

Sherbet fountains

From the sweeties.net wiki

The Sherbet Fountain is a British sweet: a tube of fizzy sherbet with a stick of liquorice sticking out of the top. It has been sold since 1925.

How it began

The idea was not Barratt's own. It was sold to the company by its inventor, Henry Edward Brunt, and rebranded under the Barratt name. Barratt had been founded in London in 1848, and by 1906 it was the largest confectionery maker in the world. Its Black Jack and Fruit Salad chews had arrived in 1920, and the Sherbet Fountain followed in 1925.

The straw that was not a straw

The original Sherbet Fountain came in a paper wrapped cardboard tube with a liquorice stick pushed into the top. The idea was to bite the end off the liquorice to make a straw, then suck the sherbet up through it, so it fizzed and dissolved on your tongue. Plenty of children simply licked the liquorice and dipped it back in, which worked just as well, and usually ended with sherbet all down their front.

The 2009 makeover

In 2009 the Sherbet Fountain was given a new look. The paper tube was replaced by a solid plastic one, which keeps the sherbet fresh for longer, and the hollow liquorice straw became a solid stick, so the sherbet has to be licked off it or eaten directly. The packet describes it as sherbet with a liquorice dip. The change was not to everyone's liking, and fans of the old paper tube still miss it.

There is also a version with a red, strawberry flavoured stick in place of the liquorice.

How sherbet fizzes

Sherbet is a mixture of sugar, flavouring, an edible acid and a base such as bicarbonate of soda. When saliva wets it, the acid and base react and give off carbon dioxide, which you feel as fizzing. See [what sherbet is made of](#).

The sherbet family

The Sherbet Fountain has plenty of relatives: [Dip Dabs](#), with a lolly to dip; [flying saucers](#), with sherbet sealed in wafer; and [sherbet lemons](#), with sherbet hidden inside a boiled sweet. Barratt still makes Black Jacks and Fruit Salads too: see [Black Jacks](#).

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