

Cheesy listening: study says tunes change Emmental's taste

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Emmental matured with hip hop music triggered a "softer, more floral" taste, one jury member said

It may be grating for some, but hip-hop is music to the ears of Switzerland's most famous cheese.

According to research on the musical tastes of Emmental, the holey [cheese](#) changes flavour depending on the melodies played as it ripens.

The experiment—"Sonic cheese: experience between sound and gastronomy"—by Bern University of the Arts and a cheesemaker in western Switzerland probed whether the sounds and vibrations of music could impact the chemical reactions in the bacteria within cheese.

Over six months, Emmental made in Beat Wampfler's 19th Century cellar in the town of Bergdorf were exposed to A Tribe Called Quest, Led Zeppelin or Mozart.

Other circles of the holey Swiss classic were kept away from music, serving as a control group.

"We did two surveys, a scientific one, and another with a jury of culinary experts," said Peter Kraut, deputy director of the music department at the Bern arts university.

"Both came to the conclusion that there are differences, there are differences in taste and in the smell, according to the music with which the cheese has been refined," he added.

Chef and jury member Benjamin Luzuy said hip-hop triggered a "softer, more floral" [taste](#), but that his favourite was Mozart-exposed Emmental.



Emmental cheese was exposed to hip-hop, rock, even yodel

"My favorite cheese was that of Mozart, I like Mozart but it's not necessarily what I listen to... maybe a sweet little classical music it does good to the cheese," he said.

Kraut told AFP that the final step will be a biomedical survey to see if there are actual differences in the composition of the cheeses.

Wampfler, a veterinarian by day but consummate apron-wearing cheese enthusiast at night, said he was delighted the experiment worked out and saw opportunities to market cheese based on a customer's [musical taste](#).

"I already have people calling me asking if I have cheese with Balkan [music](#), blues...(or) ACDC," he said.

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