



THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF CHOCOLATE

The Portrait of “chocolat”: an innovative aspect

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Chocolate's Sweet History

Originally consumed as a bitter drink, it was prized as both an aphrodisiac and an energy booster.



Produced from the seeds of tropical cacao trees native to the rainforests of Central and South America, chocolate was long considered the “food of the gods,” and later, a delicacy for the elite. But for most of its history, it was actually consumed as a bitter beverage rather than the sweet, edible treat it has become worldwide.

Chocolate in ancient times

Scientists debate how long humans have been using and consuming cacao beans. Chocolate's history goes back at least 2,000 years, while historians Sophie and Michael Coe, authors of "The True History of Chocolate," suggest that it might go back four millennia.

Chocolate played an important political, spiritual and economic role in ancient Mesoamerican civilizations, which ground roasted cacao beans into a paste that they mixed with water, vanilla, chili peppers and other spices to brew a frothy chocolate drink.

Chocolate in Europe

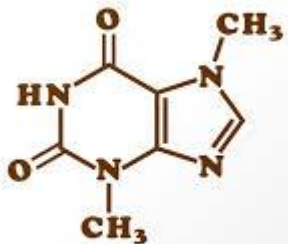
Chocolate arrived in Europe during the 1500s, likely brought by both Spanish friars and conquistadors who had traveled to the Americas. Although the Spanish sweetened the bitter drink with cane sugar and cinnamon, one thing remained unchanged: Chocolate reigned as a delectable symbol of luxury, wealth and power—an expensive import sipped by royal lips, and affordable only to Spanish elites.

Chocolate's popularity eventually spread to other European courts, where aristocrats consumed it as a magic elixir with health benefits.

Chocolate as addiction

Even though chocolate addiction isn't an official diagnosis a lot of people do experience the same cravings that they would if they were addicted to some other substance such as alcohol. They also experience negative results to their health because of extended use, which of course do not compare to the ones of other, more severe addictions.

Chocolate has significant amounts of a compound called phenethylamine that causes brain cells to release dopamine, a neurotransmitter with a feel-good effect. Dopamine is also released by drinking alcohol, gambling or doing drugs. While drugs and gambling increase our levels of dopamine ten times chocolate only increases them half a time





Chocolate in filmography

Chocolate, in all its seductive and even magical glory, has long been a popular topic in movies. Using it as a delicious treat and a metaphor for earthly temptations, filmmakers often cover chocolate with fanciful confections and bittersweet contemplations. In the film, *Chocolat*, directed by Lasse Hallstrom, uses chocolate to symbolize the liberating powers of pleasure. The main character of the movie, Vianne dispenses chocolates as therapy, finding the right candy cure for each person.

Chocolate in the movie

- The chocolate throughout the movie "chocolat" is mainly used as a symbol for freedom and indulgence. It is not only a delicious treat, it also stands for the town's people's fears and desires. It stands for the breaking out of tradition and opening up of world views. The initial opening of Vianne's store is the first hole in the rigid facade of the town's strict moral code. The movie intelligently plays with the history and taste of chocolate to bring in different aspects of the new life that comes to town. It shows diversity, feminism, independence and self assertion.





Dark chocolate –White chocolate

- Dark chocolate contains little or no milk and is mostly comprised of cocoa solids, cocoa butter, and sugar. It's often semi-sweet and has a slightly bitter flavor. White chocolate doesn't actually contain any cocoa solids which is the main ingredient in the other two types of chocolate! White chocolate, is not technically a chocolate at all as it's made without any cocoa powder or solids. It is just cocoa butter mixed with milk and sugar.



Chocolate as a symbol

- The symbolism of chocolate is known to vary throughout the time periods and civilizations that came across it. It is considered an aphrodisiac since the time of the Aztecs, a Mesoamerican civilization that flourished from the 14th to the 16th century A.D. Since the discovery that chocolate contains tyrosine and dopamine, it has been associated with love, passion and erotic intentions, which resulted in the food being gifted to one's partner as a tradition from the years of the Renaissance until today.
- Interestingly, different types of chocolate account for different feelings and symbolism. The most used chocolate type to represent love and happiness is milk chocolate, while dark and bitter chocolate are connected to culture, maturity and mysticity. On the other hand, white chocolate does not contain any chocolate solids and is therefore characterized by its addictiveness and open-mindedness.

The process of making chocolate

- The first type of chocolate, known as Mayan chocolate or locally “xocoatl” (=bitter water) was composed of roasted and ground cacao seeds, spices like chili pepper, water and cornmeal and was considered a delicacy since then. Its form, however, had not yet been finalized. During the 16th century, the Aztecs compiled cacao, corn and water to reform chocolate and its state of matter entirely, this being the first solid chocolate treat. Today, making chocolate requires a multiple-day process, divided into 9 steps:



The 9 steps

- **Step 1: Cleaning**
- **Step 2: Roasting**
- **Step 3: Shell Removal**
- **Step 4: Nibs are ground**
- **Step 5: Cocoa is separated from Cocoa Butter**
- **Step 6: Other ingredients are added to the Chocolate Liquor**
- **Step 7: Conching machines knead the Chocolate Paste**
- **Step 8: Chocolate is Tempered by Heating, Cooling & Reheating**
- **Step 9: Liquid Chocolate is Temporary Stored**





Chocolate
Little Reindeer



Sources

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