Ritz crackers. I am further down in the Ritz cracker list of addicts, but I am still capable of eating a box of these crackers in one sitting while watching Oprah re-runs.

When eaten together, peanut butter and Ritz crackers are close to being irresistible. I cannot get enough of them, even if I have already filled myself with M&Ms and Snicker bars.

There is almost no end to my obsession with sugar intakes. Best of all, I top-off these delicacies with a 12 ounce Coke containing 39 grams of sugar. Opioids for a high? Naw, just consume a few pounds of sugar.

The Nabisco Company makes a product called Ritz Bits. As seen in the figure below, they are tiny pieces of food, with peanut butter nestled in between two miniscule Ritz crackers. The amount of peanut butter in between the two crackers is far less than what would fill a teaspoon. No matter. These snacks are as addictive as Oreos.



Recently, I had a traumatic experience with Ritz Bits. I pulled one from the box, getting ready to savor it along with my---nine teaspoons of sugar---7-Up.¹ I discovered there was only one cracker in my hand and the cracker had no peanut butter attached.

What a downer. It was like eating a Frito without the bean dip.

I ate the cracker, thinking it was likely a minor slip-up on the Ritz Bits assembly line. After all, robots are not yet perfect. And who knows? Maybe they are smarter than we think, and some of those assembly line robots might be stealing peanut butter. Who could blame them?

I reached-into the Ritz Bits box and ...No! pulled out another single cracker without peanut butter. The assembly line robots were running amok, or the Ritz managers were trying to increase their profit margin; or maybe there was an issue of incompetence.

¹ <https://www.google.com/search?q=amont+of+sugar+in+a+7-UP&oq=amont+of+sugar+in+a+7-UP&aqs=chrome..69i57j0.15235j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>

Whatever the reason for these Ritzless Bits, I poured the contents onto the table to do a count of the number of peanut butterless crackers. The results are shown in the next photo, seen below.



I attempted to stack these naked, shameless crackers, but the stack was so high, they kept tumbling onto the table. So, I stacked as best I could, and arranged the other crackers around the stack...partially for ascetic reasons. Nice effect, wouldn't you say?

Notice the Nabisco claim on the top right-side of the box. I am told we should avoid high fructose corn syrup, as it is unhealthy. Nabisco comforted me with this disclaimer, although the boast led me to question what other things I was consuming that contained this semi-poison in them. You know, those thousands of things made from corn, but accompanied with no such disclaimer.



In addition, Nabisco informs us its Ritz Bits are filled with **REAL** peanut butter. Sweet Mother Peanuts. What would be **UNREAL** peanut butter? Why the disclaimer? Even more, why am I eating this stuff? Stuff that is about as unhealthy as possible and still be advertised as food?

Why? Because we Americans are junk food junkies. We exude fat, because we eat fat-inducing junk. I say "we" because I am part of this pathetic population. See that stack of peanut butterless crackers? I ate them anyway, all the while cursing Nabisco for its very existence.

On the next page is a picture of the nutrition information label that is on the side of the box of Ritz Bits. A few comments about this label (the top part of the label is shown).

First, the product is called a *sandwich*. At the risk of being contrary, I think of a sandwich as having some bread involved. But that idea is not necessary. A cracker sandwich certainly is certainly a legitimate sort of sandwich. I often feast on a teaspoon or so of peanut butter in between two saltines.

Second, and of more consequence to my scientific analysis. The label states 12 sandwiches contain 150 calories, but does not state how much peanut butter is in each sandwich; only that the sandwich actually contains, yes!, peanut butter.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 12 sandwiches (30g) Servings Per Container About 8	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 150	Calories from Fat 70
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	12%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 135mg	6%
Potassium 55mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 18g	6%
Dietary Fiber Less than 1g	4%
Sugars 4g	
Protein 3g	

My layman's research reveals that each Ritz Bits sandwich, if it even has peanut butter spread on it, contains about 1/8th of a tablespoon of peanut butter.² Given that I am not a lab researcher, nor a mathematician or statistician, I could be off a bit. (Sorry, bits.) But not by much.

Almost 50 percent (70 calories) of the 150 calories is from fat. That is not necessarily bad. I am told certain kinds of fat are good for us. Ritz Bits has no trans fat. That's good. It has some protein. That's also good.

And cutting Nabisco some slack, the product is delicious. It does not advertise to be a health food. It announces its peanut butter product contains real peanut butter, however little.

The company has me hooked, not only on peanut butterless peanut butter crackers, but because the company feels obligated to assure its eaters they are eating real peanut butter, with no corn syrup.

A Bob Dylan-type song of profundity is in order:

Strum, strum, strum... ♪♪♪♪

Nabisco sells to us a famous Ritz.

In irony, it calls the product Ritz Bits.

They don't put in too much peanut butter,

That would only add to clutter.

And make Nabisco stock take some hits.

♪♪♪♪

² This scientific conclusion came after an expensive and laborious study of how many calories are in a tablespoon of peanut butter and how many calories are in a down-sized Ritz cracker.

Addendum:

One tablespoon of peanut butter contains about 80 calories.¹ Further analysis reveals one regular-size Ritz cracker is about 15 calories. These tiny Ritz crackers are likely to contain about 2 calories each.

Therefore, the 150 calories contain 48 calories of non peanut butter (2 calories x 12 sandwiches x 2 crackers per sandwich = 48 calories). For my readers who labor under the idea that zero is not a number, let me simplify and round 48 to 50, with the zero in the 50 being a legitimate digit. Therefore: 150 calories minus 50 calories equals 100 calories

What do we find inside 12 Ritz Bits sandwiches? 100 calories of peanut butter. A bit more empirical research reveals: 100 calories of peanut butter divided by 12 sandwiches equals about 8 calories of peanut butter per sandwich. Thus: 1 tablespoon of peanut butter (80 calories) divided by 12 sandwiches equals about 8 (rounded-down) calories of peanut butter per sandwich.

Thus, each Ritz Bits sandwich, if it even contains peanut butter, contains about 1/8th of a tablespoon of peanut butter.

Be aware that this research was conducted by a person who majored in psychology in college, and thus, has no background in quantitative analysis.

¹ My lab analysis consisted of visiting the local grocery store and reading the labels of several peanut butter vendors. No thanks necessary. I bought all seven of the products and will inform the IRS it was a business expense: I had to test-taste each one to validate its claim.