

Why British Cadbury is hard to buy in America

From the sweeties.net wiki

Walk into an American supermarket and you may well find a purple Cadbury wrapper. But the chocolate inside is not the Cadbury Dairy Milk that British people grew up with. It is made in America, by Hershey, to a different recipe. And since 2015, getting hold of the British version there has been harder.

How Hershey got Cadbury

In 1988 Cadbury sold its American business to the Hershey Company for \$300 million. As part of the deal, Hershey got the rights to make and sell Cadbury branded chocolate in the United States. Many consumers have complained that the Hershey made versions are not as good as the originals.

Something similar happened with KitKat. In 1970 Hershey signed a licence with Rowntree's to make KitKat in the United States. When Nestlé bought Rowntree in 1988 it had to honour the agreement, which lets Hershey keep the licence as long as Hershey itself is not sold. Rolo in America is made by Hershey under licence too.

Why the taste is different

American and British milk chocolate have grown up differently. Hershey's own milk chocolate has a tangy taste that Americans are used to, and when Cadbury tried to sell its Dairy Milk recipe in the United States, the unfamiliar flavour proved less popular than it expected: see [Milton Hershey](#). When reporters compared the two Cadburys in 2015, the Hershey recipe was described as lower in fat and less creamy, and British chocolate fans insisted it tasted worse. Hershey, for its part, said the chocolate it sold was extremely similar, and pointed to strict American standards for milk chocolate.

The lawsuit

Shops selling British food in the United States imported British made bars for customers who preferred them. Hershey took action. It sued importers, and in January 2015 an importer, Let's Buy British Imports, settled. It agreed to stop importing Cadbury chocolate made abroad, along with other British sweets that Hershey said looked or sounded too much like American products it made or sold. Among them were British made KitKats, Toffee Crisp, whose packaging was said to resemble Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, and Yorkie, said to infringe the York Peppermint Pattie name. Maltesers and Crunchie were also reported among the bars affected. The main importers were reported to be paying a fine as part of the settlement.

The backlash

The reaction was furious. Thousands signed a petition against the lawsuit, and shop owners were blunt. A New York shop selling British goods told customers that, because of legal action by Hershey, it could no longer import the real Cadbury chocolate from England, called Hershey's version dreadful, and said it would not sell it. One shop owner, Nicky Perry, put it simply: in a global world, you cannot suddenly tell people they cannot have bars of chocolate. Another predicted that smaller import shops would struggle.

Cadbury, Hershey and the takeovers

Hershey and Cadbury have long circled each other. In 2010 Hershey was interested in buying Cadbury itself, but on 22 January 2010 it announced it would not counter Kraft's final offer, and Kraft took over Cadbury: see [how Cadbury was sold to Kraft](#). In 2016 Mondelez, the company that now owns Cadbury, made a bid of about \$23 billion for Hershey, which Hershey turned down.

Today

The settlement applied to the importers that were party to it. But in American supermarkets, the Cadbury on the shelf is made by Hershey, which still holds the rights.

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