

Opal Fruits

From the sweeties.net wiki

Opal Fruits were square, fruit flavoured chews launched by Mars in the United Kingdom in the autumn of 1959. They were made at Mars's factory in Slough, Berkshire, the same town where the Mars bar was born.

The name

The name Opal Fruits came from a competition, won by Peter Phillips, then known as Peter Pfeffer, whose prize was £5. The four original flavours were strawberry, lemon, orange and lime.

Made to make your mouth water

In the 1970s Opal Fruits were advertised with the line made to make your mouth water. It was coined by Murray Walker, later the voice of Formula One motor racing, who worked in advertising before his commentary career took off. The jingle went on to list the four refreshing flavours: orange, lemon, strawberry, lime.

From Opal Fruits to Starburst

The same chews went to the United States in 1967 as M&M's Fruit Chewies, and by 1968 they had been renamed Starburst, because a Mars food scientist, Aaron Brody, pointed out that the M&M's name suggested chocolate.

In Britain, the Opal Fruits name lasted until 1998, when it was phased out in the UK, and then Ireland, so that the sweets would carry one name around the world. The British name gave way to the global brand. The switch sits alongside other renamings such as Marathon becoming Snickers: see [sweets that changed their names](#).

Brief comebacks

The old name has been revived more than once. In 2008 Mars brought back Opal Fruits in the UK with the supermarket Asda for twelve weeks from 10 May. In March 2020 the name returned again for a limited time, in 152 g bags of the four original flavours sold in Poundland and Dealz.

Is Starburst vegetarian?

In the UK, Starburst is labelled suitable for vegetarians, and it contains no artificial colours or flavours. In the United States the recipe is different and contains gelatine, so it is not vegetarian there. As always, check the pack where you buy it.

Owned by Mars

After Mars bought Wrigley in 2008, it moved its non chocolate sweets, including Starburst, into the Wrigley side of the business. For the family behind it all, see [Forrest Mars and the Mars bar](#), and for another lost Mars sweet, [Spangles](#).

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