# Dubai chocolate craze fuels global pistachio shortage and price surge



The meteoric rise of Dubai chocolate has triggered a global pistachio shortage, leading to significant increases in pistachio prices worldwide. This surge in demand is largely attributed to the viral popularity of the chocolate bar on the social media platform TikTok.

Dubai chocolate is a luxurious milk chocolate bar filled with a creamy pistachio paste and shards of shredded pastry called kataifi. It was initially launched in 2021 by the boutique Emirati chocolatier FIX. However, it was not until a TikTok video posted at the end of 2023 went viral, amassing over 120 million views, that the treat captured international attention and widespread acclaim. The video inspired countless followers to taste or even replicate the chocolate, fueling a global craze.

This enthusiasm prompted renowned brands such as Lindt and Läderach to create their own versions. Additionally, UK supermarket chain Morrison’s introduced a pistachio cream Easter egg, capitalising on the trend. The ripple effect, however, has intensified demand for pistachio kernels, a key ingredient for the chocolate’s signature filling.

The world’s pistachio supply is mainly sourced from the United States and Iran. Prices have escalated sharply, rising from $7.95 to $10.30 per pound within a year, according to Giles Hacking of CG Hacking, a nut trading company. He explained to the Financial Times that the industry is currently “tapped out,” with supply struggling to meet the unprecedented demand.

Compounding the pressure, the US experienced a poor pistachio harvest last year. While the overall crop was of higher quality than usual, this resulted in fewer shell-free pistachios, the type typically used in products like Dubai chocolate. Hacking remarked, “There wasn’t much in supply, so when Dubai chocolate comes along, and [chocolatiers] are buying up all the kernels they get their hands on... that leaves the rest of the world short.”

Iran, the second-largest global pistachio producer, increased its exports to the United Arab Emirates by 40 percent in the six months leading up to March 2024 compared with the prior year, underscoring the scale of regional demand.

The popularity of Dubai chocolate appears poised to endure. Charles Jandreau, general manager of the Prestat Group—owners of several luxury British chocolate brands—told the Financial Times that the unexpected surge in interest has become apparent even in small retail outlets. “It feels like it came out of nowhere,” he said. “Suddenly you see it in every corner shop.”

The surge has prompted some retailers to impose limits on the quantity of Dubai chocolate bars customers can purchase to manage stock levels amid high demand.

The Independent is reporting on the phenomenon, highlighting how a social media-driven trend can swiftly impact global commodity markets and consumer behaviour.

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

## References

* <https://economictimes.com/magazines/panache/the-kunafa-chocolate-craze-how-this-viral-dubai-dessert-has-caused-a-global-pistachio-shortage-and-price-hike/articleshow/120460656.cms> - This article explains how the viral popularity of Dubai's Kunafa chocolate on TikTok led to a global pistachio shortage and price hike, triggering a surge in demand for pistachios.
* <https://www.tiktok.com/discover/dubai-chocolate-bar> - This TikTok page highlights the popularity of the Dubai chocolate bar, showcasing its trendiness on the platform and correlating with the global demand surge driven by social media.
* <https://www.tiktok.com/@mariavehera257/video/7313986849104481538> - This TikTok video is an example of the platform's role in popularizing the Dubai chocolate bar, contributing to its viral status and subsequent global frenzy.
* <https://people.com/all-about-tiktok-viral-dubai-chocolate-bar-how-green-filling-made-8699887> - This article provides details about the composition of the Dubai chocolate bar, including its pistachio filling, which has been pivotal in the increased demand for pistachios.
* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pistachio> - This Wikipedia page offers background information on pistachios, including their primary producers and global distribution, which is contextually relevant to the shortage caused by Dubai chocolate.