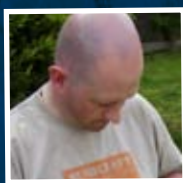




Jerkying around!



Grant



Ian



Simon



Jerky is a food that we believe dates right back to Neolithic times, it was common in ancient Egypt and is known to most from the American Wild West, 'cowboys' would take jerky on their cattle drives after cutting and sun drying strips from joints of beef, buffalo and even bears. The meat is often marinated in a sauce, smoked or rubbed with salt and herbs as part of the process to add flavor. Bacteria usually need moisture to thrive so drying the meat preserved allowing it to be kept for long periods. It is believed that the word jerky comes from the Mexican Spanish word Charqui which is pronounced 'shar-kee' being simplified to 'Jerky' over time by English speaking people.

Jerky has a long shelf life and doesn't need refrigerating. This, coupled with its nutrient value, lends it to being used as a trail snack and a backup or survival food, being around two-thirds lighter than the lean meat which it originates from. So, for example, a 20g serving of jerky would have the goodness of a 60g portion of meat! It is high in protein (around 50%) and low in calories and fats (around 3%), as a comparison; jerky generally has a higher protein percentage than



chocolate, crisps, grain bars and even peanuts, with less fat and fewer calories than all of them too. Protein has the effect of making you feel full for longer and keeps hunger pains at bay. It also balances out carbohydrates and prevents insulin spikes that

sap energy and cause uneven blood sugar levels. The high protein content in jerky is ideal for repairing aching muscles!

Being lightweight, due to having the moisture removed through the drying process, jerky is ideal for backpackers, walkers, paddlers, in fact, anyone involved in outdoor activities. It packs well, doesn't crush like crisps and other snacks, and won't melt like chocolate. Jerky is a great all-round delicious, popular, nutritious, versatile, tasty snack that can be enjoyed whilst sitting on a lake, nearing the top of a mountain, chatting by the fire, or just sitting in front of the TV at home!

When you first put a piece of jerky into your mouth it may feel dry. Once you start to chew you will notice the texture change as the meat re-hydrates and your taste buds get to work on the flavour. One try and I am sure that you will agree that jerky makes a great snack whilst out in the wilds! I have also heard of people taking jerky on trips and adding it to soups and stews, either directly or by soaking it in the stock overnight.

Whilst many imported jerkys contain excessive sugar, salt and other preservatives, these ones produced in the UK do not. In this review we are looking at three companies that produce jerky in the UK.

From a worker's snack to a teething aid, some recommend Jerky for teething babies to chew on!

“Personally, I have had an interest in jerkys for many years and have sampled many varieties around the world. There are so many recipes using different flavours and different cuts of meat from different animals that it can become quite addictive – seeking out the best!”

Martins Jerked Meats (www.martinsjerkedmeat.com), produce a range of jerky that is available at shows and from their online store. Their variety of flavours cannot go unmentioned including that one that you will either love or hate – Marmite flavoured jerky!

British Beef Jerky (www.britishbeefjerky.co.uk), is another company producing jerky in the UK with six flavours made from British beef, also available online and at selected stockists around the UK (see the list online).

Scottish Jerky (www.scottishjerky.com), Scotland is renowned for its high quality of beef and venison which are, of course, used in these jerkys. The owner of Scottish Jerky feels that there is something special about the green fields and lush heather hills that helps in the rearing of some of the best beef and venison available.

What Grant thought...

As a colonial I have been exposed to all manner of dried foodstuffs, including Jerky and Biltong. I am a frequent consumer of both such products and so consider myself to be well qualified to comment. Additionally I have also prepared and made both products myself. Marks are given out of 10 for taste, texture, presentation.

Martins Jerked Meats

BBQ 6/10, Smoked Chilli 8/10, *Meat-free* Red Wine 'n' Cracked Pepper 2/10, Jack Daniels Old Time 3/10. Overall good with the exception of the meat-free. The appearance, taste and texture of the Jack Daniels Welsh beef were disappointing.

Overall:

Looks 6/10

Taste 6/10

Texture 5/10

Chew ability 5/10

Quality of meat 6/10

Packaging 4/10

British Beef Jerky

Peppered 8/10, Teriyaki 10/10, Original 7/10. Overall really enjoyable with generous-sized pieces and the appearance was great.



ON TEST • ON TEST • ON TEST

Overall:

Looks 9/10

Taste 9/10

Texture 10/10

Chewability 10/10

Quality of meat 9/10

Packaging 8/10

Scottish Jerky

Original 7/10, Smoky 7/10, Cracked Black Pepper 7/10. Overall the jerky was good with great packaging but the jerky was too thin for my liking.

Overall:

Looks 9/10

Taste 7/10

Texture 7/10

Chewability 7/10

Quality of meat 9/10

Packaging 10/10

My preferred jerky was the British Beef Jerky with the Teriyaki being the best and most recognisable taste of jerky that I have savoured. The Scottish Jerky comes a very close second - great taste with good packaging.

What Ian thought...

Martins Jerked Meat

BBQ - Didn't like the smell, or taste.

Smoked Chilli - Tasted of plastic.

Red Wine & Cracked Pepper - I didn't like the smell but it tasted good.

Jack Daniels - Smelt of JD, Tasted of JD, good if you like JD.

Overall:

Looks 3/10

Taste 5/10

Texture 4/10

Chewability 4/10

Quality of meat 3/10

Packaging 1/10

British Beef

Peppered - Smelt funny but tasted good and the meat was tender.

Teriyaki - Smelt nice, again tasted good but the meat was tough.

Original - Smelt good, tasted good but a bit tough and quite salty.

Overall:

Looks 5/10

Taste 6/10

Texture 4/10

Chewability 5/10

Quality of meat 4/10

Packaging 4/10

Scottish Jerky

Original - Smelt great, well packed, thin melt-in-the-mouth slices, great taste.

Smoky - Good smoky smell, strong smoked flavour.

Cracked Black Pepper - Good smell, very peppery.

Overall:

Looks 6/10

Taste 9/10

Texture 6/10

Chewability 6/10

Quality of meat 6/10

Packaging 8/10

Overall, I preferred the Scottish jerky, liking all three of the flavours but favouring the original overall!

What Simon thought...**Martins Jerked Meats**

BBQ - I found this to have a more peppery flavour than barbeque.

Smoked Chilli - Strange texture and taste.

Red Wine 'n' Cracked Pepper - Delicious, nice texture, quality meat cut, great taste - high marks for this one!

Jack Daniels Old Time - Didn't like the taste of this one at all.

Overall:

Looks 7/10

Taste 5/10

Texture 7/10

Chew ability 7/10

Quality of meat 8/10

Packaging 2/10

British Beef Jerky

Peppered - Found this jerky to be very tough, which was a shame as it looked very nice.

Teriyaki - artificial taste and again very tough.

Original - Really liked the salty flavour of this one, quite unique but unfortunately, the meat was tough.

Overall:

Looks 7/10

Taste 5/10

Texture 2/10

Chewability 2/10

Quality of meat 2/10

Packaging 8/10

Scottish Jerky

Original - a thinner cut than most jerky's, different at first but it literally melts in your mouth; subtle flavouring allows you to taste the beef.

Smoky - again very tender with a nice mild flavour.

Cracked Black Pepper - tender, nice-tasting, but peppery.

Overall:

Looks 9/10

Taste 10/10

Texture 10/10

Chewability 10/10

Quality of meat 10/10

Packaging 10/10

My preference was the Scottish Jerky, as the meat quality and taste is excellent, though I have to say that Martins Jerked Meats Red Wine and Cracked Pepper was very tasty.

We had some single packs of other flavours from British Beef Jerky which were passed around the office, the general conclusion was that they were all rather tough. Martins Beef n Perrins went down well with additional flavours from Martins Jerked Meats gaining average marks, the 'wildcard' - Marmite jerky also went down well. The meat free version made with tofu was very sticky to chew and had a very strong taste of marmite, but the regular jerky fared well, having a gentler but still noticeable taste of Marmite and being made from a good cut of meat. In conclusion, I think that the quality of the meat used

makes a big difference. I have eaten Martins Jerky and Scottish Jerky on previous occasions and the quality has always been consistent. British Beef Jerky, on the other hand, was found to be tough by all except Grant who may have had some packs from a different batch... It is the first time that I had tried this brand. The Scottish Venison Jerky was 'magical' – it just vanished!

Overall in our taste test the Scottish Jerky came out on top, showing that there must be something about that Scottish beef!

So what's Biltong then?

Biltong comes from African tribes who historically have also dried meat in the sun to preserve it. This cured meat was, and still is, in some areas, necessary to sustain the tribes through the leaner months. In some ways similar to jerky the ingredients, production process and taste differ significantly – vinegar being a key ingredient. Biltong is said to be less versatile than jerky. A basic form of biltong was used

by African tribesmen of old and refined into what we know today by Dutch settlers in the 17th century who took to Africa a more refined recipe for what they called tassel meat. The name biltong originated from at this time coming from the Dutch words bil – 'rump' and tong – 'strip'.



BILTONGS

Readers' Offer

This issue we give you the chance to join us in our taste test of the winning jerky.

Made from prime Scottish beef and wild Highland venison, Scottish Jerky are proud to use locally produced Scottish beef from around the Highlands - an area renowned for the quality of its livestock. Using only choice cuts of beefsteak ensures that the end product is mouth-wateringly good. The venison jerky uses meat that comes from deer that are reared wild on the estates of Sutherland, and again, only the best cuts of meat are used.

Scottish Jerky use just a few of the highest quality ingredients in the production of their jerky, ensuring that the flavour of the meat is not lost. These ingredients include soy sauce, sea salt, pepper, and a few herbs and spices, such as chilli, or cracked black pepper, resulting in jerky that is more than 99% beef and venison.

Nutritional Value

Nutritional Analysis per 100g

Energy 1045 kJ 250.0 kcal

Protein 55.0g

Carbohydrate 5.0g

Fat 1.8g

Scottish Jerky feel that there is something special about the green fields and lush heather hills that helps in the rearing of some of the best beef and venison available; and we have to agree!

The beef jerky comes in 4 great flavours: Original, Smoky, Cracked Black Pepper and Hot Chilli - priced at £3.50 for a 40g pack.

The venison jerky comes in the same great flavours - priced at £5.00 for a 40g pack.

Please add £1.50 postage and packing for up to 4 packs and £2.50 for 5 - 12 packs.

Call 0870 350 1459 to order.

