# Chepstow youths buck trend with strong cheese as France and UK prefer milder tastes



Cheese lovers in Chepstow may find reassurance in the enduring popularity of robustly flavoured varieties, even as trends suggest a notable shift in consumer preferences towards milder options, particularly among younger demographics. A recent report from the Académie Phormos revealed a concerning trend for traditional French cheese makers: younger consumers in France, especially Generation Z, appear to be moving away from traditional, pungent cheeses in favour of milder alternatives, spurring dialogues about the future of iconic French flavours.

James Bailey, shop supervisor at a local grocer associated with Chepstow Garden Centre, expressed his surprise at these developments. “As for France, it’s probably down to the increasing popularity of yukky plastic-style burger cheese,” he stated. Contrasting this with the situation at his own cheese counter, he reassures that “stinky” cheeses, such as the notorious Stinking Bishop, remain a favourite among young customers in Chepstow. His sentiment underscores the local appreciation for bold flavours despite shifts being observed nationally and internationally.

Recent data illustrates this phenomenon. In France, mozzarella sales surged by an impressive 62% over five years, while traditional favourites like camembert and other strong cheeses saw declines, with camembert alone falling by 11% during the same period. This shift towards milder cheeses like mozzarella is reflective of broader changes in culinary trends and consumer habits, particularly among younger generations who often view stronger flavours as outdated or reserved for special occasions.

The implications of rising dairy prices cannot be ignored. In the UK, similar trends have emerged, where consumers are gravitating towards milder options like Swiss, Cheddar, and mozzarella. Reports indicate a pronounced decline in demand for stronger cheeses, attributed in part to financial pressures hindering the willingness to purchase premium products. This economic aspect intertwines with evolving taste preferences that favour versatility in cooking and snacking.

Interestingly, the culinary community is responding proactively to these changing tastes. Notably, chefs across France are undertaking initiatives to reignite interest in traditional pungent cheeses. Through innovative recipes and creative pairings, they aim to showcase the depth and complexity of flavours that these cheeses can offer, hoping to entice younger consumers who might otherwise shy away from them. This culinary renaissance highlights the dual challenge and opportunity posed by evolving consumer preferences.

As cheese makers and sellers adapt to these trends, the experience of local shops like the one in Chepstow serves as a microcosm of a larger, dynamic cheese landscape. While youth interests may fluctuate, the passion for distinct, flavourful cheeses remains robust in certain communities, exemplifying the rich tapestry of cheese culture in both the UK and France. As experts and artisans alike work to bridge the gap between youthful preferences and traditional offerings, the future of cheese—irrespective of its pungency—remains a conversation worth savouring.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25203325.chepstow-cheese-shop-says-youths-still-stinky-cheeses/?ref=rss), [[2]](https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20211028-cheese-loving-france-reels-as-mozzarella-catches-camembert)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25203325.chepstow-cheese-shop-says-youths-still-stinky-cheeses/?ref=rss), [[3]](https://www.thelocal.fr/20211028/camembert-why-the-smelly-french-cheese-is-falling-out-of-favour/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[4]](https://www.foodnavigator.com/Article/2023/06/13/demand-for-smelly-cheese-nosedives-as-dairy-prices-reach-new-highs/), [[5]](https://www.foodandbeverage.business/general-news/dairy-prices-reach-new-highs-smelly-cheese-demand-plummets/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[6]](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/lifestyle/article/2023/12/15/french-chefs-are-determined-to-put-stinky-cheeses-back-on-the-map_6346447_37.html)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25203325.chepstow-cheese-shop-says-youths-still-stinky-cheeses/?ref=rss), [[7]](https://www.theguardian.com/food/article/2024/jul/20/stronger-stinkier-softer-how-britain-fell-in-love-with-cheese-beyond-cheddar)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/25203325.chepstow-cheese-shop-says-youths-still-stinky-cheeses/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20211028-cheese-loving-france-reels-as-mozzarella-catches-camembert> - In October 2021, France24 reported that mozzarella sales in France had increased by 62% over five years, while camembert sales declined by 11%. This shift is attributed to younger consumers favouring milder cheeses like mozzarella over traditional strong-flavoured varieties such as camembert. The trend reflects changing tastes and perceptions among French youth, with mozzarella becoming more popular due to its versatility and milder flavour profile.
3. <https://www.thelocal.fr/20211028/camembert-why-the-smelly-french-cheese-is-falling-out-of-favour/> - An October 2021 article by The Local highlighted the decline in camembert sales in France, with a 11% drop over five years. The piece discusses how younger consumers are increasingly choosing milder cheeses like mozzarella, viewing camembert as old-fashioned. The article also touches on the broader trend of changing cheese consumption habits among French youth, influenced by factors such as convenience and evolving culinary preferences.
4. <https://www.foodnavigator.com/Article/2023/06/13/demand-for-smelly-cheese-nosedives-as-dairy-prices-reach-new-highs/> - A June 2023 article from FoodNavigator reported a significant decline in demand for pungent cheeses in the UK, coinciding with rising dairy prices. The piece notes that consumers are opting for milder cheeses like Swiss, Cheddar, Gruyère, Mozzarella, and Goat Cheese, which are more versatile and easier to incorporate into various dishes. The shift is attributed to both price sensitivity and changing taste preferences among consumers.
5. <https://www.foodandbeverage.business/general-news/dairy-prices-reach-new-highs-smelly-cheese-demand-plummets/> - In a report from Food and Beverage Business, it was noted that rising dairy prices have led consumers to favour milder cheeses over stronger varieties. The article highlights that cheeses like Roquefort, Provolone, Parmesan, Camembert, and Munster have seen decreased popularity, while milder options such as Swiss, Cheddar, Gruyère, Mozzarella, and Goat Cheese are gaining traction. This trend reflects a broader shift in consumer preferences towards more versatile and less pungent cheeses.
6. <https://www.lemonde.fr/en/lifestyle/article/2023/12/15/french-chefs-are-determined-to-put-stinky-cheeses-back-on-the-map_6346447_37.html> - A December 2023 article in Le Monde discusses the efforts of French chefs to reintroduce strong-smelling cheeses into the culinary scene. The piece highlights the declining popularity of pungent cheeses like Camembert, Munster, and Maroilles, with consumers increasingly favouring milder options. Chefs are experimenting with incorporating these cheeses into innovative dishes to revive interest and appreciation for traditional French cheeses among younger generations.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/food/article/2024/jul/20/stronger-stinkier-softer-how-britain-fell-in-love-with-cheese-beyond-cheddar> - A July 2024 article in The Guardian explores the evolving cheese preferences in Britain, noting a growing appreciation for stronger, stinkier, and softer cheeses beyond traditional Cheddar. The piece highlights increased sales of cheeses like feta, halloumi, and burrata, indicating a shift in consumer tastes towards more diverse and robust flavours. This trend reflects a broader change in the UK's cheese consumption habits, moving beyond the classic Cheddar to embrace a wider range of cheese varieties.