

THE FITTING ROOM

# HOT SAUCE

THE WORLD'S OBSESSION WITH HOT  
SAUCE AND ITS CULTURAL IMPACT



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# THE ORIGINS OF HOT SAUCE

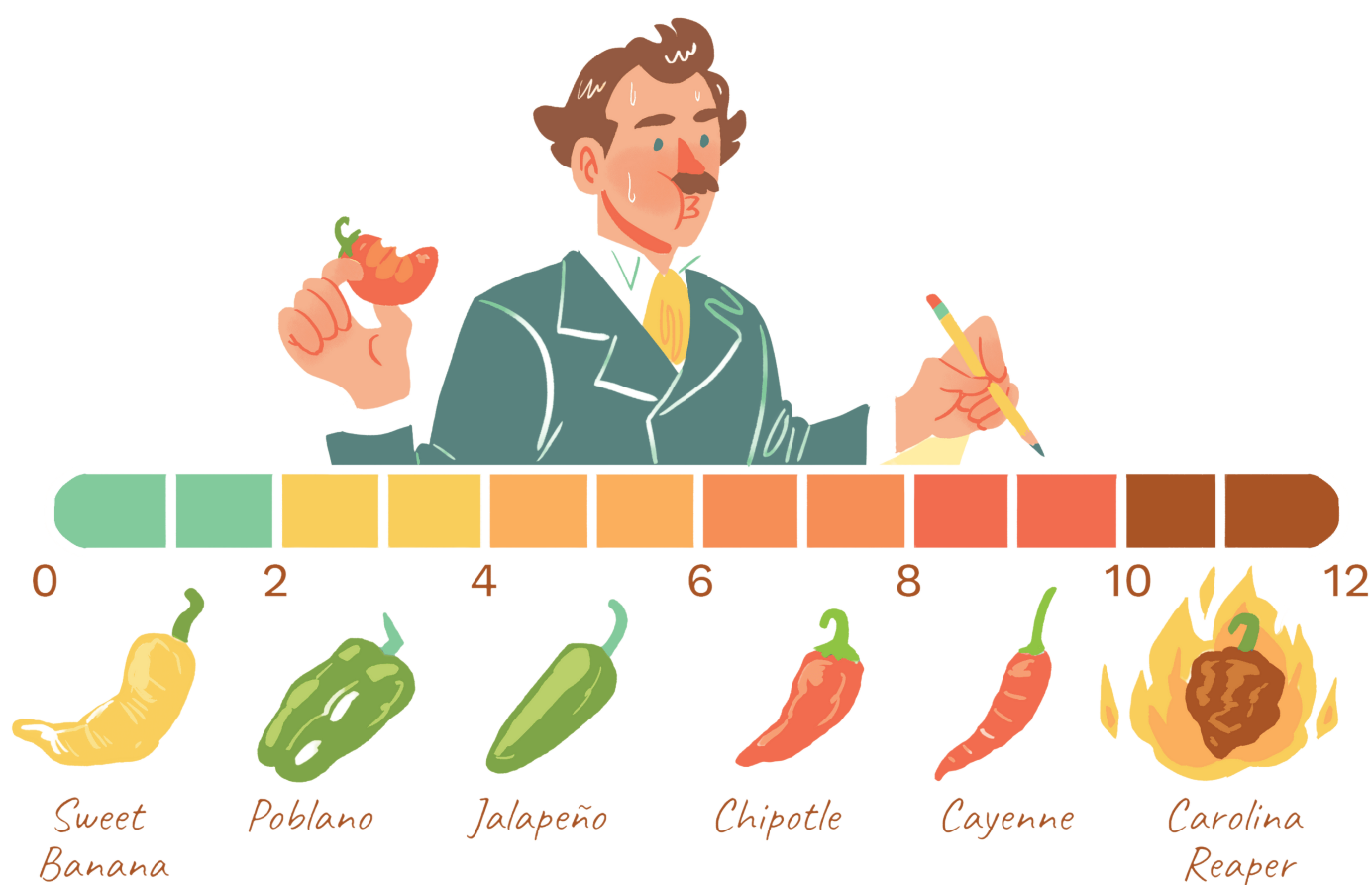


# THE ORIGINS OF HOT SAUCE

Hot Sauce began in the only region in the world where hot chilli peppers grow in the wild, Central America. The majority of hot sauces were most likely just a mixture of peppers and water but soon people began breeding pepper plants in order to develop more desirable traits in their peppers. Then, Christopher Columbus returned back to Europe with chilli peppers as a gift to the Kings of Spain, and from there they spread throughout Europe, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the United States.

The first known hot sauce was Tabasco, founded in 1868 and named after the tabasco peppers which it is made from. Edmund McIlhenny is given credit for creating the pepper sauce with the intention to give food some flavour and excitement. McIlhenny packaged the sauce in small cologne-type bottles, which he then corked and sealed in green wax, sending out 658 bottles which was the beginning of Tabasco's market dominance. Tabasco has since been labeled in 36 languages and dialects and sold in over 195 countries and territories.

Today Tabasco competes with many other famous hot sauce brands such as Frank's RedHot and Huy Fong Sriracha. There are also over 3,000 chilli pepper types grown all around the world, and their spiciness is recorded in Scoville Heat Units, named after its creator Wilbur Scoville.





# HOT SAUCE AND ITS RISE IN POPULARITY



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After McIlhenny secured copyright for Tabasco in 1870, sales grew, and by the late 1870s, he sold his sauce throughout the U.S. and even in Europe. Today, Tabasco is one of many hot sauce options that you can pair with your food as spicy foods have become more popular than ever. For example, the hot sauce market is now even more successful than BBQ sauce, mustard, mayonnaise and ketchup combined. More specifically, Sriracha that originated from Thailand in the 1930s, has become a cultural phenomenon; embraced by Gen Z and millennials seeking out different tastes and flavours.

The culinary world is becoming easier to access for most consumers via social media, and young people are therefore influencing one another to embrace authentic, ethnic cuisines and adventurous levels of spice.

**165%**

is the market  
increase of hot  
sauce in America  
since 2000

**40**

US states prefer  
Sriracha to  
ketchup

**\$4.3B**

was the value of the  
global hot sauce  
market in 2019

