

2016

EXCITING PRODUCTS, LATEST TRENDS, EXPERT ADVICE

CONFECTIONERY

& CHOCOLATE BUYER

From the publishers of
SPECIALITY FOOD

THE JEWELS IN THE CROWN



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WELCOME TO CONFECTIONERY & CHOCOLATE BUYER

Welcome to the latest installment of *Confectionery & Chocolate Buyer*, brought to you by the makers of *Speciality Food Magazine*. In this publication you'll find insight into some of the biggest talking points in today's confectionery market, a roundup of the hottest trends happening right now, and an engaging interview with TV star, author, patissier and chocolate lover, Will Torrent.

The world of chocolate and confectionery continues to evolve; in the past 12 months the British Government has introduced a controversial sugar tax – to which the food and drink world has responded with varying degrees of acceptance – and the consumer has become ever more conscious of matters of health and ethics. The Soil Association's Organic Report has revealed that the demand organic continues to grow apace, while buzzwords such as 'raw', 'paleo' and 'free-from' have sprung up



across retailers' shelves. We explore such issues within these pages.

Not only that, but you'll learn about some of the best brands in the fine confectionery sector in our producer profile section. These businesses boast heritage, authenticity, innovation and an impressive amount of expertise, and we are delighted to share their stories with you.

I hope that you find this magazine an insightful and enjoyable read.

Holly Shackleton

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SWEET SELLERS

Robin Goldsmiths explores the current and soon-to-be trends in the confectionery market

According to Mintel, the sugar and gum confectionery market is estimated to see a rise in value of 10.4% between 2015 and 2020, bolstered by increasing prices despite a slight fall in predicted sales. Nevertheless, concerns over the dangers of sugar usage, particularly links with childhood obesity, pose an ongoing threat to market growth. Several operators in this sector are exploring a more upmarket and adult-oriented positioning in certain categories, including marshmallow and fudge, referencing provenance and handmade credentials. Indeed, 52% of users polled expressed interest in sophisticated adult sweets, e.g. high-quality fruit jellies, with 45% attracted by sweets from other countries, including salted liquorice from Scandinavia. Additionally, 30% would like to see more allergen-free sweets, another potential area for development.

Mintel's analysis also shows that premium chocolate is experiencing growth with a 72% increase in products launched globally between 2011 and 2015. As consumers become more concerned with cocoa content, source of origin, uniqueness and authenticity, a quarter of chocolate buyers in the UK say they would pay more for a luxury brand of chocolate for themselves, while

44% would do so as a gift. Flavour innovation, particularly with Asian-inspired ingredients, has been strongly influential, from wasabi in 2012 to matcha green tea last year. Furthermore, the trend for teas as an ingredient in chocolate confectionery looks set to remain amid claims of health benefits, flavour nuances and ability to complement different strengths of cocoa.

Weird and wonderful

Emma Murphy, Selfridges' confectionery buyer comments, "We have seen strong sales in 'superfood chocolates' and tea-infused options, such as matcha and oolong. We're also predicting growth in 'grown-up' confectionery, including cocktail flavours." Additionally, within the speciality confectionery and chocolate sector, savoury combinations have been gaining traction and this trend shows little sign of abating. Sian Holt of Fudge Kitchen notes: "In chocolate, fudge and other confectionery, the biggest trend over the last few years has been the huge love of sea salted caramel. No single flavour has had such impact before or since and, whilst variants

of it are now emerging e.g. maple with sea salt, this is not about to go away any time soon. Beyond this, spices like cardamom and cinnamon have been increasingly popular, likewise chilli, sometimes as a named variety, other times mixed with complimentary ingredients like lime, along with more subtle flavours of tea (chai, matcha, earl grey) or florals like geranium and rose. More recently alcohols, particularly gins, are beginning to emerge linked to the growth of artisan distilleries, incorporating botanicals into confectionery."

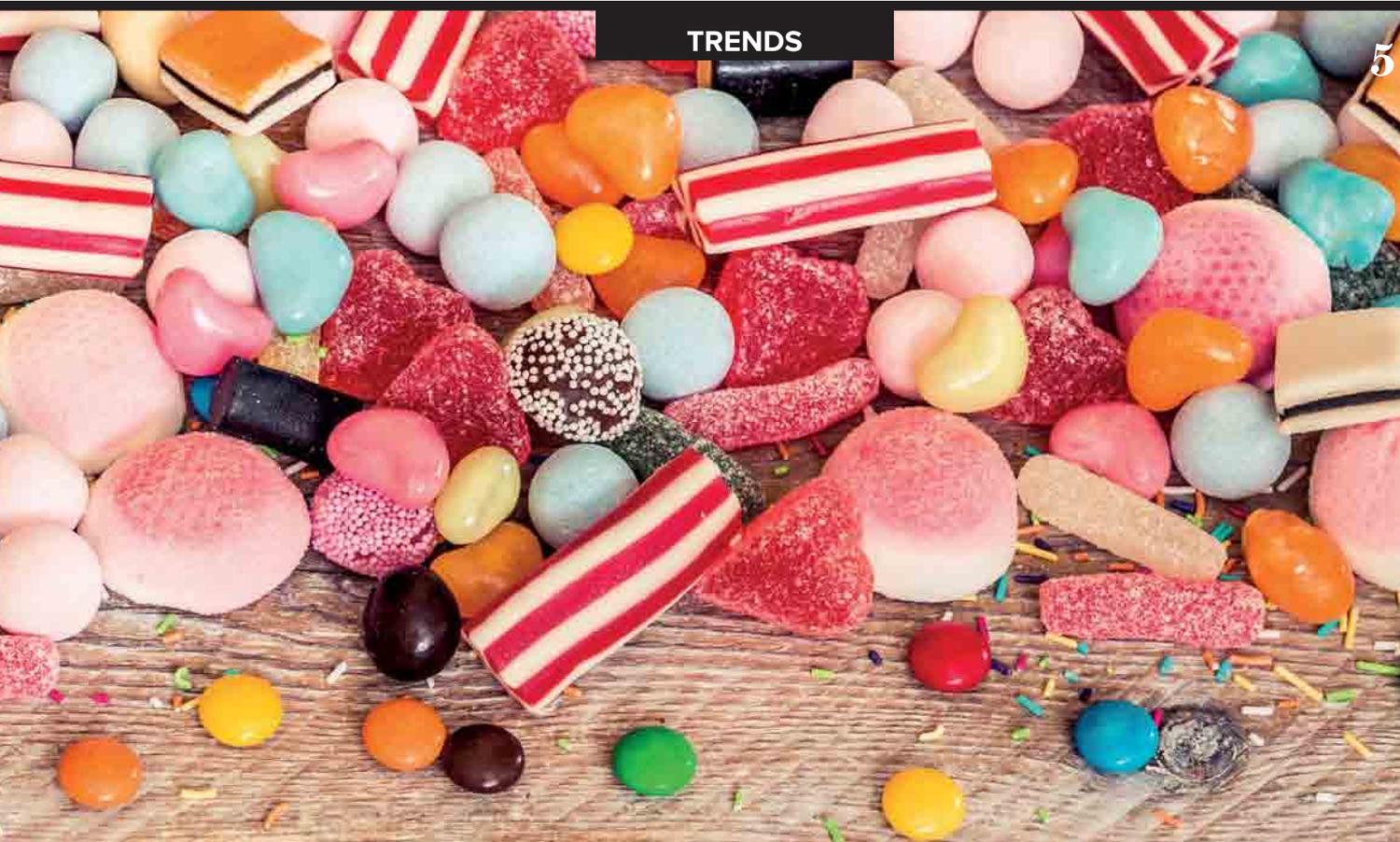
Concerning savoury versus sweet options, Bonieri's Amber Rust makes the following observations: "There are many weird and wonderful ingredients being put with chocolate – from bacon to kaffir lime, curry powder and peppercorns. I think this will persist, as opposed to the growth of 'pudding chocolates' like lemon meringue mousse or apple crumble flavours that we have already seen. Hazelnuts are always popular but I can see pistachios being used more, too." Similarly, Louise Truswell of Booja Booja adds: "All our dairy-free ice creams and a few of our chocolate truffles contain nuts.

We've certainly seen increased demand for both during the last few years and the fact they contain nuts may have played a part in this." For Nathan Williams of Tudors Pralines, the success of nuts as key ingredients may not just be for the flavours: "Almonds have become very popular and their status as a healthy ingredient is widely known. Even though we cover ours in caramel, this seems to help sell the product quite nicely."

Innovation versus tradition

At Zotter Chocolate, taste innovation is top of the agenda. "At the moment", reveals Keith Lowe, MD, "we are exploring the opportunities of wood, including chocolate infused with schnapps made from silver fir trees and we will be launching more 'wood-themed' bars in the future." However, balancing innovation with traditional flavours remains important, as Jayne Edge of Campbells Fudge describes: "There are always the traditionalists who will only buy plainer flavours such as All Butter or Vanilla, but we have found that over the last five years our customers are keen to try the more 'exotic' like Strawberry & Cream or Iron Brew. The best-sellers are always the traditional ones of All Butter and Vanilla, however in the last two years Salted

“ Premium chocolate has seen a 72% increase in products launched globally between 2011 and 2015 ”



Caramel has hit a real high and we sell as much of that as the traditional flavours.”

Another trend is the use of single-origin cocoa, as Lowe explains: “We have seen a marked increase in demand for our single-origin chocolates and I am sure this will continue. Not many years ago most of the wine on sale in the UK was the most dreadful plonk, but now every high street is full with an astonishing selection of fine wines. I believe that we are now at the beginning of the same transformation in our chocolate buying habits.” Holt concurs, adding that the use of different types of creams from named dairies, or sugar varieties that play with caramelisation and flavour depth, are also part of the same phenomenon.

“The trend for gourmet and ‘grown-up’ confectionery is certainly very current”, Philippa Quayle of Art of Mallow explains. “People seem to be much more aware of what they are eating and the desire for good quality, handmade produce is very much apparent. Food that requires little or no processing is what people are after. When food is crafted by hand there are obvious differences in taste, texture, quality and nutritional value. Marshmallows are a good example of a product that was originally made by hand, was then industrialised and over-processed, and has now re-emerged as a handmade sweet treat, albeit with a modern gourmet twist.”

Jacqueline Champion of Champion & Reeves agrees: “People want to eat something natural – a real product made with real ingredients, not something synthetic and over-engineered. We use good quality animal fats like butter in place of synthetically manufactured alternatives, olive oil rather than palm oil and molasses, which are full of trace minerals and vitamins, instead of more refined white sugars.” Kit Tomlinson of Mighty Fine Honeycomb also notes the importance to the speciality consumer of quality and provenance: “Customers are looking for great ingredients in their confectionery and chocolate and are prepared to pay a small premium for them. We use British honey in the production of our honeycomb that gives us a far superior taste and texture, allowing us to support a vital UK industry.”

Simple, healthy, nutritious

Health concerns are never far from public scrutiny and more consumers are choosing free-from products for both health and lifestyle reasons. Truswell comments: “We’re definitely seeing a growth in this market and more demand for unprocessed, simple, healthy products made from just a few ingredients. The digital world has facilitated the sharing of recipes and food photography, so naturally there’s more buzz about food and lifestyles in general with

veganism a particular trend at the moment.” Similarly, Taz Basunia of Jealous Sweets sees a growing appreciation of health and nutrition affecting the market: “People are much more aware now of what they put into their bodies. When I do in-store tastings, I am constantly asked what ingredients, allergens and calorie content are in the sweets. This would not have happened 10 years ago!” Nicole Dunphy of Pandora Bell believes this trend will last: “Since we launched, I have noticed that special dietary requirements have become a big issue, whether it be gluten-free, vegetarian, dairy-free.. I expect this will continue into the future and that vegetarian/vegan will become increasingly important as the sustainability message becomes part of how we live.”

Selfridges’ Murphy predicts further innovations in health-related products, citing Nutircoa as a brand which “harnesses the benefits of using high quantities of cocoa and collagen to create a tasty beauty supplement.” Champion sees a further significant change: “People recognise the link between obesity and large-sized, poor quality confectionery, so portion control is becoming more important with smaller, individually wrapped pieces a growing trend.”

Premium gifts

Home kits, gift sets and experiences comprise another burgeoning market, as Sian Holt explains:

45%
ATTRACTED BY
SWEETS FROM
OTHER COUNTRIES

“Over the last 10 years, particularly the last two, there has been a growing consumer-led demand for ‘real experiences’ with the culinary sector leading the way. We now undertake more than 350 fudge-making experiences a year across our shops and our ‘Make Fudge at Home’ kits have grown exponentially since launch five years ago.” For many confectionery companies, the gift sector offers a strong, reliable revenue stream. “Special treats and gifting”, Dunphy remarks, “are stable and the luxury market for food will always hold. If you compare the cost of other luxury items like handbags or watches to a bar of nougat, the premium price is not at all unaffordable!”

The speciality confectionery and chocolate market offers exciting possibilities for the consumer. As Philippa Quayle says, “There seem to be more artisan producers now who are looking at popular mainstream confectionery, reorganising and disrupting it and adding exciting new twists. It’s a fun and innovative time for confectionery offering consumers more variety and appealing new choices.”

“Chocolate is there to be explored”

Star patissier, Will Torrent welcomes us into his chocolate-filled world

A shocking statistic was released last year: it stated that we could run out of chocolate by the year 2020 – I can’t imagine a world without chocolate! Sustainability is becoming increasingly more important to the chocolate industry, and chocolate lovers and those who work in the industry need to embrace that and do more work in the farming communities. We have to invest time, effort, education and skills so that we can have chocolate for years to come. There are a lot of companies doing incredible work in this field, whether through planting new trees or developing new fermentation methods so farmers can sell at least 90% of their crop rather than the conventional 50-60%. This means they have more income and lead better lives. They’re also running educational programmes to teach younger farmers of the benefits of growing cacao. If we don’t educate younger farmers, they will go to where the money is – in coffee, rubber and palm. This is where the grey area of child labour on cocoa farms comes in; there’s a very fine line, but in a nutshell we have to educate younger farmers about farming without them using dangerous tools like machetes and machinery. Trafficked labour is very much the bad side of the industry, and we have to highlight and stop that by working with charities who are based in the trafficked area.

We seem to be moving away from the novelty factor – there’s less crashing of ingredients together to create a new flavour. Instead, we’re appreciating the source of the cacao more, rather than where the chocolate is made. I’m seeing some amazing coffee coming in from Haiti and Vietnam with some really unusual flavours. There’s a Haiti chocolate I’ve tasted from Cocoa Barry which has flavours of pineapple and grapefruit with an undercurrent of bitterness and a slight milky taste. Just eaten on its own it’s beautiful, but worked into a ganache, sauce or cake it’s even more special. Consumers are becoming a lot more serious about chocolate and want to know where it’s from, where it’s grown and if it’s sustainable. I think Fairtrade is falling down the spectrum of importance, and



sustainability is inching its way up; there's more of an awareness of the farmers' lifestyles now.

I work with Cocoa Barry, who do a lot of educational work in farming communities across the ecuadorial belt. They do a lot of research alongside other businesses to work towards the greater good of chocolate-loving consumers. The network of chefs and ambassadors we have as a group is incredible, and this includes some of the best chefs in the world. I'm happy to see that it's becoming more and more about the chocolate itself for chefs, rather than using a brand on the menu because it will sell. It means that restaurants can be telling their customers about the chocolate and what they should be tasting, as would a wine sommelier – his focus is on the wine rather than the chateau it's from.

What's amazing about chocolate is that it can change from bite to bite. It's like a fine wine – in one mouthful you can have lots of different tastes and in the next you get another batch

of flavours. The layers of flavour you can get in really good quality fine chocolate are incredible; it's a real taste journey. In the same way as you can blend grapes from America, France and Australia to the same recipe and they will all taste completely different, chocolate from different regions can vary hugely in flavour – this really gets me excited about chocolate. For me, there needs to be some character to chocolate – it shouldn't just be a one-dimensional taste, but have lots of layers of flavours and texture. The word 'connoisseur' is used quite a lot in the chocolate world, and as a member of the Academy of Chocolate I'm used to seeing chocolate from that perspective.

A lot of elements work together to create great chocolate; everything that is built up around the product, like the design of the branding and the story behind it,

is absolutely key as it's all a part of the experience. Branding is what draws you in – I think we're moving away from everything being brown, black, purple and gold into more exciting territory. When you start to delve into the brand side of things, you need to think about how consumers connect with the brand – it needs to be very clear and accessible. As someone in the food industry it's very important to have an understanding of this; is the product crafted or personalised? It's these things which will connect the consumer to the product and the brand.

Some chocolate products can be a bit of a fad. Some things appear to be innovation just for the sake of it. Are these products going to improve the dining experience of the consumer? If you're creating a product for PR rather than for the enjoyment of the consumer, something's not

right and I wouldn't be too keen to try it. Having said that, I have been proven wrong in the past – I tried a cheese chocolate in the Academy of Chocolate Awards this year, which I wasn't expecting to enjoy. I think it was a Norwegian caramelised cheese coated in some amazing chocolate; if you shut your eyes and partner it with a glass of port it really works! This wasn't a rushed job – the makers matched the flavours of the cheese to those of the chocolate. Very clever stuff!

I'm a big believer in the classics; they're classic for a reason! Chocolate releases a lot of nostalgic memories and endorphins – it's very evocative. My tastes all depend on the mood I'm in. In the winter I eat a lot of rich dark chocolate, and I eat white chocolate when I need a little burst of sweetness. Everyone can benefit from not being a chocolate snob – everything has its place, from an incredible single-estate chocolate bar to confectionery which can be bought in a petrol station. There's some incredible milk chocolates around at the moment, too – which suits my current mood!

“Chocolate releases a lot of nostalgic memories and endorphins – it's very evocative”

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THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO CHOCOLATE TERROIR

John Bensalhia explores the individual aspects of chocolate production all around the world, looking at the terroirs of one of the globe's best loved confections

Terroir is a term that's connected with food and drinks such as tea, wine and, of course, chocolate. Essentially, it roughly translates as a sense of a place, and looks at how local aspects such as the location, climate and geology can have an affect the produce of that specific region, and ultimately the end product on the shelves. In the case of chocolate, terroir relates to the flavours and properties of different types across the globe. Join me as I head around the world, looking at some of the various tastes, properties and other aspects of global chocolate.

AUSTRALIA

A common taste sensation connected with Australian chocolate flavour is fruit. That's undoubtedly the case with some of the country's best known chocolate makers.

Daintree Estates, for example, offers up a wonderful 70% dark chocolate that is bursting at the seams with fruit sensations such as berries, cinnamon and a tinge of banana. Daintree Estates actually grows its own cocoa beans, while also calling on the services and ingredients of the local dairy and sugar. Citrus and floral clove notes can also be detected in the single origin, organic 70% dark chocolate of Goodman Estate.

Zokoko's chocolates are also famed for their diverse notes and aromas. The Western Sydney chocolate maker serves up elements of citrus and honey in its Alto Bene Bolivian 68% dark chocolate, which is produced with organic cocoa, and an aroma of dried fruit in its Tranquilidad 72% Bolivian chocolate.

Other notable chocolate makers include Kennedy & Wilson, which

is famed for its quirky, eye-catching and delicious products that include Cat's Tongues (81% cocoa chocolate, full of natural bitterness, aroma and spice) and After Dinner Ducks (with flavours such as orange, mint and cinnamon).

And, of course, there is Haigh's, the oldest family-owned chocolate maker in Australia. Haigh's is notable as it makes the chocolate itself, utilising raw cocoa and sourcing UTZ-certified beans. Its high quality list of goodies include the Easter Bilby which was first introduced in 1993.

COLOMBIA

When it comes to cacao beans, they are usually placed into two types. The first group, general bulk beans, are the ones most commonly used across the globe for chocolate products. The other is a higher quality flavour bean that is known for its deep, rich flavour with an undercurrent of fruit.

Colombia is one of the countries which cultivates the latter kind of bean, and is also said to be the only country to consume them. The Colombian Premium Cacao is highly regarded and acclaimed for its fruity and floral properties.

Interestingly, Colombians prefer to consume chocolate in liquid form as opposed to conventional bar form. In particular, it's a popular favourite at breakfast, and for the maximum effect is made the old-fashioned way using a pan of heated water over a stove or fire. A solid bar of 100% ground cacao is added to the water along with cinnamon and panela (traditional brown sugar), resulting in a delightful chocolate drink.

There are some notable examples of Colombian chocolate products, including Jet bars which

are especially striking, thanks to the stickers which wrap around the bar, and can later be collected and placed in a special book. Compañía Nacional de Chocolates' Chocolate Cordillera is also renowned for its delicious taste, smell, soft consistency and high quality.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

A source of 'healthier' chocolate, the Dominican Republic is known for its connections with organic chocolate.

An example of the healthier kind of chocolate is Madre 70% Amaranth Dominican Republic Dark Chocolate. With its crunchy, nutty taste experience, this is one chocolate that's healthier than the average bar as amaranth includes all eight of the key amino acids.

The Dominican Republic has been making the jump from bulk-type cocoa to a more specialised, finer cocoa that contains elements of cloves, cinnamon and tropical fruits. The cocoa from the Dominican Republic is distinctive, with instant impact, and boasts elements of tannin, acidity and occasional spice and tobacco.

GHANA

Ghana is a region that's famed for its prodigious cocoa production. Its days of producing cocoa can be traced back to the middle of the 19th century. Over the years, the production has grown to the point where today it's estimated that around 22% of the globe's cocoa is grown in Ghana.

A turning point for the industry came in the 1990s, when Ghanians were given the opportunity to start their own cocoa-buying bodies. Up until then, the industry had been managed by the government-owned Ghana Cocoa Board.

Ghana is well known for its



Forastero beans, which are strong, rich in chocolate flavour and without bitterness.

One of the most famous companies in Ghana is Kuapa Kokoo. Founded in 1993, it owns almost half of the Divine Chocolate company, and its fruity, earthy and addictive chocolate is sold throughout locations in Europe and Australia.

HAWAII

Hawaii's range of cacao beans is diverse and unique.

Original Hawaiian Chocolate is a well-known company that began in 1997, and is devoted to making tasty, unique and home-grown chocolate. The business explains that there are a number of different factors that add up to the unique flavour of Hawaiian Cacao, which include the volcanic soil, the island showers and the tropical sun.

Hawaii plants a wide range of beans which possess different characteristics, from the older, vintage Criollo bean to the fruity goodness of the Trinitano bean. Whether fruity, nutty or tropical,



Hawaii's cacao industry ensures that there is something for all tastes.

IVORY COAST

The Ivory Coast is said to be the biggest supplier of unprocessed chocolate, most of which is of the bulk variety.

Today, the Ivory Coast produces 40% of the world's cocoa, and its formidable reputation in cocoa production can be traced back to the 1960s and 1970s. Big name chocolate producers such as Cadbury and Nestlé are said to have bought Ivorian cocoa futures and options via Euronext.

While regarded as a major player in cocoa exports, the Ivory Coast has also opened more home-based chocolatiers and boutique cafés which make its own artisanal Ivorian chocolate.

Ivorian chocolate is largely grown from the Forastero bean.

Some claim that it doesn't offer the most sophisticated taste, but it does provide simple, big, bold flavours with low acidity and bitterness.

MADAGASCAR

For that quintessential Madagascar chocolate, a notable example is Chocolat Madagascar.

This chocolate manufacturer is again known for its organic output. It uses pure natural Madagascar cocoa butter without the presence of chemical additions. As a result, the original cocoa flavours and aromas come through loud and clear.

The likes of Criollo and Trinitario are grown in the shade of the Sambirano organic rainforest, and its red fruit and citrus tastes and aromas can be found.

The Chocolat Madagascar dark chocolate bars are worthy of note. Its 68% Dark Chocolate and Cocoa Nibs Bar twins the fruity, single

origin dark chocolate with the crunchy properties of the cocoa nibs. Meanwhile, the 100% Dark Chocolate Bar is high in cocoa and bitter, but with a twisty zest of fruit notes.

MEXICO

The history books will show you that chocolate has been a key part of Mexican life for quite some time. In the days when the Mayans inhabited Central Mexico, chocolate was consumed in great quantities. This would be taken further still at the time of the Aztecs. Not only was chocolate enjoyed and consumed, but it was also regarded as a symbol of status. If you had chocolate, then your authority was considerably boosted – in fact, at the time of the Aztecs, cacao beans were used as a form of currency.

It's also worth pointing out that in the days of Pre-European

Mexico, chocolate was said to have a sour, intense flavour, but nevertheless, it was still enormously valued by the native people.

Chocolate is still much loved in Mexico today, and runs along the tried and tested lines from history by adding spices, cinnamon and sugar in the mix to produce a unique, rich flavour. It's usually accomplished by combining roasted and ground Cacao nibs, sugar and cinnamon – and in some cases, is augmented by other ingredients such as nutmeg and even chillies. The natural sweetness of the sugar gives the chocolate that sweet edge which was missing from the Pre-European Mexican chocolate.

PERU

Peru recently hit the headlines with respect to what was regarded as a rare discovery by two Americans, Dan Pearson and his stepson Brian Horsley: the Pure Nacional Cacao Tree.

This was to lead to the ingredient that was used to make a rare kind of chocolate, a rare cacao which was subsequently called the Fortunato. What made this discovery all the more special was that the Pure Nacional Trees could grow impressively sized pods, which formed a rare combination of 40% white beans and 60% purple beans, which resulted in a rich chocolate with less bitter properties.

Another great example of Peruvian-grown cacao is that of the white Criollo cacao beans. These are generally grown in the northern region of Peru, close to Piura. The interesting thing about the white Criollo is that it's only recently that their potential has been seen. Originally, these hadn't been recognised to such a great degree because of the abnormality of the pods.

Today, they are nicknamed God's Nectar (or Manjar de los Dioses). The pods contain white-coloured viscous pulp which are embedded with the seeds, which in turn contain the beans. These unfermented beans are quite something, boasting aromas of honey, nuts and citrus. On top of this, the level of cacao butter in these is around 50 or 60%. Because these are richer in fat, any chocolate produced using them is more fluid.

“ Historically, chocolate was regarded as a symbol of status in Mexico. If you had chocolate, then your authority was considerably boosted – in fact, at the time of the Aztecs, cacao beans were used as a form of currency ”

SWEET ILLUSION

*Looks like confectionery... Tastes like confectionery...
John Bensalhia reports on the rise of sugar-free confectionery*

The sweet shop. A multi-coloured paradise for youngsters who can choose their favourite sweets. Jelly beans, chocolates, lemon sherbets... the list goes on. As far as treats go, the sweet shop's an unbeatable proposition.

But as those kids accelerate into adulthood, health issues need to be considered. Too many sweets can equal tooth decay, high blood sugar levels and calories, which is why sugar-free confectionery makes for an attractive alternative.

But as a nation, have we reached into the crumpled paper bag of sugar-free sweets with gusto? Two years ago, German confectioner Sula reported

that in the UK, 5% of all sweets in this country contained no sugar. This was a relatively low figure in comparison to countries such as Germany (30%), Sweden (40%) and Spain (60%).

Nevertheless, in 2016, demand for sugar-free confectionery is strong. Sugar-free sweets make for good alternatives for people with diabetes, for example. This is an important consideration as recent reports have found that diabetes levels are on the rise. In March 2013, the charity Diabetes UK said that three million people had been diagnosed with diabetes in this country. The report also claimed that by 2025, it is estimated that the figure will increase to five million.

In April 2016, the World Health Organisation said that diabetes now affects nearly one in 11 adults. The organisation said that cases of diabetes had quadrupled from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014. 3.7 million deaths a year are connected with high blood sugar levels.

Lower levels

"People with diabetes or with diabetic friends and relatives are regular purchasers and the low carbohydrate content is attractive to followers of a low carb lifestyle," says Peter Simons, manager of sweetswithout.co.uk.

Peter adds that the lower calorie count of sugar-free confectionery is another benefit. "Enquiries about the calorie content of the sweets indicates that slimmers are attracted by the lower calorie

3.7
**MILLION DEATHS
A YEAR ARE
CONNECTED WITH
HIGH BLOOD SUGAR
LEVELS**

count in the sweets. I have found that there can be some confusion for the public as far as the terms 'sugar-free' and 'no added sugar' are concerned. This applies particularly to chocolate or sweets with a natural fruit content."

"I have seen a steady increase in turnover which has doubled in the last year," says Peter Simons. "Currently I am finding that my customers seem to have a preference for jellies and chews over boiled sweets. I have also noticed that there is quite a following for liquorice-based sweets and some customers tend to buy mainly the sugar-free chocolate."

"The sugar-free versions of well-known branded sweets have also sold well. I stock a number

“ There can be some confusion for the public as far as the terms ‘sugar-free’ and ‘no added sugar’ are concerned ”

“ As a nation, have we reached into the crumpled paper bag of sugar-free sweets with gusto? ”

of sweets from smaller artisan makers. These sweets have more unusual flavour combinations and I have noticed that some customers definitely like to try these interesting tastes as well as the familiar favourites.”

Chewing it over

An example of a well-known brand's sugar-free offering is the Werther's Original sugar-free butter candies. These retain their caramel flavour, but because they have less than nine calories, they are suitable for people with diabetes. Sugar-free chocolate is also a notable offering at Selfridges, including La Molina's Tuscan-made sugar-free dark chocolate, and boxed Pierre Marcolini sugar-free milk and dark chocolate bar packages.

The chief benefit of sugar-free confectionery is that it's healthier than ordinary sweets. One of the most obvious advantages is that you don't have to worry about your teeth. “Media attention given to the importance of reducing sugar in the diet has, I feel, encouraged people to look at the sugar-free alternatives,” says Peter. “The effect of sugar on teeth has also proved an incentive to move to the sugar-free varieties.”

For example, sugar-free chewing gum uses Xylitol, a natural sweetener normally made from birch bark, and one that's commonly derived from vegetables and fruits such as berries. Not only can Xylitol help to stop plaque bacteria sticking to teeth, it can also replace minerals in the tooth



enamel and thus, help to reverse tooth decay.

Another common ingredient of sugar-free confectionery is Maltitol, a sugar alcohol that acts as a sugar substitute. Again, this ingredient helps to combat tooth decay, and because it's metabolised at a slower rate than sugar, means that sugar-free confectionery is suitable for diabetic people.

However, as with other sugar-free products, this kind of confectionery comes with a higher price tag. This is for a number of reasons. For example, the extra processing required to convert the ingredients from regular carbohydrates into the right sugar-free element. It's also worth noting that energy costs will be higher in the making of sugar-free sweets



as the melting temperature of the ingredients is higher than sugar.

“Sugar-free sweets tend to be more expensive as the sweeteners themselves are more expensive and may be more expensive to work with,” says Peter. “For instance, Isomalt requires a higher temperature to reach the stage required to make boiled sweets.”

But despite the cost, sugar-free confectionery looks set to have a healthy future, whether as a present or a tasty treat. Peter concludes: “I feel that there will continue to be a popular demand for sweet treats but the increasing emphasis on the need to reduce sugar consumption can only serve to encourage growth in the sugar-free confectionery market.”





THE FLAVOUR EDIT

Looking for the next big thing to take your chocolate sales up a gear? Move over salted caramel, the future's coming, says Anna Blewett

When food and drink analyst Richard Caines spoke of flat volume sales in chocolate confectionery in April's 'state of the market' report from Mintel, he identified innovation as the paddle with which the sector can steer itself away from troubled water. Certainly 'stagnating chocolate markets' were identified as a challenge by chocolate giant Lindt when posting its half-year results in July. Fortunately, reinvention and transformation are familiar factors in this dynamic sector; as an ingredient it props up other categories – apparently chocolate is the fastest growing flavour within new ice cream innovation,

for example, accounting for 22% of all new launches – and when it comes to confectionery this old dog has a few new tricks up its sleeve.

1 Micro focus on seasonal

"We're in the lucky position that we set trends, rather than following them," says chocolatier Paul A Young. "Buyers from M&S and Waitrose come to shops like ours to get inspiration for their collections – it means I have to change what I do as others start doing it but that's okay. We've just finished work on a black garlic caramel. It's unlikely to go mainstream but you never know." So where else is the avant-garde of chocolate focusing

its attention right now? "We're very much about seasonality at the moment," says Paul, "so going into autumn we're looking at those flavours that really capture that feeling of the season. Cobnuts, walnuts, sloes, damsons... they're familiar, of course, but we try to approach them in a new way to really get to the heart of those tastes that sum up the British seasons."

2 Twisted dairy

Mast, the small 'bean to bar' maker with a workshop-come-outlet in trendy Shoreditch, is just one producer pushing the envelope with the dairy element of its products with its Goat Milk Chocolate and Sheep Milk Chocolate. Visitors to New York's Fancy Food Show – the US's biggest speciality trade event – this summer would have spotted chocolate-covered Brown Butter Toffee from Ehchocolatier in Massachusetts made, as the name suggests, with a deeply-browned butter to add dark and nutty tones. A Brown Butter Truffle also sells well at Toronto's Soma Chocolates, recently named within the National Geographic's top 10 shops.

3 Local pairings

Sticking with the US, "bean-to-bar chocolate-making is still a

serious trend," says Sara Feinberg, a chocolate judge at this year's prestigious Sofis (Specialty Food Association Awards) and director of online sales at California's Market Hall Foods, "as is featuring the flavours local to a specific regions' beans." This year Åkesson's, a British-registered company with cocoa estates in Madagascar, Brazil and Indonesia, has cleared up at award ceremonies with its 75% Trinitario Cocoa & "Wild" Voatsiperifery Pepper and 75% Trinitario Cocoa & Black Pepper, combining the harvests of co-existing plants in one harmonious blend. Sara Jayne Stanes, chair of Britain's Academy of Chocolate, chief executive of the Royal Academy of Culinary Arts and self-confessed purist, approves. "I believe the flavours of chocolate should be allowed to speak for themselves and any additions should be a bit like seasoning, able to draw out the natural character of the bean."

4 Yep, more superfoods

Okay, so we know chia, maca, boabab et al are gathering attention in 'functional' foods but are they really good enough in taste terms to become mainstream? "You can have a healthy product with an amazing taste," says Tatiana Zhelezko, director of Petit Apres, which blends chia, matcha or

“ In 2005, Paul A Young won a gold medal for a filled chocolate bar branded “ridiculously weird” by detractors. That bonkers filling was, of course, salted caramel ”



other 'superfoods' with white chocolate and layers them between fine dark or milk chocolate into 'stuccos'. "You don't have to trade one off to have the other. I did market research before starting out and all the indications are the British market is becoming more interested in health."

5 Snack mash-ups

As the 'snackability' of chocolate means classic bars evolve into new and smaller formats (barks, bites, 'stuccos' etc) flavour innovators are taking a more literal approach. Visitors to NYC's Summer Fancy Food Show in June this year were treated to a bar of kalamata olive with salted marcona almonds and crystals of coriander from the Moonstruck Chocolate Company in Oregon, while on British shores Duke of Delhi has extended its range of bombay mix chocolate bars (that's 20% crunchy, savoury snack in each bar) to include buttons. With the chocolate-covered potato crisps by Lays, the American division of Walkers, listed as 'unavailable' on Amazon, a yawning gap in the market beckons...

6 A little heat

Bombay mix chocolate bars are the tip of a very spicy iceberg, and a natural evolution of chilli-spiked confectionery. "Chilli chocolate has become passé," says Paul A Young, "the customers that come to us expect innovation, but spices are huge at the moment and are going to get bigger." A scheduled collaboration with Atul Kochhar looks set to bring some exciting

“ Big trends don't die, they evolve ”

products – less about searing heat, more complex warmth – to the market. "When I made chocolate, my chilli chocolate just had a tiny amount of chilli so that the warmth took the wonderful flavours of the bean onto the back of the tongue to light up the mouth and keep the flavour of the chocolate going." Tragically, London's Mighty Fine Chocolate appears to have axed its Curry & Chips bar so, again, if you're looking for an opening...

7 Salted caramel 2.0

Big trends don't die, they evolve. "Salted caramel is a classic example," says Albert Chau, co-founder of Fifth Dimension Chocolates. "For a number of years people have been asked for salted caramels but now customers want more. What we see is two trends. One is people experimenting with specialised salted caramels, so using Himalayan pink salt or Hawaiian black salt. Another trend is using an ingredient that's still salty but not normally associated with chocolate, so for example miso. We do a soy caramel; you still get the salty character but it brings an umami taste." Japan's ES Koyama scooped gongs at the International Chocolate awards for bars flavoured with black soybean flour, sake-pickled radish and dried bean curd.

8 Yuzu

And the Japanese influences don't stop there. "William Curley, like

a number of very fine chocolate manufacturers today, is using Japanese ingredients like black vinegar or yuzu," says Sara Jayne Stanes, "for their finely-balanced acidic flavours. Essential to chocolate is its fruit flavours, so you find a lot of those acids naturally present. If finely balanced, those ingredients can really light up the chocolate in your mouth." The tart citrus fruit, most widely associated with Japan and Korea, is winning more fans. "Yuzu's coming," agrees Albert Chau. "In the last 12 months we've seen a lot of people using it." Already well established among Japanese makers, yuzu popped up in The Chocolate Society's Yuzu Basil Bob Bon, which won gold at April's British round of the International Chocolate Awards.

9 The downright odd

Never discount the weird. When the Academy of Chocolate launched its awards in 2005, Paul A Young won a gold medal for a filled chocolate bar branded "ridiculously weird" by detractors. That bonkers filling was, of course, the aforementioned salted caramel, and 11 years on it remains Paul's bestseller. If today's odd is tomorrow's sure thing, Austrian maker Zotter is sitting on a gold mine. Its Bacon Bits – a chocolate-covered bar of nougat studded with crumbs of pork crackling – won a bronze medal in the milk chocolate bar category of this year's Academy of Chocolate awards. Elsewhere in

the same range of 'hand-scooped' bars, flavours include Cheese, Walnut & Grapes, Basmati Rice with Saffron, Asparagus and even Raspberry Blood (with a few drops of blood from the brand's own petting zoo).

10 Naked

The debate may rage about the success or failure of ingredients added to chocolate, but it's those flavours within the bean that are a dead cert when it comes to predicting the direction of the market in the next few years. "I believe chocolate should be left to speak for itself," says Sara Jayne Stanes. "It's a long journey from pod to palate and the various stages from the tree to the bar take a lot of manufacturers' time, effort and skill." She's pleased to note that a new generation of chocolate manufacturers are also taking a purist approach. "I think we're probably going back to basics a bit; after all, the cocoa bean is a fruit with hundreds of different flavour compounds and aromas." And when it comes to craft products with a strong focus on single estate, it's the US market that leads the way. "It's very exciting to see how many small manufacturers in America have grabbed the initiative and gone for it. I don't think we look to America for innovation – in terms of filled chocolate I think we're ahead – but I just know the inside intelligence on American manufacturers at the moment. They have galloped on a million miles in terms of small 'bean to bar' producers."



CONFECTIONERY WITH CONSCIENCE

Lucy Talbot navigates ethical labels on chocolate

The 21st century, so far, has seen consumers shaping the food industry more than ever, with heightened awareness of health concerns and the social and ecological impact of the food they buy. Trends in the past few years alone such as ‘clean eating’ and the paleo diet, not to mention the surge in popularity for veganism, have looked to anthropology and geography to reorganise peoples’ daily diets. This has had a knock-on effect in both mainstream food retail and specialist artisan products; arguably more so in the latter category. Keeping ingredients ‘natural’ is now very attractive to consumers, making treats such as chocolate “#GuiltFree”, a hashtag trending on Instagram among food bloggers and aspiring chefs.

Organic food connotes superior quality, ‘clean’ food that is produced sustainably, positively impacting the environment,

whereas the Fairtrade label seems to focus primarily on countries with poorer workers’ rights, situated in the ‘bean belt’ between the tropics, where goods which are exotic for Western European consumers, such as cocoa and coffee, are produced.

If we take the organic movement to promote the environment near and far, and the Fairtrade cause to target global social equality, then we can see that the trend of ‘consumers turned producers’ in artisanal products such as chocolate may come directly from consumers’ motivation to combat unsustainable and harmful food production. Mintel’s April 2016 Chocolate Confectionery Report informs us that, “the majority of users think it is fine to enjoy chocolate every day as part of a balanced diet. The strong emotional ties consumers have with chocolate have also protected it against heightened concerns

over sugar”. Chocolate has innovated to remain in our diets despite the current movements for clean eating, with cacao or cocoa nibs deemed perfect ingredients in superfood smoothies, ‘raw’ chocolate baking rising in popularity, and more ‘ethical’ labels than ever on high-end chocolate bars.

Booja Booja’s Fairtrade, organic and vegan truffles, stocked primarily in health food shops, for example, won the Bronze award this year in the Academy of Chocolate’s category for Salted Caramel, whilst absolutely qualifying for a #GuiltFree hashtag, and gratifying the consumer with regards to the environment and social impact. In fact, Akesson’s Organic won Bronze, Silver and Gold in the category of Dark Bean to Bar under 80%, among many other categories. ‘Ethical’ chocolate is adjudicated by

blind tasting alongside all other chocolate entries in the Academy of Chocolate awards, and an overwhelming amount of the high-scoring chocolate brands contain the word ‘Organic’ in their very name, such as Akesson’s. The list of brands receiving Academy of Chocolate awards grows year upon year, with well established brands such as Rococo visible from the Academy’s inception in 2005. Smaller artisan producers retailing in independent shops and markets are featuring increasingly.

Chocolate consumers could be forgiven for thinking that speciality labels such as Fairtrade and organic are clear-cut. Both require certification by a body (Fairtrade Foundation/Rainforest Alliance/Soil Association) which means that, although labelling a product ensures adherence to the bodies’ standards, it must be taken into account that these standards cannot promise totally cruelty-free chocolate, given the rates of child labour, deforestation and other such problems in cacao growing regions. In fact, many brands free from certification might still employ more ethical practices than official Fairtrade or organic products. As for the organic label, a farm or plantation must employ organic practices for a number of years before qualifying, and many plantations are built upon deforested plots. Even if these farms become technically organic, there is still some doubt as to whether they are ‘ethical’.

Andy Charman, Buyer at Bayley & Sage, a group of four fine food stores operating across South West London, praises the clear message of human interest in the Fairtrade label from the consumer’s point of view: “Customers know exactly what the Fairtrade label means when they see it on the product”. For him, customers’ awareness of food providence and production works in independent food retailers’ favour, as it empowers them to discuss the retailer’s range and find the right product for them, much like with wine. “Customers trust and expect us to source products of high quality, with an ethical providence in a broader sense. Good quality, artisanal and high-end chocolate brands will use superior cacao to start with, for example from small, single estates.”

Andy distinguishes that keywords like ‘Fairtrade’ and ‘organic’ have appeal, especially when the customer wants the

“ There may still be holes in the standards of ‘ethical chocolate’, but consumer pressure has already reshaped the industry hugely in the last 16 years alone ”

satisfaction of certification, but a valuable product will always have a sense of novelty and “something special”. “What we look for, beyond a great chocolate product, is innovation. If the brand can also have the Fairtrade label then that is a commercial bonus.” Bayley & Sage want to offer customers something that they wouldn’t find elsewhere, so although only part of their chocolate range carries official ethical certification, all of it is artisanal, with plenty of information about the origin of the cacao through to the packaged bar on the shelf. Similarly, Andy stipulates that the price point of good chocolate, whether Fairtrade, organic, or neither, will always be higher than the mainstream competition. Consumers browsing chocolate in an independent food retailer will expect a higher-end (and therefore higher priced) chocolate product than could be found in a supermarket.

Phrases invoking a certain sense of quality of providence that do not require certification, such as the current vogue for ‘Bean to Bar’ chocolate, can certainly more nebulous for consumers and

retailers alike, especially when evaluating ethics. The media has been quick to paint Bean to Bar chocolate as synonymous with high quality, ethically made confectionery. For Andy of Bayley & Sage, however, a product labelled ‘Bean to Bar’ has no superior marketing pull over any other artisan or ethical chocolate product: “I wouldn’t expect a customer to know what Bean to Bar means, just as I wouldn’t assume that Single Origin or Single Estate chocolate is an obvious label for the consumer. It may be fairly clear what the phrase suggests but their significance isn’t anywhere near as clear as Fairtrade”.

Perhaps it is the sense of unity in a movement that draws consumers to ethical products with official certification. The obvious benefit across the industry will be the normalisation of ethically better chocolate products. There may still be holes in the standards of ‘ethical chocolate’, but consumer pressure has already reshaped the industry hugely in the last 16 years alone. Here’s to the rest of this century closing the ethical gap once and for all.

A POTTED HISTORY OF FAIRTRADE CHOCOLATE

The Fairtrade movement came into public consciousness with the turn of this century, notably through a Peabody Award winning documentary aired by the BBC in 2000, *Slavery: A Global Investigation*, which exposed cacao production in the Côte d’Ivoire.

2000 was also the year in which the Co-op released their first Fairtrade products, the chocolate bars that formed the basis of their current own-brand chocolate range which is 100% Fairtrade and first brought this certification to the mainstream market.

Following this, the Harkin-Engel Protocol of 2001 promised to end the use of child labour and the practice of child trafficking in the chocolate industry. To this day, only 5 out of 6 of the protocols have been addressed worldwide, with none of them having been resolved for good.

The Academy of Chocolate was founded in 2005, with the aim to “encourage the transparent sourcing of cocoa beans from the plantations and their production in socially fair and environmentally undamaging conditions”, among others.

Mars and Cadbury famously joined the Fairtrade movement in 2008, offering Fairtrade products, following which they joined the Rainforest Alliance in 2009.

In 2010, dissatisfied with the lack of results coming from this now mainstream ethical cause, the same filmmakers behind *Slavery: A Global Investigation* made a follow-up documentary *The Dark Side of Chocolate*, which impressed stronger activism and action by consumers upon its viewers.

Many Fairtrade groups and movements have focused on ethical problems of child trafficking and labour in West African cacao production. The Fairtrade certification, as it stands today, has not eradicated these issues and even the highest scoring chocolate on various ethical standards indexes* may still have an ethically ambiguous history.

*Ethical Consumer: Plamil Fairtrade Organic Vegan chocolate – 18/20

The Ethical Company.org: Plamil – 88%; The Organic Seed & Bean Co – 100%; Dairy Milk 54%

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THE POWER OF NOSTALGIA

Our imagination is stuck in the familiar when it comes to treats, says Lucy Talbot

I am, unfortunately, of the generation whose happy memories of Saturday morning sweetie shopping have been left tainted by the price inflation of Freddo Frogs rising from 10p to 20p. Perhaps I am particularly stung because Freddo was born in the same year as me. For some, this price increase over the past 22 years may have been completely unnewsworthy, if not unremarkable. Yet, when I look back to being a 6-year-old in the penny sweets corner of the local Post Office, I can always picture a little paper bag where my 10p Freddo would mingle with laces, chews and gummy bottles, and I think bitterly about the 100% inflation rate on chocolate frogs

preventing current 6-year-olds from spending their pocket money picking and mixing and matching as whimsically as I did. Despite this early heartbreak, I still sometimes buy a Freddo Frog as a little treat. I don't even like chocolate that much. It is a sense of nostalgia, rather than a love of the fits-in-your-palm, frog-shaped treat, that entices me to go back to it.

I'm not alone in this drive backwards towards comforting icons of childhood. Heston Blumenthal's Fat Duck has decided to take advantage of diners' reminiscence for a childlike sense of anticipation in its recent rebrand, headlined 'Like a Kid in a Sweet Shop' by marketing agency The Neighbourhood. During the two-month wait between booking

and dining, guests receive various surprises and menu clues through a link to a website where they see animated children, little avatars of their own selves, look through the windows of an old-fashioned independent sweet shop. The viewers get hints of what might be on the menu through these glimpses of opulent window displays. Blumenthal's franchise has always been about joy and discovery, about the innovative, with a known anchor (snail porridge sounding less alien than snail and oat hash) keeping the customers just close enough to their comfort zone. His new tasting menu is largely formed to resemble sweet shop offerings, breakfast cereals and other objects marking childhood. Blumenthal

created the 'smell of a sweet shop'; diners receive a bag of sweets at the end of the meal containing this scent alongside caramels in edible wrappers, aerated chocolate and an edible set of playing cards.

Although a rather more lavish expression of nostalgia than my rare Freddo purchases, Heston's dessert responds to the same need for treats to represent childhood comfort and "trigger reward mechanisms", as he explains in his 'Like a Kid in a Sweet Shop' case study. A general case study about treat habits for UK consumers might be the tradition of chocolate Easter eggs. The Easter Egg business is worth £220 million, according to figures from this year; this is an area where the occasion of the confectionery is entirely



to do with nostalgia, yet the design has evolved to incorporate products that can fit the moulds of designer, high-end, more sophisticated, speciality et al. Even those who may take their Easter egg handmade, vegan, maybe even in a non-ovoid shape (!) can't deny that it excites them precisely because they remember waking up as a child on Easter morning to chocolate eggs. Heston's design, like our conditioned consumption of chocolate eggs, is based on this nostalgia for a feeling, or occasion, rather than always containing the particular flavours of childhood.

Canesmith & Co's slogan, "We make gourmet sweets for grown-ups", justifies adult consumption of confectionery with the ironic inclusion of children's vocabulary; "grown-ups" reveals the semantic link that sweet treats will always have with childhood. Nominated for Best New British Product at the Great British Food Awards 2016, Canesmith offers quirky new flavours of old-school sweets such as caramels and sherbet dippers in retro-style packaging. Beer and peanut caramels, for example, appeal in their exclusivity to adult consumers; it feels a bit daring to mix alcohol with confectionery in a new way rather than sticking to traditional liqueur chocolates. The

branding also set them apart as more current than old-fashioned Walnut Whips, which arguably haven't been innovated to suit tastes and trends.

Whole Foods stocks an array of artisan and ingredient-focused sweets and chocolates whose names and packaging evoke the confectionery that generations have known at least through the last century: pear drops, liquorice wheels, sherbet lemons, milk and cola bottles. Even if this selection were to leave a shopper cold in terms of their own personal experience and memories, the classic sweets still stand the test of time and are visible on high profile shelves. The reinvention of penny sweets from the Post Office as high-end artisan sweets capitalising on this olde worlde marketing perspective opens up questions about price point: why pay 10 times more for a bag of sherbet lemons just because they are made with 100% real lemon juice from Sicily? The fact is that modern confectionery brands can enter the market at this price point because consumers are paying simultaneously for trust in classic flavours remodelled to suit modern tastes and top quality ingredients that have become available and better known in recent years.

Paul Weaver, head chef at Noble Rot Bar & Restaurant in Bloomsbury, London, whose menu is comprised of high-quality ingredients gracefully dressed and simply plated, argues, "A classic will always be a classic". He gives the example of ingredient innovation ('elevation' is the buzzword) in dining, "Nowadays, when you read 'rhubarb and custard' on a menu, it could be stewed fruit and custard or it could arrive as something frozen, poached, pureed or baked, or sprinkled with popping candy." The essence of such a dish is rooted in tradition, yet its execution is what can set it apart as modern and fancy. According to Paul's logic, this is exactly why we are buying high-end versions of penny sweets rather than cheaper alternatives that hold less of a sense of being "a classic". We are seeking traditional food that can stay relevant and exciting.

There are, of course, plenty of confectioners who are doing exceedingly well purveying totally novel or unexpected products, especially those who manage to introduce British tastebuds to exotic flavours. The Academy of Chocolate's 2016 awards for flavoured bars included ingredients such as Tonka bean,

fir tree and 'Wild Voatsiperifery Pepper'. Pump Street Bakery have also been alchemising with their award-winning single origin chocolate bars, adding crumbs from their bakery in Orford, Suffolk (sourdough, dark rye). However these trends don't always remain exciting; the last few years have seen salted caramel go from a luxury ingredient in the UK sweets market to a commonplace addition to baking and confectionery that now barely registers as inventive. The confectioners who find these exciting and new combinations are, therefore, potentially on to winners which could become classics in their own time, such as the beer and peanut caramels satisfying our awakened 21st-century umami tastebuds. Take the Great British Bake-Off as the ultimate authority on beloved sugary snacks: it has the power to rock the nation with innovation in sweet treats, yet last year's winner Nadiya Hussein won with an immaculate three-tier lemon drizzle cake. If this isn't a Freddo Frog-esque celebration of a familiar classic that can be timeless perfection, then I don't know what is.





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THE CONFECTIONERY PHENOMENON

Tony Alfano, managing director of Best Imports, the UK importer for Jelly Belly since 1986, talks us through the sensation that is BeanBoozled

If your confectionery selection is in need of a boost, then BeanBoozled is the sweet treat for you. It's the joke that goes on and on – nobody seems to tire of it. In fact, in 2015 we nearly had to set up a waiting list because the demand was staggering. People just cannot get enough! This innovative product pushes the boundaries of taste and people find that very exciting; they're an astonishing demonstration of the immense skill and dedication of the Jelly Belly team.

The story of BeanBoozled began when The Jelly Belly Candy Company were asked to produce a range of weird-flavoured beans for Warner Brothers, to be branded as Harry Potter's Bertie Bott's Every Flavour Beans. This was an incredible success around the world, except for in Britain – possibly because JK Rowling didn't want to be stopped on the street by mothers asking why she was feeding their child dog

food-flavoured sweets! Today, Jelly Belly Candy Co continues to manufacture Bertie Bott's beans worldwide including the UK. Herman Rowland Sr, chairman of The Jelly Belly Candy Company, became taken with the idea of wild-flavoured jelly beans and his imagination took flight. He wanted to take this to the next level, so conceived the notion of Jelly Belly candy roulette which became BeanBoozled nearly seven years ago. It grew steadily in popularity until a couple of years ago, when there was an explosion in sales and it became a very important brand in its own right.

The success of BeanBoozled is largely due to the staggering proliferation of home generated YouTube videos. People of all ages want to make a video for YouTube, but how do they do it? They can't make their cat do something funny on cue or fall into a ditch in a funny way at the perfect moment. However, if you can get someone to do the BeanBoozled challenge

you'll get the reaction you want. That's the secret of the 1.5 million BeanBoozled videos online. It's a gift, an extra level of fun they can share with their friends and family.

To cater for the incredible demand, there are now four editions of BeanBoozled – the fourth edition is a jumbo box comprising 20 flavours (10 lookalikes) including Stinky Socks/Tutti-Fruitti, Lawn Clippings/Lime and Toothpaste/Berry Blue. Two new pairings are introduced Spoilt Milk/Coconut and Dead Fish Strawberry & Banana Smoothie.

It's a phenomenon; despite being so disgusting, people keep going back. It appeals to children of all ages – anyone who has a sense of fun. There's no doubt that 10 year olds who can set up their own video camera love it in particular! There is a buy-to-keep 100g BeanBoozled spinner game as well as a mystery dispenser – almost a double BeanBoozle as

there's no way to know what you're going to get! These can be topped up with our 45g boxes or 54g bags.

One of the obvious and perhaps inevitable consequences of the BeanBoozled phenomenon is that the Jelly Belly brand recognition has grown exponentially. After all, for every bad BeanBoozled taste there is a delicious look alike original gourmet jelly bean – and in fact, there are another 100 luscious flavours to choose from. Launching in time for the festive season is the new range of gable box packaging beautifully embossed in gold, for the ever popular 200g range. The line-up includes the top Jelly Belly sellers: Cocktail Classic, Fruit Mix, 50 Flavours, Sours and the Jewel Mix. It is a stunningly class act! Jelly Belly jelly beans are also fast gaining recognition as a free-from confectionery. Jelly Belly are suitable for vegetarian, OU Kosher and contain no wheat, gluten, dairy, nuts, gelatine, dairy and of course fat.

“ The consumer's enthusiasm for new flavours from The Jelly Belly Candy Company just does not dim! ”

HANDMADE WITH LOVE

Founders of Barú, Gunther D'Hondt and Maarten Krikken, introduce their trend-led brand

At Barú, we like to describe ourselves as contemporary confectioners – pushing the boundaries with product innovation and packaging style. As well as our signature marshmallows, our range also includes swirly chocolate drink powders, gift packs and cute Chocolate Hippos.

Our Barú range is available to the speciality food trade through a network of distributors including Cotswold Fayre, The Cress Co., The Bay Tree, Springvale and HF Chocolates.

We have gone 'naked' and launched a new collection of 'uncoated' marshmallows. The range comprises both boxed and bar variants to perfectly

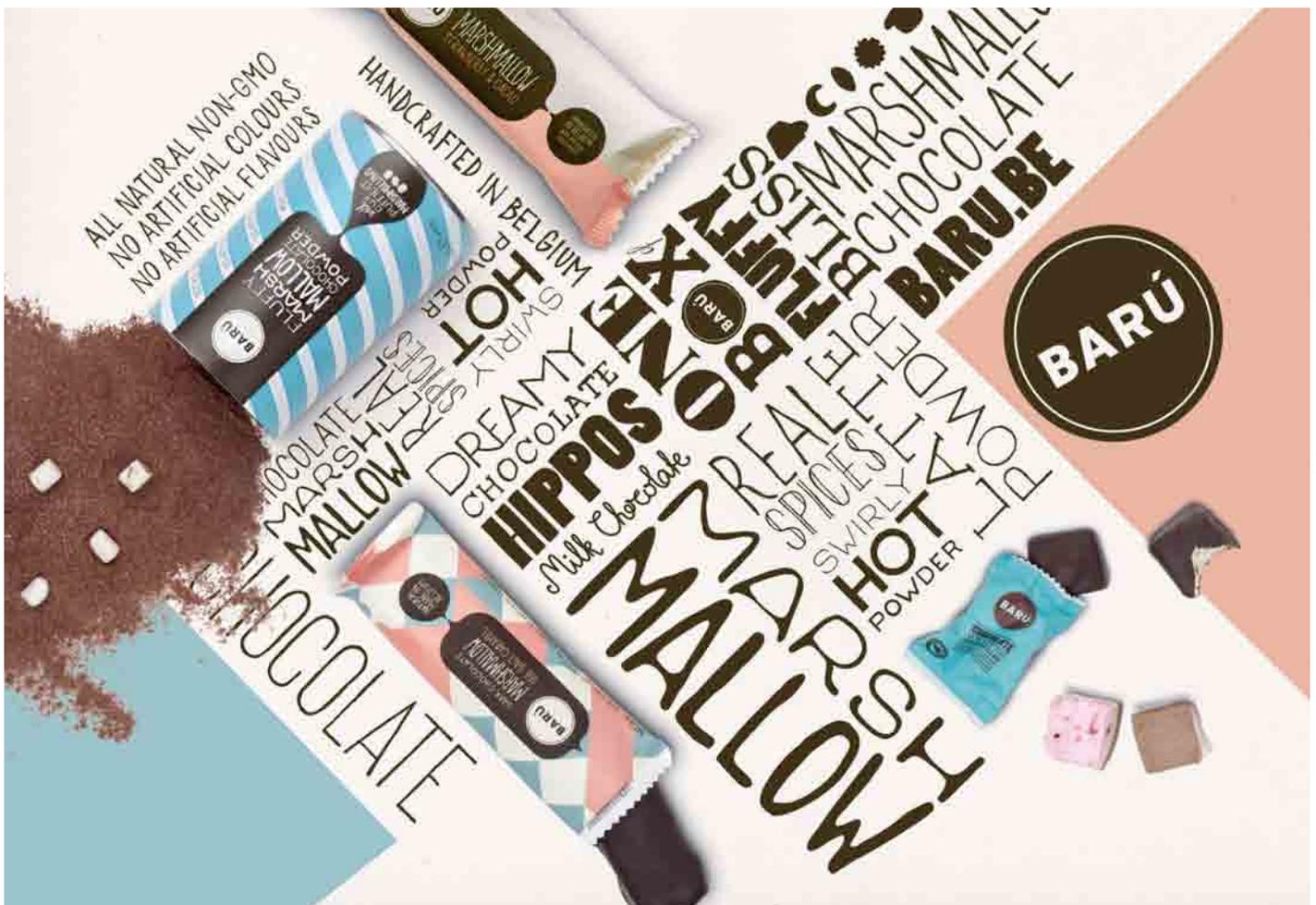
complement Barú's current range of chocolate coated marshmallows. The new 'non-chocolate' collection of Vanilla Bean, Toasted Coconut, Sea Salt Caramel, Blueberry & Basil, Strawberry & Cacao and Raspberry & Mint contain natural ingredients such as dried raspberry, strawberry, blueberry and basil. Key ingredients are also prepared in-house with both the Sea Salt Caramel and Toasted Coconut prepared in small batches to ensure a consistent, high quality finish. The marshmallows, which are referred to as 'clouds' due to their soft texture and light eat, are hand-crafted in Belgium and made to a carefully developed recipe. Each mallow is handcrafted and cut.

The new uncoated range has allowed us to introduce flavours that are especially on trend at the moment such as salted caramel. It has also allowed us to be somewhat retro as our Strawberry & Cacao marshmallow is inspired by childhood memories of layered 'Neapolitan' ice-cream. To ensure equal layers, this hand-crafted marshmallow is a labour of love as it is poured three times before the

final marshmallow is cut by hand into generous pieces.

Our packaging is innovative and inviting, and helps create impactful displays in store, at any time of the year. We also have a diverse product offer of both uncoated, hand-crafted marshmallows as well as chocolate coated options which are generously enrobed in Belgian chocolate.

We never rest on our laurels and are constantly working on new products. We are very much committed to establishing and supporting the Barú brand here in the UK and of course we are already working on product innovation! As we sell internationally, we can be working on things for up to 18 months before they officially launch. We launch new products each and every year – so watch this space!



A strong confectionery display should entice, excite and offer something beyond what customers will see in the convenience stores and supermarkets. Hider Foods offers a wide and comprehensive range of top-flight products which satisfies on all fronts.

"The range we stock is very different," confirms managing director Duncan Hider. "We have our own production facility on-site, so we can make bespoke products. Being large-scale importers of fruit and nuts, we can turn those into confectionery with the addition of chocolate. If the demand is for dried bananas covered in yogurt, we can provide that item. Dependent on the volume, we can also white label brand for the customer."

Hider's own-brand sweets are sold under The Hider Sweet Shop brand, and dedicated stands are available for customers who would like to stock a larger range of these products. The own-brand line also includes nuts and dried fruits which are available in snack pots with peel-able lids, and Bear, an attractively-packaged line of 100% pure fruit confections which have been baked into the shapes of bears' paw prints.

Selling well for Hider right now is a range called Candy Kittens, which offers more adult-oriented versions of much-loved confections, and also popular at present are retro sweets of various types. "There's definitely a taste for nostalgia just now," Duncan says. "It's always there, but it's a little stronger now. Some of the old-fashioned sweets like sherbet pips, cola cubes and pear drops seem to be eternally popular, but sometimes you get spikes for them, too. In times of

HIDER: OFFERING QUALITY AND CHOICE

Customers can choose from a huge array of top-quality confectionery from Hider, the Fine Food Family

recession, when people think in terms of comfort foods and hark back to easier and more innocent times, retro products come into their own. This side of the business is increasingly strong and I don't see it disappearing." Parents, he says, are very much instrumental in sustained interest in older formats, being always keen to share their own favourites with a younger generation of consumers. Catering for this demand, Hider offers the familiar confections liquorice all-sorts, jelly babies, wine gums, fruit pastilles and also, delightfully-designed tins of Simpkins travel sweets.

Hider offers a huge range of turkish delight. "We are exclusive importers of the Hazer Baba brand," Duncan says, "who are producers of the best quality turkish delight." Turkish delight is a great and much misunderstood product, Duncan says. "It has two or three ingredients; it's kosher,



Halal, and suitable for vegetarians and vegans." This may surprise those people who have dismissed it as a product that is packed with animal

gelatin. "Good turkish delight," Duncan explains, "is thickened with corn starch, not gelatin. Also, it's important to realise that this is a product that is evolving. A lot of people remember turkish delight as a cloying confection flavoured with rose water, but there is a myriad of flavours and textures available now. Good quality 'lokum', as the Turks call it, is unflavoured, and may contain pistachio or cashew. It really is a wonderful sweetmeat."

Also seeing strong signs of growth, Duncan says, "is the new generation of products for the health-conscious" There is, he says, a whole sector of products aimed at people who prefer something other than sugar-based confections." Creeping onto the market now are some more natural products, "lots of free-from ranges, dairy-free chocolate, and products which use sugar alternatives." Trending for the last couple of years, he says, are gourmet marshmallows. "These have seen huge growth and are now available in every conceivable flavour." The company has recently formed an association with Monty Bojangles, "who produce a fantastic range of French-made, cocoa-dusted truffles in wonderful packaging." Such products have a lot of appeal for adults, but the tastes of children are comprehensively catered for by Hider, which carries everything from jelly beans from Jelly Bean Factory to liquorice laces."

Great care is taken when making additions to the Hider confectionery range. "It's all about offering a wide range of products," Duncan



says. "If someone comes to us with a really good range of traditional sweets, we probably wouldn't be looking at it just now as we think we are covered in that area. However, if someone approaches us with a product that is genuinely innovative, or a similar range of products that is packaged in a really clever way, we may give it a go. We will all sit down and look at it, and try and put ourselves in the position of the consumer. We ask ourselves if this is a product that will sit well in the market, and in our range, too."

Hider, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2015, is keen to use its wealth of experience to help retailers set up successful confectionery counters. "If someone tells us they have a 10,000 sq ft store and want a large confectionery section that is going to appeal to the octogenarian down to five year old children, we can come up with a selection for them. We might, for instance, include Beechs Fine Chocolates, a range of high quality turkish delight and American type candy. All this will provide the retailer with a necessary point of difference from the supermarkets." Retailers with smaller space for confectionery should include a selection of impulse buys for the point of sale area, a range of chocolate, and an offering of retro-type confections. It's also worth noting at this time of year, Duncan adds, that Hider also offers a full catalogue of solutions for Christmas confectionery stocking.





PAST MEETS PRESENT

Alan White, director of Guilbert's Chocolates, tells the historical brand's unique story

Guilbert's Chocolates was founded in 1910 in Bristol and we have been hand-making our chocolates in the centre of the bustling city ever since. Our history is what makes us interesting, as even in the 21st century, we continue to adhere

to the traditional recipes and methods that were prevalent in the 20th century.

Our techniques are what makes Guilbert's stand out from all the rest; with no machinery in sight we hand-dip our centres in a heated bowl of melted couverture.

In a century where everything is churned out in factories and everything is identical, handmade is something that consumers actively seek out, and that is what Guilbert's stand for. If we were to alter our methods we would lose our USP that customers look for and we would lose our individuality.

At Guilberts we cater to everybody. Our range includes typical Victorian flavourings such as the Rose and Violet Creams that seem to be as popular now as they were back when Guilbert's started out over 100 years ago, to the more experimental Blackberry Absinthe Truffles that are a newer creation. We continue to create new and exciting flavours to keep up with the changing tastes and demands of a modern society, whilst also staying true to our roots maintaining the flavours that never seem to decrease in popularity.

History is vital to Guilbert's, as our company is rooted in the history of Bristol's chocolate trade and to us it is important that we uphold that and therefore provenance is a key ingredient to ensuring that our company continues to thrive. To honour

this importance we recreate iconic Bristolian places of historical interest which allows us to highlight our love of history as a company along with our love of the historical possibilities of Bristol as a city.

Hopefully the future of Guilbert's is to continue to thrive within a city that is always looking to improve and try new things. We hope to continue to create new and exciting flavours that will continue to pull in new customers, whilst also catering to those tried and tested flavours that people have grown to love. Most importantly, hopefully in the future of Guilbert's we will still be looking into and recreating the past as that is where our true success lies.



Established in Bristol in 1910

We have been hand making chocolates for over 100 years.

Guilberts branded chocolates are available for retailers nationwide.

We supply some of the top names under their brands, so although you may not be familiar with the Guilberts name or brand, you could quite possibly be familiar with our product.



Contact sales@guilbertschocolates.co.uk or call 0117 9268102

US FAVOURITES

Feed the nation's hunger for American confectionery with Empire Bespoke Foods

The trend for American food – and confectionery in particular – is showing no signs of waning, so now is the perfect opportunity to differentiate your range by looking outside of the UK with Empire Bespoke Foods'

iconic American confectionery brands. For the enjoyment of young and old alike, their eye-catching range of best-selling candy from across the pond provides inspirational gifting, plus when it comes to impulse-buying for Halloween they're irresistible.

Since it began importing in 1998, Empire Bespoke Foods has swelled the consumer appetite for such household names as Marshmallow Fluff, Mike & Ike, Tabasco Chocolate and Flipz chocolate-coated pretzels (recently launched in a 56g single-portion treat bag) and is a valuable ally for independent retailers wanting to stand out from the crowd and boost their state-side offering.

Proving popular are Little Becky Marshmallows – giant for the bonfire and mini to top hot chocolate – in traditional pink and white or fruity 'Frootmallows'.

The ever-so-tasty and fun



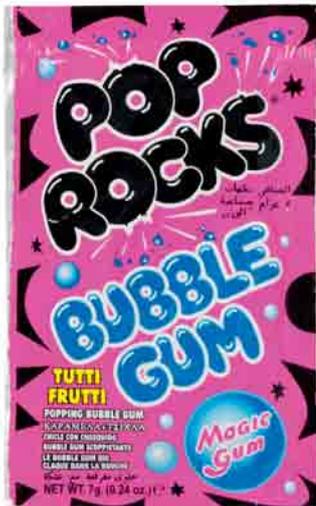
Mike & Ike Jelly sweets bring an intense burst of fruity and chewy deliciousness to every bite with five zesty flavours, including recently launched Zours and Mega Mix.

Goldenberg's peanut chews feature deliciously chewy, chocolatey, bite-sized pieces loaded with crunchy roasted peanuts.

You can't get more American than Cookie Dough Bites, bite-sized cookie dough pieces covered in creamy chocolate, with five enticing flavours including recently launched Cinnamon Bun and Red Velvet Cupcake.

And finally, with retro flavours making a reappearance, Empire Bespoke Foods are proud to distribute Pop Rocks, the original popping candy from the 1970s. Feel the crack and pop with eight authentic flavours.

Choose your treat!



THE GIFT OF CHOCOLATE

Charlotte Green, marketing director of Divine Chocolate introduces its newest launch

The informal sharing market is growing as shoppers are increasingly choosing products that offer a variety of flavours to give as a gift or to share with friends, so there's something for everyone. We know that chocolate purchases are driven by social occasions, so a shareable product that is luxurious enough to give as a gift or for a casual evening with friends taps into this growing market, which is why Divine Chocolate is launching the new Tasting Set with 12 individually wrapped bars.

The Tasting Set has been launched to appeal to premium chocolate consumers to discover more about fine quality chocolate and what makes Divine special. The little bars are perfect for

individual consumption or to share with family and friends, either informally or to give as a gift. The set has a distinctive book format, which opens to reveal flavour notes on each bar and a chocolate tasting guide complete with a flavour wheel to appeal to discerning chocolate fans, and to enable consumers to learn more about Divine's quality chocolate. The Tasting Set also brings alive Divine's unique farmer ownership by featuring two of the cocoa farmer members of Kuapa Kokoo, the co-operative who co-own the Divine company, and introduces Divine's Ghanaian heritage with a guide to the traditional Adinkra symbols which appear across all Divine's packaging. Finally, inside the wrappers of each little bar, there is a different Kuapa farmer to

meet, and they explain themselves how Fairtrade and owning Divine impacts directly on their families, farms and communities.

What's special about Divine is that as well as producing delicious, premium chocolate at a competitive price point, there's also a great story behind the company – all the cocoa is supplied by a co-operative of over 85,000 farmers in Ghana called

Kuapa Kokoo, who own 44% of the Divine company, have two seats on the board and receive the biggest share of the distributed profit. We want to create chocolate people can really enjoy, while also empowering the farmers who grow the cocoa and putting them at the heart of everything the business does.

Divine is the only mainstream chocolate company in the UK that is Fairtrade and farmer-owned.

NEW TO MARKET

The Tasting Set features 12 individually wrapped little bars in six of Divine's best-selling dark, milk and white chocolate flavours. It includes two each of Divine's 85% Dark Chocolate, 70% Dark Chocolate, Dark Chocolate with Raspberries, Milk Chocolate, Milk Chocolate with Toffee and Sea Salt, and White Chocolate with Strawberries. These six flavours account for two thirds of Divine 100g bar sales.




New! Chocolate Tasting Set




Discover six fabulous flavours in a box of 12 little bars, all individually wrapped to cherish and share.

Divine invites you to run a chocolate tasting using the new Little Bars.

Contact roy@divinechocolate.com to request samples

Farmers receive 44% of Divine profits

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STAND OUT CHOCOLATE

Confectionery Buyer speaks to Peter Martin, managing director House of Sarunds to find out more about this renowned brand

Tell us about House of Sarunds

House of Sarunds is an independently owned and managed business offering the largest collection of competitively priced premium British and Belgian chocolate and confectionery currently available from a single UK source. With over 25 years' experience and industry know how to draw on, we are confident that we can help any retailer maximise the profit potential of confectionery sales.

What does House of Sarunds offer retailers?

At any one time up to around 2,500 hand-picked confectionery lines are available from House

of Sarunds, and that ranges from British and Continental chocolates, fudge, jelly beans, Italian soft nougat, liquorice, tinned biscuits, panettone and traditional sweet shop favourites plus seasonal products, too.

We launch three catalogues each year and constantly review selections and introduce new brands as we find a new supplier that meets our exacting standards and complements the existing Sarunds range. The Sarunds' development team also works with some award-winning chocolatiers to create bespoke lines specifically for the UK market.

Many of our brands are exclusive to us and as we choose to sell only to the independent sector

we can help retailers create a 'go to' destination store with a fabulous selection of more unusual artisan confectionery that customers can't find in the supermarkets.

What are your most popular flavours?

We are particularly well known for our range of loose chocolates and this includes traditional British and Belgian chocolates, cocoa dusted truffles, flaked truffles and enrobed fruits including figs and dates which add a more exotic twist to the mix. It is interesting to see how flavours become popular over time. Salted caramel has been a recent inclusion into the list of favourites and now appears as a main stay in the Sarunds' top 10 loose chocolate best-sellers.

What retail support do you offer?

We don't just sell chocolates and confectionery, we can help manage the whole customer experience. That starts with advice on the basics such as the choice of chiller cabinet and where it should be positioned in the shop. Then comes the chocolate selection, which will be influenced by location and type of customer.

We pack around 500,000 boxes of chocolates a year and so are well placed to advise customers on packing of loose chocolates. Presentation is critical and can make or break a sale. We offer a whole range of packing materials such as quality boxes of all shapes and sizes, cello wrap, bags, curling and organza ribbons and decorations. These finishing touches can help make a standard box of confectionery extra special and that means a higher perceived value which helps justify an increase in price point.



Looking to generate more profit from your confectionery?

“Come and talk to Sarunds”

We can help you become the go to store in your area for that special gift or impulse purchase with our exclusive range of the finest Belgian chocolates and confectionery. With over 5000 lines across three brochures to choose from, all at very competitive prices, we think you will be impressed. And what's more, so will your customers.



“We can not be beaten on price”

Call today for a free catalogue 01258 450 200
www.sarunds.co.uk

SARUNDS



SPECIALISTS IN FINE CONFECTIONERY



CHOCOLATE MEETS FRUIT

Claudia Rushworth, MD of The Original Candy Company, introduces Chocca Mocca

Tell us about Chocca Mocca

Chocca Mocca is a delicious range of fruits and nuts enrobed in wonderful layers of the finest Belgian chocolate. The range includes Belgian drinking

chocolate and chocolate lollies with fruits and nuts. The range was created back in 1992 and has seen great year on year growth. The range offers a wonderful gift solution, as well as an array of products to cater for all.

What makes it stand out?

Chocca Mocca stands out from the crowd as it has such fresh, simple and eye catching packaging. Since we added the display last year we have seen sales increase and many stockists saying the products stand out even more than they did before.

What's in the range?

Our range consists of 12 variants of our 100g sachet pack range including Strawberries & Cream, which is a very firm favourite. We have two variants of delicious drinking chocolate – dark and milk chocolate. The range also has four chocolate lollies with fruit and nut inclusions, which are perfect as a pickup line. The Paradise Collection is a wonderful array of treats such as golden marzipan, coconut and lemon, all enrobed in chocolate.

What's new?

We wanted to offer our customers the best way to order and to make the process as easy and convenient as possible, so we have changed our case size to six so that retailers can put all the stock out with no need to fill their store cupboard.

Why stock?

Because we don't sell into major multiples we offer great quality products with competitive margins and great eye catching displays so consumers will find them an irresistible purchase. They also make an excellent addition to hampers for both Christmas and Valentine's Day.

Do you offer retailer support?

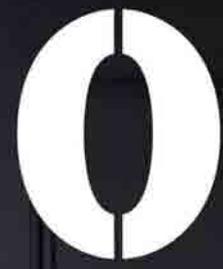
We have a great display which holds a great variety of the product and adds real wow factor to any fixture. At just £250 your free display unit will be delivered already filled 13 x 6 (100g boxes), 2 x 10 (150g drinking chocolate), 2 x 24 (40g chocolate lollies) along with free tasting samples of Chocca Mocca favourites for your customers to enjoy. This is a great opportunity to add easy counter top sales.

What's next?

We have lots of exciting products being developed at the moment for 2017 – needless to say, they will be continuing our delicious chocolate fruit and nut theme!



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FAMILY FAVOURITES

Carefully selected sweet treats are key to The Fine Confectionery Company's offering

Based in the market town of Hertford, The Fine Confectionery Company is a family-run business which has been supplying quality sugar and chocolate confectionery to the speciality food sector for over 25 years. "Our team offer a carefully selected range of premium brands along with the facility to create bespoke packaging options and own brand solutions," explains managing director Andrew Mitchell.

"Key brands we offer include Niederegger, the benchmark in marzipan, which is made in Germany in the Hanseatic city of Lubeck on the Baltic coast. The Niederegger marzipan recipe has not changed for over 200 years, although the product offering certainly has with many new varieties for the coming winter season!" The business's new autumn winter catalogue is now available, with such products as Raspberry Panna Cotta and



popular Beanboozled family and the introduction of the Harry Potter range."

The Fine Confectionery Company frequently updates its offering, as Andrew explains. "A new addition to our range is P & T chocolate, fine Belgian chocolate is crafted into fun and funky shapes or lollipops then decorated by hand. The collection includes stunning Christmas decorations, chocolate letters and numbers, funky pops along with 'rusty' cocoa dusted chocolate tools, perfect for imaginative stocking fillers."

All seasons are catered for by the business. "Of course the winter season is not complete without a warming mug of hot chocolate," says Andrew, "and this year's additions to the Chocolate

Company's Hot Choc Spoons are delicious. Winter Wonderland with Dark Rum, Cinnamon Stick and Gluhwein are some of our favourites from the new flavours on offer."

Top selling products, says Andrew, "are Jelly Belly, especially Beanboozled, Niederegger classic bars and gift boxes and the new range of Christmas decorations from P & T."

"Personally, my current favourite confection is the Vanilla Toffee marzipan loaf from Niederegger, served thinly sliced with a good coffee!"



New Brochure Available Now



The Fine Confectionery Company Ltd

Tel: **01992 551075** www.fineconfectionery.co.uk





A GIFT FOR EVERYONE

Attractive packaging in a range of formats and high quality confectionery make the Gardiners of Scotland range ideal for the independent retail

“Gardiners of Scotland Ltd has a large and varied range of products,” says managing director Tom Gardiner Snr. “In the last year, we have had particularly good sales of the Hebridean Sea

Salt & Caramel Fudge Tins and this trend looks set to continue for the foreseeable future. These particular tins are beautifully embossed making very attractive gifts for all the family, these tins were designed with this in mind.

“Our best performers in the market place are too many to mention by name, but the branded whisky fudge tins and cartons, along with the butterfly and fairy tins, have been performing extremely well in the current market.

“Retailers looking for strong gifting items have a fantastic choice of beautiful packaging, with a high quality product within. All our confectionery is produced using only the finest of ingredients to ensure that the quality is never compromised.

“Initially, we decided to specialise in Scottish confectionery and to get started we focused on the tourist trade. Such was our success that this continues to be a large part of our business today. Having said that, we have built up a very good customer base in other areas of the British Isles, with sales of the vast range of branded whisky fudge products and flower and luxury fudge tin ranges all excelling.

“The quality of our confectionery and unique packaging make our tins and cartons across the range very appealing to the independent farm and deli shops. These can also be used as gifts which are not too

expensive for the customer.”

Our products also have a global appeal and yet we manage to provide a personal service to our wholesale and retail customers. Being a family company, it is very important to us that we maintain this service at all times.

We have a great range of Christmas tins and cartons on offer for that special gift and the delicately designed flower tins are the ideal size for stocking fillers. All our products can be viewed on our website at gardeners-scotland.com



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“QUALITY IS KEY”

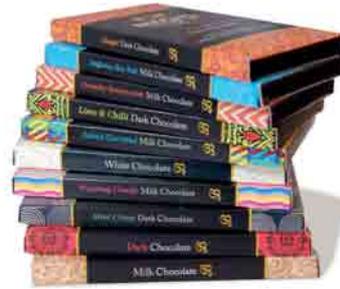
Looking for a producer of superior free-from confectionery? Look no further than Beech's Fine Chocolates

Close to celebrating its centenary as a gourmet British chocolate manufacturer is Beech's Fine Chocolates, founded in 1920 in Preston, Lancashire. “Our British heritage is incredibly important to us as a brand,” says Peter Whiting, operations director of Beech's Fine Chocolates. “It defines our products and is a huge part of our history and future. We're proud to have long been heavily involved in the history of the local area.”

“Our heritage gives us something that no other business can

replicate,” he says. “We have a workforce with over 600 combined years of experience in the chocolate manufacturing business and this is reflected in our product quality.”

Beech's Fine Chocolates produce a wide variety of gourmet British chocolates, including chocolate bars, creams, assortments and more recently delicious luxury champagne and prosecco truffles. Health-conscious consumers are well-served by the brand: “We use the finest, natural ingredients in



our products and as a result our entire range is gluten-free, says Peter. “We did not set out to create great gluten-free chocolates, it just so happens that our chocolates are also gluten-free! It is a very similar story with our special recipe dark chocolate in that it happens to be vegan, it was not created to be vegan!” The brand boasts an extensive vegan range.

Quality is of paramount importance to Beech's, explains Peter. “There are already plenty of chocolates out there that are made to a price point, and rather than

add to the abundance of inferior quality chocolates we decided to use the highest quality natural ingredients to ensure our brand stands out – once you taste one you will immediately recognise the difference!”

Retailers can be confident that Beech's products will boost their sales, not least thanks to the support Beech's offers its customers. “There has been a huge boom in people wanting British produce and we are seeing massive year on year growth,” explains Peter. “Our retailers are continually expanding their product lines and we pride ourselves on working closely with all our retailers to make sure they have the best service, newest products and most importantly sell everything they purchase from us! We offer unique special offers throughout the year and help support you with promotional pricing during slower sales periods. Sell the best, sell Beech's.”

“Our British heritage is incredibly important to us as a brand, it defines our products and is a huge part of our history and future”

THE TEST OF TIME
WHATEVER THE TIME OR SEASON
THE BEECH'S BRAND ALWAYS DELIVERS.

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ON A MISSION

Adam Sopher, co-founder and director of Joe & Seph's explains how the brand continues to drive evolution in the popcorn sector

"The Willy Wonka of popcorn"

Joe & Seph's is an award-winning family business from London on a mission to create the best-tasting popcorn in the world. We produce gourmet popcorn and caramel sauces in a variety of different flavours. Everything is handmade by a small team of chefs in our London kitchen, using only the finest natural ingredients and we also "air-pop" our extra-large kernels – which is a healthier cooking method than frying, resulting in better texture and taste. We're famous for our unique 'flavour-sequencing' technique which means the individual

flavours 'unlock' as you're crunching on the popcorn – which led to Joseph (our founder) being nicknamed "the Willy Wonka of popcorn"!

We have a range of over 40 different flavours of popcorn, both sweet and savoury, available in impulse, food-to-go, retail pouches, gifts and catering packs suitable for a variety of different customers. As well as our popcorn, we have recently ventured in to a new range of 10 caramel sauces in retail jars and catering packs. These are perfect for avid bakers and can be drizzled on ice cream, spread on waffles and pancakes and used in baking recipes.

"Our Marmite popcorn has been a hit!"

We initially met Chloe Irwin (Senior Licencing Manager for Unilever) at a trade show two years ago and started conversations about creating the first official licenced Marmite Popcorn and were delighted when Unilever selected Joe & Seph's as their popcorn partner. After lots of recipe tweaking, design and technical meetings we launched the first official Marmite Popcorn in June 2016. We've loved seeing the reaction so far (which has been largely positive – thankfully more seem to "Love it" than "Hate it"!), and are delighted to have been featured in the Telegraph, Mashable.com and the Metro newspaper as well as a huge reaction on social media and at shows.

"Our caramel sauces are award-winning"

We launched the caramel sauce range in 2015 as a natural extension to our popcorn, bringing Joe & Seph's to a new category. With the growing popularity of home baking (particularly with the rise of *The Great British Bake Off*),

the sauces have proved extremely popular with our customers, and they have now won us a total of 6 Great Taste Awards from the Guild of Fine Food. We now have 10 flavours of sauce from the best-selling Salted Caramel through to our innovative Gin & Tonic Sauce. For Christmas, we're adding a Brandy Butter, made with 5% real brandy, and have even more alcohol infusions in the pipeline, including a beautiful Rum & Raisin variety.

"We offer retailers support"

We support all of our stockists with sampling stock and any available POS.



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JOE & SEPH'S
GOURMET POPCORN CHEF & CONNOISSEUR



29
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FAMILY ETHOS
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Offering over 3,500 lines our range has grown considerably over the last 50 years, without compromising our commitment to customer service. That's why we are serial winners of Britain's Best Speciality Food Distributor - as voted for by you!



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