

Mmm ... do you fancy a tasty bag of crisps? Or how about a yummy chocolate bar? British people love their snacks. Find out more about some popular British snacks. Don't read if you're hungry!

Snack facts

Young people in Britain eat more snacks than people of the same age in other European countries. A recent survey has discovered that 64 per cent of under-20-year-olds snack between meals. How does this compare with other countries? 58.7 per cent of young people snack in Germany, 53 per cent in France and only 40.7 per cent in Spain.

What are these young Brits eating? Savoury snacks, especially crisps, are the favourite snack in the UK. Snack researchers found that the average person in Britain spends £43 on savoury snacks each year, compared with £12 for the French and only £7 for the Italians. British people are spending a total of about £2.8 billion a year on savoury snacks!

Crisps

What are crisps exactly? They are very thin slices of potato, fried in oil then covered in salt or other salty flavours. British people are mad for crisps and they like them in a huge variety of flavours. Some of the most popular flavours include cheese and onion, salt and vinegar, steak and onion, roast chicken, tomato ketchup, and cheese and bacon.

A crisp-making company held a competition recently to find new exciting flavours for their crisps. The competition was called 'Do us a flavour' and the company received more than a million suggestions for new flavours. The finalists included squirrel flavour and onion bhaji flavour. The winner was builder's breakfast, which tried to replicate the tastes of a full English breakfast including bacon, eggs, sausages and beans. The flavour was suggested by Emma Rushin of Belper, Derbyshire, who won £50,000 and one per cent of future sales of her flavour. You can't find builder's breakfast crisps in the shops now, though – they were discontinued after one year.

Chocolate

It isn't only savoury snacks that British people love. In fact, they spend more on chocolate than any other European country! If you go to any newsagent's shop in the UK, you'll see a huge selection of chocolate bars on sale. There is milk chocolate, dark chocolate and white chocolate. There are small bars of chocolate, medium-sized ones and massive bars of chocolate. You can buy mint-flavoured chocolate, chocolate-covered peanuts or raisins, chocolate with nuts, chocolate with toffee ... the list is endless!

And chocolate companies are always testing out new flavours. One brand of chocolate bar recently asked people to try four new flavours of a chocolate and then vote on Facebook for their favourite. The bar with the most votes will be permanently added to their range.

Health

While crisps, chocolate and other snacks can be delicious, many people are worried that young people eat too much of these kinds of foods. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is a government organisation that is responsible for food safety and food hygiene in the UK. The FSA issued a warning recently that many children's snacks contained dangerously high levels of salt.

Some parents are unhappy that their children can buy snack foods that are high in sugar, salt or fat such as sweets, biscuits and crisps from vending machines in schools. Some schools have banned these types of vending machines.

Advertising and marketing is another controversial area. Some people feel that advertising for junk food and unhealthy snacks should not be directed at children and teenagers. One opinion is that young people should be protected by a ban on this kind of advertising before 9 p.m. on television and that there should be more controls over websites, sponsorship and in-store promotions. What do you think?