

Menthol Additions Following Removal from the Market

In anticipation of regulatory actions that remove menthol cigarettes from the market, a number of enterprising companies have introduced post-market additives to enable smokers to add menthol flavoring to non-menthol cigarettes. The menthol additive techniques include capsules, infusion cards, roll-your-own infused paper, drops, flavor caps, filter, flavor stones, etc. Purveyors of these products include not only entrepreneurial start-ups, but also major tobacco companies. Some of these products are being produced by the tobacco brands themselves as flavor enhancements. They are readily available for sale on brand-owned websites, tobacco retail websites, as well as online marketplaces such as Amazon, Alibaba and Rakuten.

Flavor Infusion Cards

Imperial Tobacco launched Rizla flavor infusion cards (Menthol Chill and Fresh Mint) in the United Kingdom in advance of a menthol ban in the country in May 2020.¹ The flavor cards when inserted into a pack of cigarettes or roll your own tobacco for 60 minutes can provide menthol flavoring to any cigarette.² According to Chris Street, Imperial Tobacco UK market manager, the Rizla flavor infusions will help “*shoppers discover a whole new way to flavor their products.*”³ Rizla has extended their product line to include roll-your-own flavor papers in different thicknesses (super thin, ultra thin, medium thin) and filters (slim, extra slim, king size). Rizla also introduced Roll Your Own filter tip that contained a “crushball.”⁴

Major multinational British company Imperial Tobacco owns Rizla, which sells post-market additive menthol in the forms of add on filters and infusion cards.



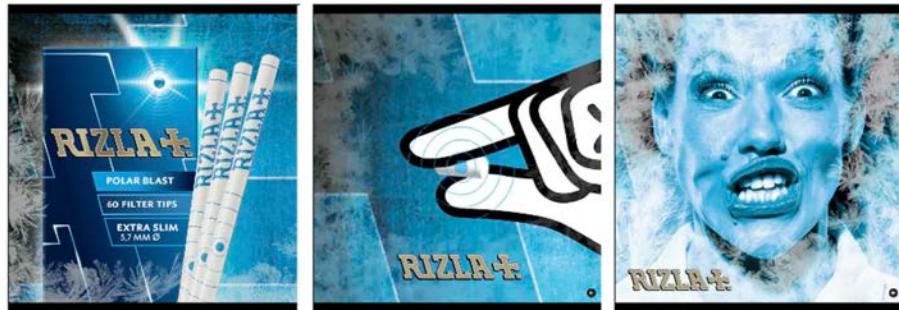
¹ Hegarty R. Imperial Tobacco to launch Rizla Flavor Infusions to offset 2020 menthol ban. Published December 11, 2019. (<https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/new-product-development/imperial-tobacco-to-launch-rizla-flavour-infusions-to-offset-2020-menthol-ban/600353.article>)

² Cronin Eilis. Imperial Tobacco adds menthol accessories to portfolio. Talking Retail. Published December 16, 2019. (<https://www.talkingretail.com/products-news/tobacco/imperial-tobacco-adds-menthol-accessories-portfolio-16-12-2019/>)

³ Ibid

⁴ Rizla. Imperial's new rizla tips proposition is a blast. Published September 4, 2019. <https://www.rizla.com/news/imperial-s-new-rizla-tips-proposition-is-a-blast/>

Instagram Post on Rizla's Roll Your Own Filter with Crushball

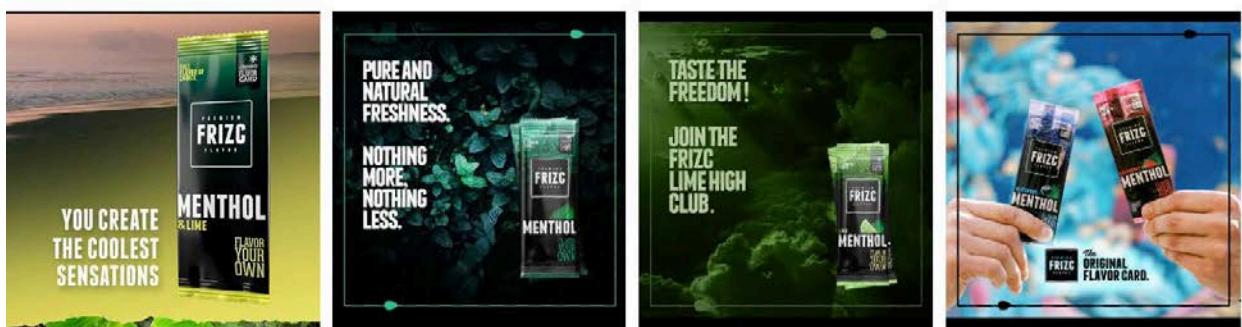


Frizc is a flavor addition brand that is sold via online tobacco vendors. The advertising suggest that the flavor cards have the ability to “unleash the flavor” and “turn your favorite treat into a brand new sensation,” and that their menthol/mint products are “too fresh to fail.”⁵ Social media posts for Frizc’s menthol/mint flavored products emphasize “pure and natural freshness” of the menthol flavor by situating the pack against a bush of fresh mint leaves, as well as the ability of the consumer “create the coolest sensations. Nothing more, nothing less.”⁶

Frizc Flavor Cards (<https://frizcflavor.com/>)



Frizc Flavor Card Posts on Instagram



⁵ Rizla: Flavor cards. (<https://frizcflavor.com/>)

⁶ Frizc. Instagram. (<https://www.instagram.com/frizcflavor/>)

Other brands of flavor paper inserts include Itsa, and FLEVA cards and filters. Products offered by these brands include mint/menthol as standalone flavors as well as popular “ice” flavors with mint/menthol combined with other fruit flavors including blueberry and strawberry.

Flavor Drops and Sprays:

Many companies offer menthol/mint drops to add flavor to cigarettes and have promoted them as a way of circumventing menthol cigarette restrictions. Instahit is a brand of menthol drops that claims the product can be used on any filter type to provide an immediate menthol flavor effect, unlike the flavor infusion type taken in cards.⁷ The Instahit website claims the product can “make any cigarette menthol,” the small portable menthol drops bottle provides users “flexibility like never seen before.” Instahit claims the product can be used on any filter type and requires no waiting, unlike the flavor infusion type taken in cards. Egogreen promotes its drop products as a “must have liquid,” for e-cigarettes, e-shisha, and POD systems.⁸ The brand claims that the drops can be used on an entire pack of cigarettes at one time, making it convenient for those on the move or those enjoying a night out. A number of videos on both YouTube and TikTok describe these products and how to use them.

Another post-market variant are flavor sprays. For instance, Leaf Only brand has a range of tobacco sprays including menthol variants that is sprayed on the dried leaf, then dried again, before it can be used.⁹

Instahit Menthol Drops



⁷ Instahit. Product information. <https://www.instahit.co.uk/product-page/instahit-menthol-drops>

⁸ Ego Green. Tobacco liquid. <https://egogreen.de/e-liquids-tabakgeschmack-regular-vorteilspack>

⁹ Leaf Only. Tobacco flavoring spray. <https://www.leafonly.com/hookah-shisha-tobacco-leaves/tobacco-accessories/tobacco-flavoring-menthol>

Menthol Sprays



Flavored Capsule and Capsule Dispensers

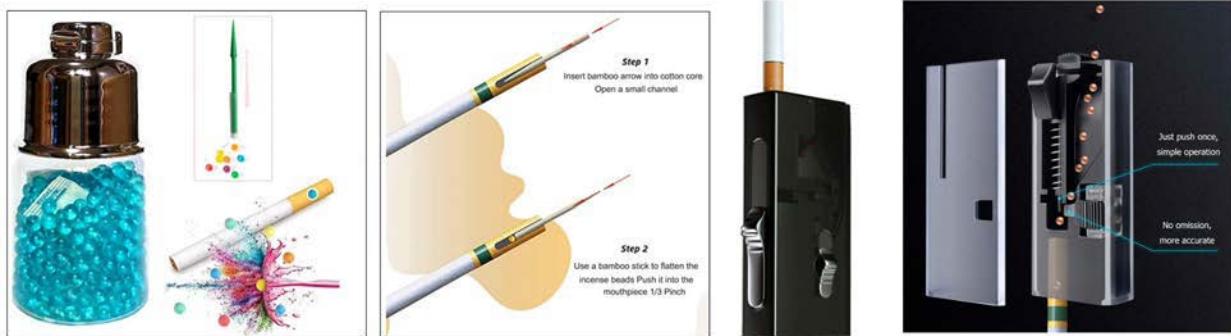
Flavored capsules and capsule inserters are another prominent technology that allows consumers to add flavors to their tobacco products to convert traditional cigarettes into menthol capsule cigarettes. The capsules are often referred to as “*aroma*” beads on online vendor sites. While we did not locate capsule inserters offered by major tobacco companies, multiple brands of capsules inserters systems are sold by online retailers. For example, Crushy Balls claims that their capsules are “*made with 100% food essence and contains no harmful or toxic ingredients*,” and add a “*unique taste to your smoke*.¹⁰ The website provides information on how to add a capsule to a cigarette by using an inserter or manually. “*When using a dispenser, first insert a cigarette into the bottom left side hole of the capsule dispenser. Next, while holding the cigarette pull the lever down to puncture a hole inside the filter. Once an aperture for the cigarette has been made, use the other filter lever to load the cigarette with the capsule. Finally, pull the lever that was used to make a hole earlier to slowly push the flavored capsule deeper into the hole*.¹¹ For nonmechanical insertions of flavored capsules into cigarettes, a toothpick like stick is the only instrument needed to both puncture and insert the capsule.¹² Menthol capsules and dispensers are widely available through online retail stores including Amazon. A search for “menthol crush balls for cigarettes” in September 2022, yielded 310 results on Amazon’s US website.

¹⁰ Crushy Balls. About Crushy Balls. (<https://crushyballs.com/pages/about-crushyballs>)

¹¹ How to Use Crushballs: Crushball Filter Tips - Crushyballs.” CrushyBalls. (<https://crushyballs.com/pages/how-to-use-crushballs.>)

¹² Ibid

Techniques for manual and automated insertion of a post-market capsule (products available on Amazon.com).



Do-it-yourself cigarette filter beads and dispenser for sale on Amazon.com.¹³



DIY Cigarettes Filters Pops Menthol Mint Burst Beads Click Fruit Aroma Bomb Flavour Popping Smoking Accessories Smoke Balls Fresh Breath

Brand: **lilico** ★★★★☆ 6 ratings

\$17.00

Get 5% back (\$0.85 in rewards) on the amount charged to your Amazon Prime Rewards Visa Signature Card.

Size: 200 beads + a box

Color: Mixed flavors

100 \$17.00
100 \$17.00
100 \$17.00
100 \$17.00
100 \$17.00

• **Flavor:** Menthol Balls For Cigarettes is going to present an amazing Blueberry, Mint, Fruit, Ice flavour for traditional cigarettes to enjoy the taste with nice scent. It is the best choice for everyone who connoisseur of

¹³ Lilico. Crushable beads.

Crushy Balls Minty Flavors



Some capsule vendors suggest adding two or more capsules to a cigarette to enhance flavors.¹⁴



The British website cheapasmokes.com offers an assortment of 30 products to “Make Your Own Menthol Cigarettes” and thus escape the menthol market removal.¹⁵ Similarly, British vendor Bull Brand offer a wide variety of “menthol alternatives.”¹⁶

¹⁴ Menthol Filters Dreark. (https://www.amazon.com/Menthol-Filters-100-Flavor-Beads/dp/B0B462455Z/ref=sr_1_5?keywords=Mint+capsules+for+cigarettes&qid=1661881801&sr=8-5)

¹⁵ <https://www.cheapasmokes.com/collections/make-your-own-menthol-cigarettes>

¹⁶ <https://www.bullbrand.co.uk/collections/menthol-alternatives>

Menthол-flavored filters are yet another means of adding minty flavor post market.

Menthол flavored add-on cigarette filters



Menthол/mint paper and tobacco wraps can add flavor to unflavored roll-your-own tobacco. They can also be added to an unflavored cigarette as an extra wrap to add flavor.

Menthол flavored cigarette rolling paper and blunts



Leading youth e-cigarette brand Puff Bar has offered a post market flavor additive sleeve (Puff Krush) which is inserted over an unflavored disposable e-cigarette. (Puff Clear).¹⁷



With the myriad ways in which menthol/mint can be added post-market to tobacco, employing legal non-tobacco derived flavor additives, regulators need to consider ways of ameliorating this eventuality to ensure the intended public health impacts are realized. Options include categorically prohibiting tobacco companies from offering menthol/mint/ice additives, or prohibiting them from offering any flavor additives. Products obviously intended for use with tobacco products, such as filters and rolling papers, and those marketing themselves as for use with tobacco products, could be disallowed on the market. Rules may be enacted to prohibit retailers and online sellers who vend tobacco products from also selling menthol/mint add-ons.

¹⁷ Ramamurthi D, Chau C, Berke HY, Tolba AM, Yuan L, Kanchan V, Santos G, Jackler RK. Flavour spectrum of the Puff family of disposable e-cigarettes. *Tob Control*. 2022 Jan 11:tobaccocontrol-2021-056780. doi: 10.1136/tobaccocontrol-2021-056780. Epub ahead of print.

Brand	Type of flavor insert	Type of flavor insert	Website
Rizla	Flavor card	Flavor tip with crushball	https://www.rizla.com/
Frizc	Flavor card		https://frizcflavor.com/collections/flavors
Itsa	Flavor card		https://itsaflavor.com/en-ca
FLEVA	Flavor card		https://www.novusfumus.nl/en/fleva-cards-menthol.html
Hoffman	Flavor card	Flavor capsules	https://www.hauser-augsburg.de/en/Products/Flavourproducts/Flavourcapsules/VOVAN-Balls-Aromakapseln-Black-Ice-Inh-100-Kapseln---0.13.0-13789.html
Hipzz	Flavor card		https://www.hauser-augsburg.de/en/Products/Flavourproducts/Flavourcapsules/VOVAN-Balls-Aromakapseln-Black-Ice-Inh-100-Kapseln---0.13.0-13789.html
Aroma King	Flavor card		
Leaf Only	Flavor Spray		https://www.leafonly.com/index.php
Ego Green	Flavor Spray		https://egogreen.de/
SpraEgo Green Sprayy	Flavor Spray		https://egogreen.de/
Vovan	Flavor capsules		https://www.hauser-augsburg.de/en/Products/Flavourproducts/Flavourcapsules/VOVAN-Balls-Aromakapseln-Black-Ice-Inh-100-Kapseln---0.13.0-13789.html
Gizeh	Flavor capsules		https://www.bullbrand.co.uk/products/gizeh-filter-tubes-fresh-clique
Switch	Flavor capsules		https://switchlebanon.com/
Fruta	Flavor capsules		https://www.bullbrand.co.uk/collections/frutta-capsule-filter-tubes/products/frutta-apple-mint-capsule-filter-tips
Swan	Flavor capsules		https://www.hauser-augsburg.de/en/Products/Flavourproducts/Flavourcapsules/VOVAN-Balls-Aromakapseln-Black-Ice-Inh-100-Kapseln---0.13.0-13789.html
Juicy Beads	Flavor Capsules		https://www.hauser-augsburg.de/en/Products/Flavourproducts/Flavourcapsules/VOVAN-Balls-Aromakapseln-Black-Ice-Inh-100-Kapseln---0.13.0-13789.html
Zen	Menthol tubes		https://zensmoke.com/cigarette-tubes/
Pegasus	Menthol tubes		

Fresh Bomb	Menthol tubes		https://www.amazon.de/-/en/Fresh-Bomb-Cigarette-Tubes-Technology/dp/B08C2T1H9K
Instahit	Menthol Drops		https://www.instahit.co.uk/product-page/instahit-menthol-drops
Flavor by stone	Menthol Stone		https://www.flavorbystonesthop.com/
Puff Krush	Flavor caps		https://www.pricepointny.com/products/puff-krush-pre-filled-add-on-caps