

Love Hearts

From the sweeties.net wiki

Love Hearts are hard, round tablet sweets, each stamped with a heart and a short message, usually a romantic one. They have been made by Swizzels since 1954.

Victorian messages

The idea is older than the sweet. In Victorian times people bought conversation lozenges, sweets printed with little messages. By 1840 the York confectioner Joseph Terry was selling conversation lozenges. Love Hearts are the modern version.

Made like medicine

Love Hearts are made in the same way as many pills, by pressing powder into a tablet. Sugar is ground into a very fine powder and split into batches for each flavour. Colours and flavourings are added and mixed, and the mixture is fed into a machine that compresses it under high pressure. At the same moment the message is stamped into the front. The message is then picked out in red food colour so it is easy to read. Finally the different colours and flavours are mixed at random and packed.

Each sweet is about 19 mm across and 5 mm high, in one of six colours: white, yellow, orange, green, purple or red. Bite one and it breaks up into a powdery, chalky crunch.

The messages

The messages are mostly about love, such as Be Mine, Love You and I Surrender, which is printed curving around the bottom of the heart. In 2008 Swizzels held a competition to add ten new messages, and the winners, including Granny P and Happy Harry, appeared in packs that September. In 2022 the sweets were temporarily renamed Kind Hearts, with messages such as Be Kind and Dream Big, in a collaboration with the young people's mental health charity YoungMinds.

People have had their own made too: special Love Hearts were produced for a celebrity wedding in 2008 and for the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton in 2011.

From the East End to Derbyshire

Swizzels grew from a market stall in Hackney in the 1920s, and by the time Love Hearts were launched the firm had moved to a disused textile mill in New Mills, Derbyshire, where it had relocated during the Blitz in 1940. Love Hearts are still made there, and they are usually sold in paper wrapped tubes of 20. In the United States, the nearest equivalent is Sweethearts.

The perfect sweet for a message

It is no surprise that Love Hearts turn up at weddings, on Valentine's Day and in party bags. See [sweets for Valentine's Day](#), and for their Swizzels stablemate, [Parma Violets](#).

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