

THE POD

NEWS & REVIEWS STRAIGHT FROM THE CONCH



The inside
story of our
Cocoa Beer *p8*

HOTEL
Chocolat.

TASTING CLUB

Summer Desserts

– 2014 COLLECTION –



Bursting with *flavour*

Exclusive to Chocolate Tasting Club Members

 chocs.co.uk/summer £28.95 including delivery

 chocs.com \$54.95 plus delivery

CONTENTS

FEATURES

4 STRAIGHT FROM THE CONCH

Hotel Chocolat's co-founder Angus Thirlwell explains why he thinks about Mayan warriors while he's making breakfast. Plus, our Top Picks to see and do this month.

5 THE POD BEAKER

The story of our ritual drinking cup, created by the British artist Andrew Wicks.

6 FOOD & DRINK

The story of the popcorn chocolate that won't stop popping. Plus: The Passion Fruit Crème Brûlée recipe you must make this month.

7 LIVING IN A BOX

Our editor Iain Ball learns why the idea of an emergency chocolate gift is doomed to failure.

8 A SHED-LOAD OF BEER

How we created our amazing Cocoa Beer with the help of a small-batch English brewery. In a shed.

12 COCOA PLANET

The latest happenings from the world of the Tasting Club and Hotel Chocolat, plus cocoa news from around the globe.

13 QUICK SNAPS

You heard it here first: Tidbits and snippets to keep you informed.

14 THE CHOCOLATE TASTING CLUB

Learn more about our Chocolate Tasting Club, with scores and comments from last month's selections.



EDITOR'S NOTE



This issue, read about how we partnered with a gifted, small-batch English brewer to create our superb Cocoa Beer. And when we say small, we mean it – he makes all his beer in a shed.

I'd also like to introduce you to the heroes of Hotel Chocolat: our chocolatiers, endlessly juggling ideas for inventive new recipes and creating chocolates live in our stores and restaurants. Find out more on page 12.

Enjoy the issue, and follow us online at hotelchocolat.com/thepod



Iain Ball, Editor

With thanks to this month's contributors: _____



HANNAH FAWKES

Junior Designer

Norfolk girl with a passion for all things art, design and typography, who's created many a stunning illustration for

Hotel Chocolat. Happiest with a G&T in hand, watching films with her boyfriend and beloved dog Kipper at her feet. Makes a killer guacamole.

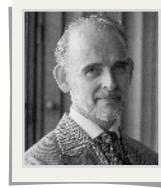


ANDY SIMPSON

Art Director

When he's not munching on his daily dose of tomatoes, the irrepressible Andy is working on dazzling new

design concepts for our packaging, including the typographical maze that is our Cocoa Beer label, featured on this month's cover.



TIMBO RENNIE

Creative Director

Before taking the design helm at Hotel Chocolat and overseeing collaborations with artists like Andrew Wicks, creator of our

Pod beaker, Timbo worked in the world of magazines, including a stint as the art director of *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue India*.

PRODUCTION: Editor: Iain Ball Creative Director: Timbo Rennie Assistant Editor: Alexandra Hare Senior Designer: Andy Linney Designer: Sarah Mckewan
Designer: Louise Daniels Photography: Daniel Hills

CONTRIBUTORS: CEO Hotel Chocolat: Angus Thirlwell Managing Director CTC: Terry Waters Head of Marketing: Melissa Shackleton Head of Guest Relations Saint Lucia: Judy Buckley
PR Manager: Megan Roberts Head of Chocolat Development: Adam Geileskey Head of Concept: Rachel Hillel Head of International: Roger Williams

CONTACT US: Send your letters to The Chocolate Tasting Club, Mint House, Royston SG8 5HL, or simply email thepod@hotelchocolat.com or via our website chocs.co.uk

STRAIGHT FROM THE CONCH



“Research is proving what the ancients already knew: cocoa is a superfood worthy of our respect.”

THE BREAKFAST OF WARRIORS

Angus Thirlwell gets go-go with cocoa

Most mornings, believe it or not, I think about Mayan warriors.

What brings them to mind is the act of crushing cocoa beans over fried eggs, my usual breakfast. In the 4th Century, Mayan warriors would march all day and then fight a battle, sustained just by a leather pouch of cocoa beans slung around their waist.

Modern research is proving what ancient civilisations already knew: cocoa is a phenomenally healthy superfood worthy of our respect and, in their case, worship.

Like coffee, cocoa is at its most delicious when freshly roasted. Leave it too long and it oxidises, tasting like the bottom of a budgie cage (same with coffee!). But when you taste it freshly roasted... ah, the nutty, savoury cocoa notes are truly tasty and a fabulous ingredient to add to almost anything, even fried eggs.

You can discover all this for yourself when you dine with us at our restaurants in London and Leeds, where we offer a 'cocoa calibration' for your taste buds: Three cocoa beans, fresh from our roaster downstairs, to give you

a foretaste of our cocoa cuisine menu.

We also have cocoa bean roasters at High Street Kensington, Monmouth Street near Covent Garden, Edinburgh at John Lewis and in Copenhagen. Just ask our resident chocolatier for a cup of freshly roasted beans to take home if you too would like a warriors' breakfast (fresh nibs are available online too). I can also recommend adding to gravy, casseroles, desserts, avocado, spinach, or just mashed into butter.

Mid-afternoon, I like to savour the lighter side of cocoa – our cocoa infusion drinks. The flavoursome, antioxidant-packed shells from around our roasted beans are steeped in hot water to make a tea-like brew – a gentle pep-up and calorie free.

Now available online as well as in our cafes, it's what we're all drinking now at HC-HQ. Peppermint & Cocoa Infusion is the most popular but we're excited about the new Ginger & Cocoa, out soon.

Discover the astonishing superfood facts about cocoa at hotelchocolat.com/cocoabean.

TOP PICKS

THINGS TO DO, PLACES TO GO, PEOPLE TO SEE

1



SEE HOCKNEY

An exhibition of David Hockney's fascinating career as a printmaker, celebrating the 60th anniversary of his first print show. On until 11th May. dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk

IMAGE COURTESY OF: Dulwich Picture Gallery

IN CAMERA

Beautiful style, fabulous features, exquisite photos. We adore the new Leica C compact camera – a must for those of us who enjoy stylish technology. leica.co.uk

2



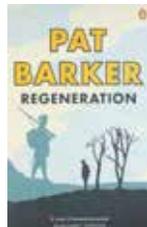
SPOT THE BEAU

Hotel Chocolat's dapper Easter bunny will be touring the UK from 3rd-19th April. Spot him and you could win oodles of Easter treats. hotelchocolat.com/beaubunny

4

LEST WE FORGET

If you read just one book about World War I this centennial year, we recommend you make it Pat Barker's powerful and deeply moving *Regeneration*.



5

CELEBRATE MOTHER'S DAY

Celebrate Mother's Day with a luxurious cocoa-inspired afternoon tea. Available at Rabot 1745 in London & Roast+Conch Leeds, 29th & 30th March. Book at hotelchocolat.com/mothersdaymenu

THE POD BEAKER

*Drinking cocoa has always been a ritual.
For that, you need a special cup*

The Aztec ruler Moctezuma preferred a chalice of solid gold; the ancient Mayans liked cocoa cups with handles shaped like monkeys, lizards and bats. But our favourite cocoa drinking cup is our very own Pod beaker.

Designed by the British artist and ceramicist Andrew Wicks in collaboration with Hotel Chocolat's creative director Timbo Rennie,

the Pod beaker is inspired by the shape of a sliced-open cocoa pod.

Andrew presented designs that evolved into a beautiful, fluted pod-like shape that, for us, evokes our Rabot Estate plantation in Saint Lucia every time we take a sip. Now used at our cafes and restaurants, Pod beakers are also available to buy at hotelchocolat.com

Far left: The finished Pod beaker
Below: The design concept



THE ANDREW WICKS EFFECT

Andrew's distinctive Pod beaker for Hotel Chocolat is the first time one of his porcelain creations has been made for a commercial design project.

The Dorset-based ceramicist is a graduate of the Royal College of Arts and has worked in hand-thrown clay pottery since 2006. Andrew's work has been featured in galleries and exhibitions throughout the UK, Europe and the United States.

The textured surfaces in Andrew's work are inspired by patterns found in the natural world, such as fossils, coral reefs and magnified plant forms.

"Throwing clay isn't as sexy as it seems in the movie *Ghost*," he warns.



6



THE ART OF CHOCOLATE

Yorkshire Sculpture Park is a celebration of art and landscape on a grand scale. And on 19th April they're hosting a chocolate sculpture-making workshop for families. yvsp.co.uk

7

SWAP COFFEE FOR COCOA

Kick-start your morning with a Barista Cocoa at one of our cocoa bar-cafes: a shot of 100% top-grade cocoa in steamed water or milk. hotelchocolat.com/cafelocations



MINE'S A PINT

Put it in your diary: The 41st Cambridge Beer Festival. Fabulous local and national beers, served at Jesus Green in the heart of Cambridge. 19-24th May. cambridgebeerfestival.com

8

9 TAKE A COCOA JOURNEY

We've got Chocolate Tasting Adventures happening in our stores and restaurants from Edinburgh to London in April and beyond. Book yourself in for an unforgettable experience: hotelchocolat.com/tastingevents

10 UDDERLY BRILLIANT

Don't miss the Udderbelly Festival at Southbank in London, filled with fabulous live acts from comedy to acrobatics. From 10th April. underbelly.co.uk



10

FOOD & DRINK



THE CHOCOLATIER'S TALE THE UNSTOPPA-POPPABLE

Claire Haddad

"This is one of our quirkiest made-on-site chocolates and it just keeps going!

The basic recipe is toffee-coated popcorn blended with popping candy, covered with dark made-on-site chocolate. It's unbelievably crunchy and tongue-tingling, not to mention extremely moreish!

We take all the ingredients, mix them together and set them into a big rustic 'loaf', which we then slice to serve. The exact recipe will likely change from visit to visit, depending on which region and variety of cocoa beans we are roasting and conching in the store at the time.

The thinking behind the recipe was to have a bit of fun and put the 'pop' back into popcorn. Although it sounds completely wild, our dark chocolate gives it just the right level of dignified restraint!"



The Unstoppa-Poppable is available at our cocoa bar-cafes: hotelchocolat.com/cafelocations



PASSION FRUIT CRÈME BRÛLÉE

Just one of the delicious recipe cards that can be found in the Tasting Club Summer Desserts Collection. To reserve yours go to chocs.co.uk/summer

Serves: 8

Difficulty: Medium

Time: 25 minutes preparation, plus chilling; 1½ hours cooking

Ingredients

6 passion fruits, halved and pulp scooped out (about 9fl oz / 250ml / 1 cup pulp)
7 large egg yolks
150g / 5½oz / heaped ½ cup caster (superfine) sugar
400ml / 14fl oz / scant 1½ cups double (heavy) cream
4 tbsp Hotel Chocolat Cacao Nibs
60ml / 2fl oz / ¼ cup milk

Nibbed Meringues (optional):

35g / 1¼oz egg whites
35g / 1¼oz / ¼ cup caster (superfine) sugar
20g / ¾oz / scant ¼ cup icing (confectioners) sugar
2 tbsp Hotel Chocolat Cacao Nibs, roughly chopped

To Serve (optional):

1 lime, peeled and segmented
1 packet Hotel Chocolat Cocoa Grower Biscuits

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 120°C / 235°F / Gas ¾.
2. Put the passion fruit pulp into a large mixing bowl, add egg yolks and half the caster (superfine) sugar. Whisk on a high speed for 5 minutes or until light and frothy.
3. Heat cream, cacao nibs and milk in a saucepan over a moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until almost boiling. Pass through a fine sieve and discard nibs.
4. Gradually add hot cream to passion fruit mixture, whisking continuously on a low speed until combined. Strain through a sieve into a large jug, discarding passion fruit seeds.
5. Increase oven to 140°C / 275°F / Gas 1. Put 8 x 7.5cm / 3 inch deep ramekins into a baking tin and pour in the custard mixture. Pour boiling water into the tin until it reaches halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Bake for 35-40 minutes or until custard is set but still slightly wobbly.
6. Remove from oven and leave to cool, then cover with cling film and chill for 2 hours or preferably overnight.
7. While the brûlées are cooling, make the nibbed meringues. Reduce oven to 110°C / 225°F / Gas ½. Put egg whites in a large, greaseproof bowl and whisk until soft peaks. Gradually add sugar, continuing to whisk, until stiff peaks. Line a baking sheet with baking parchment and pipe the mixture into rounds. Sprinkle cacao nibs over each and bake for 40 minutes or until crisp on the outside and soft in the middle. Leave to cool before removing from baking sheet.
8. To finish the brûlées, sprinkle remaining sugar in an even layer over each ramekin. Lightly spray the surface with water to help the sugar melt and caramelise. Using a blowtorch (or grill on high), caramelise the sugar on each ramekin. Take care not to burn; you just want the sugar to start bubbling and turn golden. Leave to cool.
9. Meanwhile, place limes on a tray lined with foil. Using a blowtorch, caramelise the top of each one. Serve the brûlées topped with the limes, with the biscuits and meringues.

FOR THE SHOPPING LIST...



Bag of Nibs - Ecuador

Fine cocoa nibs from Ecuador, rich in healthy antioxidants and feel-good compounds. Perfect for sprinkling on fried eggs or steamed spinach, for spicing up a jacket potato with sour cream, or just snacking on their own.

£7 hotelchocolat.com



Cocoa Grower Biscuits

Just-perfect handmade butter shortbread with warming hints of Caribbean spice – cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger, and rolled in roasted cocoa nibs. An authentic, crunchy treat from our Rabot Estate pantry in Saint Lucia.

£11 hotelchocolat.com

LIVING *in a* BOX

There is such a thing as free chocolate, discovers Iain Ball

Zoe returns from the kitchen with a look: We've run out of chocolate.

I laugh at this foolish notion from the comfort of the sofa.

"There's a small Rabot bar behind the rice," I tell her.

"We ate that last week," she says sheepishly.

I do a quick calculation. What she means is, she ate it last week.

"I see," I say.

"You do have some chocolate, don't you?"

When you work at a chocolate company, you become very used to hearing this question. Everyone seems to think I'm like Al Pacino in some chocolate version of *Scarface*, with a mountain of it constantly piled on my desk.

I pat my pockets as if checking for car keys.

"Oh, that's funny," I say, "I seem to have mislaid my inexhaustible supply of Coastal Ecuador 82% dark chocolate."

Zoe raises an eyebrow: "What about the 90%?"

We both pretend to laugh.

She vanishes back to the kitchen, from where I hear the sounds of random rummaging.

A bit later she returns with a beautifully illustrated red-and-silver box that's been in the cupboard for ages. The name on it is *A Taste of Winter*, a free gift we received after ordering an orgy of chocolate presents for Christmas.

"A fusion of salted caramel and milk feuilletine chocolate, with little pieces of salt and caramel in a grand star shape," she reads from the back. "That sounds nice."

For the last three months *A Taste of Winter* has been on hand as our emergency back-up gift – a first-responder ready to save the day in the event of an unexpected birthday, christening, graduation or other celebration crisis. Until now, we haven't needed it.

"But we can't eat that," I tell Zoe, as she throws herself on the sofa in triumph.

"Why not?"

"Because we finally decided we're giving it to Sarah as a dinner party gift, remember?"

Zoe puts on her legal face. "That was before Sarah moved her dinner party to next week. We can't give it to her then."

"Why?"

"Because tomorrow is March the 20th."

"So?"

She holds up the box like an affidavit. I take it from her and check the use-by date on the back. I shake my head: It's fine until the end of July.

She snatches it back, ripping into the box with her usual velociraptor-like daintiness.

It takes me a while to translate the next thing she says, muffled as it is by a mouthful of chocolate.

"Perhaps we could give her *A Taste of Spring*?"

"Everyone seems to think I'm like Al Pacino in some chocolate version of Scarface"



VOX CHOCS

COCOA SOUNDBITES FROM PEOPLE WHO SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER

"It was the passion of curiosity more than of lust that impelled him now... It was like having a box of chocolates shut in the bedroom drawer. Until the box was empty, it occupied the mind too much."

Graham Greene, The Heart of the Matter (1948)





A SHED-LOAD OF BEER

How the landlord of a local pub helped us create our astonishingly tasty and completely original Cocoa Beer. In his shed.

THE LANDLORD – *David Marjoram*

Director of Brewshed, a small, family-run craft micro-brewery, based in a shed in the car park behind the Beerhouse pub in Bury St Edmunds.

THE REGULAR – *Adam Geileskey*

Head of Chocolate Development at Hotel Chocolat, and beer drinker.

THE IDEA

To make an original, exciting kind of Cocoa Beer that
a) lovers of great beer will enjoy and
b) has absolutely nothing to do with chocolate.

Clockwise from top left: Barrels stacked outside; Brewshed – a one-man brewery behind the Beerhouse pub in Bury St Edmunds; David Marjoram, director of Brewshed; Fuggles hops used in making our Cocoa Beer; David and his 'copper', or 'kettle'; Adam Geileskey, Head of Chocolate Development; our beautiful Cocoa Beer

Met David Marjoram, the director of the one-man brewery Brewshed, and Hotel Chocolat's head of chocolate development, Adam Geileskey. They first met in early 2013 to start exploring the idea of creating a high-quality beer using the shells from roasted cocoa beans as a key ingredient. Here, they explain in their own words how they did it:

Adam: "Making a beer with cocoa was something I'd been wanting to do for years, but chocolate beers are, in general, horrible. The Belgians do it and they're just... not very nice."

David: "They're quite sweet and cloying. We wanted something earthy and darker."

A: "So the first thing I had to do was find someone who could have a go at making it. I live in Bury St Edmunds, a city with a beer heritage. And I thought, why go further when you've got someone less than two miles from your home?"

D: "What he's saying is: he's lazy."

COCOA BEER



“It’s almost unheard of to have a brewery this small now.

But most pubs brewed their own beer until the late 19th Century.”

David Marjoram, Director of Brewshed, Bury St Edmunds

A: *(laughs) “The One Bull in Bury is pretty much my local pub. I didn’t know David then but I knew his beer, which is excellent.”*

D: *“We’re a pub company that makes beer for our own four pubs. When Adam spoke to me about what he had in mind, it was a really interesting challenge.”*

A: *“The priority was always to make a good beer, but when we started, we really didn’t know if it would work. We started off with cocoa shells, the husks that are left over from the roasted cocoa beans that we make chocolate with. We started infusing them in boiling water.”*

D: *“The first thing I had to do was completely reset my understanding of cocoa. Everyone associates cocoa with chocolate, but roasted, unsweetened cocoa flavours are savoury and subtle. It has bitter, earthy tones, with notes like coffee and tobacco.”*

A: *“We started with just cold infusions – literally steeping beer in cocoa shells. But the flavours from the shells have to be robust enough to make an*

impact on the beer, and you just can’t do that with a cold infusion.”

D: *“We wanted a greater intensity. So I tried putting the shells in a pressure cooker. With the right amount of shells you can make a kind of ‘cocoa elixir’ – a thick, brown syrup, almost like a gravy or strong stock. It’s packed with all these amazing cocoa flavours.”*

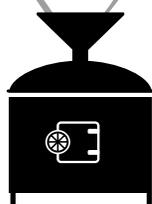
A: *“Once we had the elixir, it was about finding the right flavour balance with the right kind of beer.”*

D: *“At Brewshed, we make a range of beers for our pubs, from an American Blonde beer to a pale ale, a best bitter, and a porter. We tried blending the elixir with all of them, even the American Blonde, but it’s just too citrusy and light. And the beer already has a bitter note.”*

A: *“We kept an open mind, but we quickly realised it was going to work best with the porter.”*

D: *“The dark malts in our porter have notes of roasted coffee and chocolate, and these pair very well with cocoa’s earthy notes. But we*

A ONE-MAN OPERATION: *How Cocoa Beer is made*



1. MASHING

Munton’s malt from Suffolk is mixed with hot water, dropped into a mash tun and ‘put to bed’, or steeped, for about 1½ hours to create a sugar-rich liquid called ‘wort’.



2. COCOA SHELLS

Vietnamese cocoa shells left over from making chocolate are put into a vessel called a ‘copper’ or ‘kettle’. These will impart a subtle peppery and earthy flavour to the wort. The exact amount of shells is a secret.



3. BOILING

The wort is then moved into the copper, or kettle, where it is boiled with the shells and hops for 1¼ hours. Embittering hops go in at the beginning, and hops to add aroma go in near the end.

changed the recipe, reducing our usual amount of malt in our porter to make it less bitter and let the cocoa elixir add its own bitterness.”

A: “So, then it was a process of working out the balance of elixir and beer to create a good overall flavour.”

D: “I started off injecting a millimetre of the elixir into a half-pint glass and carried on from there.”

A: “Our Cocoa Beer is basically a high-quality London style porter with a subtle twist. It has a very complex blend of savoury bitterness and notes of tobacco, cocoa and coffee with a rounded mouth-feel. It’s just a great beer. I love it.”

D: “And since then, we’ve improved on the recipe. Instead of making an elixir, we now add the cocoa shells to the copper along with the hops during the boil. Again, it took quite a bit of experimentation with the quantity and timings, but we nailed it with the batch we made last Christmas Eve.”

A: “And, of course, he’s not going to say how many shells go in.”

It’s a secret recipe.”

D: “I think the new method is a little more authentic. And one of the special things about being a small, craft micro-brewery is that your store of hops and malts changes over time, depending on when you use them, depending on the season. And it’s the same with the cocoa shells.

So, even though each batch of Cocoa Beer has the same essential recipe, the flavour will have interesting little quirks and personality traits. I love that uniqueness.”

A: “Making the cocoa beer with David is one of the things that I’m most proud of. It’s so good to come up with something you really like, and find that other people like it!

I’m already thinking about a new kind of Cocoa Beer. Now we’ve got a dark beer, I’d really like to try and make a lighter, summery cocoa beer that would go down well in our restaurants, and I think I might have a cunning way to do it.”

D: “Sounds good! Let’s try it.” ☺

WHAT GOES IN OUR COCOA BEER?

- **MALT FROM MUNTON’S** – a Suffolk-based East Anglian malt supplier.
- **FUGGLES HOPS** from Charles Faram – fruity hops, all from Kent.
- **VIETNAMESE COCOA SHELLS** – all from Dong Nai and the Mekong Delta, roasted by Hotel Chocolat in Huntington.

COCOA BEER

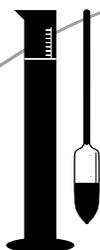
Our distinctive, English, small-batch beer is brewed with traditional Fuggles hops and the warming flavour of cocoa shells to create a complex, rounded ale of real character, with pleasing savoury bitterness and notes of tobacco, cocoa and coffee.

Our cocoa shells are left over from making chocolate, but they’re just too good to throw away. We hope you agree. hotelchocolat.com



4. FERMENTATION

The wort is cooled and transferred to a fermentation tank, where yeast is added to turn the sugars into alcohol. Fermentation takes about 3-4 days at a temperature of 23.5°C (74°F).



5. TESTING

The specific gravity of the beer is measured to ensure it has reached the correct level of 4.7% alcohol by volume. We also give it a taste test to make sure it has all the right properties: a perfect porter with a malty cocoa twist.



6. BOTTLING

The beer is crash-chilled to 10°C (50°F) to stop the fermentation. Then it’s transferred into barrels for bottling. Brewshed makes about 2,000 litres per batch, which after filtering makes about 3,000 bottles.

COCOA PLANET NEWS FROM AROUND OUR WORLD



Location: UK

Meet our Chocolatiers Online

At Hotel Chocolat, our chocolatiers are our heroes – a bunch of endlessly creative connoisseurs with a passion for all things cocoa.

You can meet our resident chocolatiers in our restaurants and cocoa bar-cafes, where you can watch them roasting and conching beans live, each with their own flair for the art of making chocolate.

And hidden behind the scenes are 'The Inventors' – the gang of ingenious chocolatiers at work in our development kitchen in Huntingdon, conjuring up innovative recipes for our shops and Chocolate Tasting Club selections.

Now you can get to know them all a little better, in a series of online video interviews in which our chocolatiers open up about their intimate relationship with the cocoa bean.

Some of our team, like Daniel Morris and Natasha Pang (pictured below left), began as staff in HC stores before training to take up the chocolatier's palette knife. "Every day, people tell me I have the best job in the world, and I have to agree," says Daniel. "Creating chocolate straight from the bean is incredibly exciting and very few people have the opportunity to do it."

You can read their bios at hotelchocolat.com/chocolatiers and see their video interviews at: youtube.com/hotelchocolat



GHANA

Location: Osuben, Kwahu District

The Osuben Medical Centre: Nearly finished

We're now very close to the completion of a new medical centre for Osuben, the village at the heart of the cocoa farming community in Eastern Ghana we've been supporting since 2001.

Funded by donations from our Tasting Club members, the centre will be big enough to accommodate two permanent members of staff, including a midwife, able to provide a 24/7 health service.

We know first-hand from people in the community how important the centre will be to them, especially for pregnant women. Local people have given the project their spare time and labour, and the Kwahu District Health Authority has agreed to supply staff and medicines.



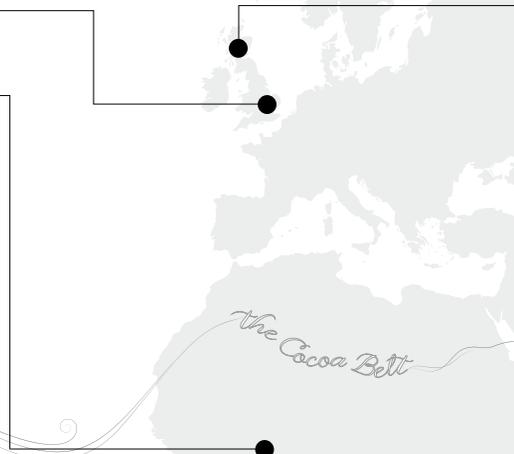
JOIN OUR GHANA APPEAL

How you can help: We still need £3,815 to complete and equip the Osuben medical centre. We add 25p for every scorecard we receive from our Tasting Club members. But if you'd like to donate, please send a cheque made payable to: **The Cocoa Farmers' Fund**, and send it to: CTC Ghana Appeal, Freepost, ANGI0659, Royston, SG8 5YD.

CURRENT:

£ 4 1 , 1 8 5

TARGET: £45,000





IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

Location: Edinburgh

If you're visiting us in Edinburgh, don't miss the Water of Leith

The Water of Leith is one of Edinburgh's best-kept open secrets, and a great walk to go on if you're visiting our cocoa bar-cafe in Edinburgh.

This beautiful 12-mile stretch of walkway through the heart of the city is a project started in the 1970s. Well known to Edinburgh's residents, relatively few visitors find their way along this strange green corridor.

Cutting discreetly through the city centre, the hidden path is abundant with wildlife from otters to badgers, roe deer and even albino squirrels.

Designated an Urban Wildlife Site, the mystical waterway snakes from the foot of the Pentlands to the Leith docks.

Butterflies blaze through river banks richly carpeted in wildflowers, while willow herb trails through the clear water along the sleepy wooded trail. Look out too for more than 80 species of bird, including heron,

dipper, wagtail, goosander and kingfisher.

It's worth walking the whole route, but our favourite part runs from Stockbridge, about a 15-minute walk away from our cocoa bar-cafe at John Lewis, to the Gallery of Modern art.

This mysterious stretch is home to the fairytale Dean Village and a life-sized statue of the celebrated British artist Anthony Gormley.

Standing knee deep in the cool water, the figure is part of *6 Times*, a landmark sculptural project. It's the first of six 'Gormleys' that appear at various points along the route from here down to Leith.

'For me, it's about using the Water of Leith as a living bloodstream. I've always been very affected by the river because it's untouched,' says Gormley.

Find out more at www.waterofleith.org.uk



Edinburgh - John Lewis
John Lewis
St James Centre
Edinburgh
EH1 3SP
Telephone 01315 587 346

From Stockbridge: Take the walk south along the river to the gallery of Modern Art
75 Belford Road, Edinburgh, EH4 3DR
nationalgalleries.org

JOIN US TOO



OUR NEW CLUB MEMBER

Dame Helen Mirren confessed to a deep love of our chocolate at this year's BAFTA Award, where we wowed her and other stars, including Ron Howard and Zoe Ball, with our special BAFTA chocolate masks and other delights. Dame Helen has since become a member of our Chocolate Tasting Club! chocs.co.uk

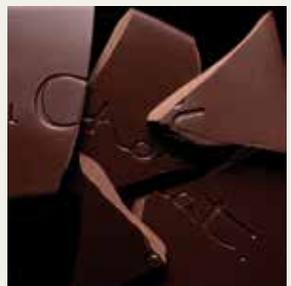
SAINT LUCIA



MARCO COCOA

We enjoyed a visit from the legendary chef Marco Pierre White at our Rabot Estate in Saint Lucia recently. Marco grafted his own cocoa tree seedling at our plantation nursery before thoroughly enjoying lunch at our famous Boucan restaurant, along with a few of our cacao bellinis. You're welcome, Marco!

SUPPORT US



THE CHOCOLATE BOND

Bored with banks? There's never been a better time to invest in British chocolate. Our new chocolate bonds offer an interest rate of more than 7%, and we'll be using the funds we raise to expand our business and create new skilled jobs at home. Intrigued? Email us your name and address and we'll send you a Bond Invitation document. thepod@hotelchocolat.com

QUICK SNAPS

TASTING CLUB REVIEWS

For those who don't know, the Chocolate Tasting Club is at the heart of Hotel Chocolat's talent for innovative and exceptional chocolates. Our ingenious chocolatiers make hundreds of delicious recipes, which are sent to our Tasting Club members to taste and evaluate before anyone else.

Here are the latest scores from our members on our recent selections. Members' scores help us keep making better and better chocolate recipes and decide which of our new chocolates should go into our stores as 'Selectors' and in our boxed selections.

How the Chocolate Tasting Club works

Every four weeks our members receive a new box of exciting chocolates created by Hotel Chocolat's chocolatiers, and are free to let us know what they think of each recipe, either online or with a scorecard that comes with the menu.

We offer different 'genres' of chocolates that our chocolatiers work on, from all milk chocolate to all dark, the alcohol-free Elements selections, the rare and vintage cocoa of our Rabot 1745 selection, and the Classic selection, with a little bit of

PS – DON'T FORGET to order your Eggsquisite Tasting Club Easter Collection, available online at chocs.co.uk

everything. You can also opt to receive a new box every four weeks or less often if you like. We're a flexible club, and members can swap selections whenever they want.

The advantages of membership

There are lots of perks to being a Tasting Club member, not least enjoying a 5% discount on everything online and in our stores, cafes, restaurants and even our Boucan Hotel in Saint Lucia.

You'll also have access to special collections exclusive to the Tasting Club, including the annual 'best of the best' – and unique season specials.

Visit chocs.co.uk to find out more.



CLASSIC SELECTION D170

No	Chocolate Name	Chocolatier	10/10	Average
1	Christmas Mess	Olivier Nicod	27%	8.6
2	Lemon Curd	Kiri Kalenko	23%	8.3
3	Macchiato	Olivier Nicod	23%	8.4
4	Salted Praline & Caramel	Kiri Kalenko	22%	8.3
5	Apricot Hug	Felicity Plimmer	21%	8.2



WHAT MEMBERS ARE SAYING

Christmas Mess – *"Pure Indulgence - 10 isn't a high enough score for this."* 10/10
Miss Barbara Dale – Doncaster

Lemon Curd – *"Curdelicious!!"* 10/10
Mr David Powell – Corsham

PRIZE DRAW
Our prize draw winner is *Mr David White from Harpenden who wins a Fruity Selection.*

DARK SELECTION K103

No	Chocolate Name	Chocolatier	10/10	Average
1	Christmas Mess	Olivier Nicod	20%	8.5
2	Lemon Curd	Kiri Kalenko	15%	8.3
3	Salted Praline & Caramel	Kiri Kalenko	14%	8.3
4	Apricot Hug	Felicity Plimmer	13%	8.1
5	Banana & Custard	Kiri Kalenko	12%	8.0



WHAT MEMBERS ARE SAYING

Salted Praline & Caramel – *"Good ooziiness."* 9/10
Helen Horner – Biggleswade

Banana Custard – *"Very pleasant but a bit more banana would have made it even better."* 8/10
Mr Richard Mills – Wallington

PRIZE DRAW
Our prize draw winner is *Mrs Katy Turnbull from Calne who wins an Extreme Dipping Adventure.*

Follow us



DISCOVER • REVIEW • SHARE

Score online or by post and you'll automatically be entered into a Prize Draw to win some Hotel Chocolat goodies. We'll also be donating 25p to our Ghana Appeal for every scorecard we receive, so you'll be helping to build the Osuben Medical Centre.

WINTER PUDDINGS 2013*

No	Chocolate Name	Chocolatier	10/10	Average
1	Queen of Puddings	Felicity Plimmer	33%	8.7
2	Sussex Pond Pudding	Rhona Macfadyen	30%	8.7
3	Stewed Rhubarb & Custard	Rhona Macfadyen	30%	8.7
4	Treacle Tart	Kiri Kalenko	28%	8.6
5	St Clements Pudding	Rhona Macfadyen	28%	8.6



WHAT MEMBERS ARE SAYING

Winter Puddings Collection – *"This was one of the best boxes I have had from the club, there were some absolute favourites and no duds."*

Miss Christine Reilly – Glasgow

Queen of Puddings – *"An old favourite of mine in the kitchen, it was a royal pleasure in the Coronation 60th anniversary year."* 9/10

Ms Julia Courtney – Barnet

Sussex Pond Pudding – *"If all the ponds in Sussex tasted this good I'd never leave the county."* 10/10

Julie – Sheffield

ALL MILK SELECTION M25*

No	Chocolate Name	Chocolatier	10/10	Average
1	Salted Praline & Caramel	Kiri Kalenko	28%	8.0
2	Christmas Mess	Olivier Nicod	23%	8.4
3	Tawny Port Truffle	Olivier Nicod	20%	7.7
4	Pecranberry Praline	Olivier Nicod	18%	7.7
5	Open Sesame	Rhona Macfadyen	17%	7.7



WHAT MEMBERS ARE SAYING

Pecranberry Praline – *"Would have been perfect without the cranberry bits. I love praline."* 6.5/10

Miss Ann-Marie Vickers – Preston

Open Sesame – *"Wow-just wow! I find halva too sweet on it's own but this was a perfect combination. Fab."* 10/10

E Pensley – Edinburgh

PRIZE DRAW

Our prize draw winner is Mrs Victoria Barley from Godalming who wins a Milk Adventure Peepster Box.



RABOT 1745 SELECTION P35*

No	Chocolate Name	Chocolatier
1	Sour Cherry & Hazelnut Bûche with Vietnam 80% Dark	Olivier Nicod
2	Trinidad 75% Lemon & Verbena Ganache	Rhona Macfadyen
3	Hacienda Salted Almond	Olivier Nicod
4	Saint Lucia, Island Growers 100% Dark	Rhona Macfadyen
5	Peru 75% Milk	Kiri Kalenko



WHAT MEMBERS ARE SAYING

We haven't received enough scores this month for the Rabot 1745 selection to be statistically valid. But members' comments below are representative.

Trinidad 75% Lemon & Verbena Ganache – *"Wow – I did not expect that!"* 8/10
Nick Kennedy – Aldeburgh

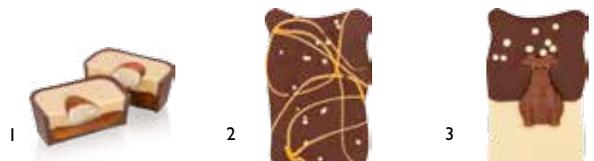
PRIZE DRAW

Our prize draw winner is Dr Helen Beardsell from Yiewsley who wins a selection of bars from Coastal Ecuador.



ELEMENTS SELECTION S81

No	Chocolate Name	Chocolatier	10/10	Average
1	Salted Praline & Caramel	Kiri Kalenko	26%	8.5
2	Caramel Orange Crêpe	Felicity Plimmer	25%	8.5
3	Snowy Reindeer	Kiri Kalenko	25%	8.5
4	Christmas Mess	Olivier Nicod	25%	8.4
5	Quince Ganache	Rhona Macfadyen	20%	7.7



WHAT MEMBERS ARE SAYING

Caramel Orange Crêpe – *"I would really like to give this 11, it was divine. I'd hate to think I could never have it again so please add it to the Hotel Chocolate collection."* 10/10

Lucy – London

Snowy Reindeer – *"Perfect for Xmas."* 9.5/10

Dr S Cook – Swansea

PRIZE DRAW

Our prize draw winner is Miss Emily Liddle from Oxford who wins a Mississippi Mud Pie slab.



HOTEL Chocolat.

BRITISH
COCOA GROWER & CHOCOLATIER



0212014627

Beau Bunny is back!



The dashing and dapper Beau Bunny returns for his brand new Easter Tour this year, from 3rd April - 19th April.

He'll be appearing at more than 40 stores across Europe to give away delicious salted caramel golden eggs.

Every day, we'll be holding a "Where's Beau?" guessing game online and in stores, with the opportunity to win some fabulous prizes.

Beau will sometimes be joined by a friend who will dazzle you with magic tricks, and conjure up some brilliant Easter prizes for you to win!

Don't forget to follow Beau Bunny on Twitter for all the latest news on [#thebeabunny](#)

For full details visit hotelchocolat.com/beabunny