

Rotten fish, dead rats, raw sewage, moldy onions and dirty socks - they are just some of the descriptions of the world's smelliest fruit that polarizes opinion.



At www.freshfruitportal.com, we caught up with a London-based specialist Chinese supermarket that is the first of its kind in the U.K. to sell the Malaysian variety of the durian; a rather strange tasting fruit with a pungent smell that is hard to put into words.

Fruit consumers throughout South East Asia have been enjoying the bounty of durians for hundreds of years while, to the western world, the intense flavor and smell is something most people may have heard about but not actually tasted.

This could change in the U.K at least, says retailer Loon Fung, which has a chain of niche supermarkets dotted around the capital. For the first time in Britain, the Malaysian "king of fruits" otherwise known as Musang King durians are on sale.

"We are now selling two types of durian. Before the durians on sale were from Thailand only but just recently we have sourced durians from Malaysia and this is the first time this variety has gone on sale in the U.K.," a Loon Fung spokesperson said.

"So far, I believe we are the first supermarket to introduce the Malaysian variety of durian in Britain and, at this stage, we do not want to discuss the quantities or volumes for commercial reasons but we are very pleased to be able to offer this fruit to our customer base."

Loon Fung import the fruit directly from the fields of Malaysia and bypass the potentially awkward transportation issues by freezing the large thorn covered-husk fruit during haulage. As an example of how smelly the fruit can be, durians are banned on Singapore's city's rail network and in many hotels in the region guests are forbidden to eat the fruit because the high sulfate levels that cause the smell are so powerful.

However, thanks to advancements in vacuum packaging, the aroma can be contained, at least for a while.

"Actually the Malaysian durian is well packed and completely frozen during transportation which is something we have to do to contain the smell and keep the produce safe and this means you can't smell anything at all," the spokesperson added.

Growers of Musang Kings spread nets around the trees to collect the fruit that falls after it has naturally ripened. They are vacuum-packed straight away to preserve the ripeness and sent for export.

Loon Fung, alongside Malaysian Kitchen, is promoting the fruit in the U.K., encouraging people to branch out by using niche recipes that have been made popular recently thanks to celebrity chefs.

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