

While they may not be popular in the United States, jacket potatoes have taken over England. Jacket potatoes are also known as baked potatoes, or jacket spuds, as the British call them. Though this food may be seen as very plain or simple, social media is largely to blame for the boom in jacket potatoes.

SpudBros is a popular local business founded in Preston, England, and family owned, and over the past year their business has really taken off. Social media has allowed them to grow from one food truck into a franchise, with reach across both physical and digital realms. The business specializes in the baked potato, with a TikTok following of nearly 5 million followers, and a combined 2.4 million followers across both YouTube and Instagram. The business has been able to tap into the digital realm, last April they even had a collaboration with the popular YouTuber Mr. Beast, which left some individuals lining up for up to 6 hours just to try their food, and the video itself amassed over 52 million views on the streaming platform.

Throughout the previous year, SpudBros has launched 5 express shops within Britain, and an international outpost in Amsterdam. In addition, the business also has another express shop planned to come soon in Sheffield, England. SpudBros is booming, selling over 2,000 potatoes each day, they have quickly become a hot commodity.

However, SpudBros is not the only other popular jacket potato business. In Tamworth, Ben Newman, has also formed his own brand around baked potatoes using social media, as an online creator, better known as Spudman. He has over 5 million followers across his digital platforms, and is selling up to 2,500 potatoes each day from his “SpudWagons”. Newman is the son of an agricultural wholesaler who supplied jacket potatoes, he took over his father’s Tamworth business about 20 years ago. Additionally, Newman has resisted various offers to

scale Spudman, despite them being extremely profitable, he makes a point to not step on local businesses.

Ruby Tandoh, the author of a best selling book on the formation and proliferation of food trends, discussed how she believes that unlike many viral foods, jacket potatoes are not simply about hybridization or novelty. However, she does wonder how long the trend and popularity around them will last.

This is not the only time in British culinary history that jacket potatoes have been trending. Around the 1830s the streets of London were full of hot potato sellers, they were selling simple, butter, and pepper doused potatoes. By the 1970s and 1980s Spudulike, a Scottish potato chain, had grown to the point where it had over 40 franchised outlets, with the business ultimately going bankrupt in 2019. The Hot Potato Tram is the original name of the business that the SpudBros revamped and took over back in 2023, the business had originally been operating in Preston's Flag Market, since 1955.

Traders, such as Spudman and SpudBros have completely modernized and redefined the baked potato. They have strayed from the standard formula, and added crispy onions, flavored butters, and specialty toppings from all across the world. This has allowed consumers to experience other culinary cultures while enjoying the jacket potato. Furthermore, these traders have really benefitted from the overall inexpensiveness of the baked potato. The food item is a hot assembled to order item, which allows businesses to produce the potatoes easily and efficiently. This is an especially good market to be in as the price of prepackaged sandwiches has been increasing.

Larger national brands have also taken note of the popularity of jacket potatoes and are attempting to get into the market. Subway recently introduced the dish as a menu item this past

spring, and the first trial went so well that the company made them a permanent menu item in September 2025. In addition, the company conducted a poll to measure how often British adults eat jacket potatoes, and the results were outstanding, with 94% of these adults claiming that they have them once a week.

At a time when the food industry as a whole is struggling, baked potatoes have revealed themselves as an economic alternative because they have a good margin and do not take a lot of skill to make. The main and most expensive piece of equipment is a potato oven, which is able to cook up many potatoes at once, and allow for minimal staff needs.

In conclusion, jacket potatoes have proven themselves as the newest British food trend, and one that may stick around for a while. Do you think that these potatoes could ever gain similar popularity in the United States?