

## Chocolate

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An irresistible delicacy one the sweetest beverage and the craziest plant that roamed the world. As a child, everyone desires a “Charlie’s chocolate factory”. The eccentric taste, luscious sense, the happy rush are all the pleasures of eating chocolate.

Its journey of the gods’ food started long ago in ancient Mesoamerica and southern Mexico. The Latin American Olmec were the first ones to turn the cocoa plant beans into chocolate. Archeological evidence suggests the chocolate was drunk as medicine and used in ritual practices. Aztecs believed the cocoa seeds are a gift of Quetzalcoatl god of life and death. Due to its predominant value, it was also used as a form of currency.

The cocoa traveled to Spain in the late 1500s and from there to all over Europe. There are many stories for its introduction in Spain starting from Hernan Cortes to Christopher Columbus. Chocolate soon became a luxury beverage in Europe. Dutch later found the treating of cocoa beans to powdered chocolate it was also called Dutch chocolate.

**Fun facts: when introduced it was considered as a medicine and doctors prescribed it to aid fevers**

In the early 1700s, cocoa plantations were widespread in the Dutch, English, and French colonies. We can also say that chocolate has invaded the whole European continent. Due to its increasing demands, large farms with slavery grew exponentially it was often said as the Dark side of Chocolate.

New recipes were introduced, processing of cocoa was discovered many were patented, the idea of making chocolate bars started to emerge in the mid-1850s the English replaced the hot water (in cocoa processing) with cocoa butter it led to the era of modern-day chocolates. In 1875 milk chocolate is first created by Daniel peter by using condensed milk after eight years of toil.

**Fun facts: white chocolate is not chocolate they are made of dairy cream with less than 10 percent of chocolate liqueur**



Scientifically chocolates are known to be a stress reliever, anti-depressor, or sometimes even aphrodisiacs. They contain theobromine a chemical that has an equivalent stimulating effect to caffeine. Neurotransmitters such as endorphins, dopamine, serotonin, and oxytocin are released when we bite chocolate which gives us a warm and fuzzy feeling. Chocolate consumed at a moderate level has many health benefits.

**fun facts: chocolate can prevent tooth decay as of its antibacterial properties that turn sugar into acids – “quoted to mothers”.**

In modern, Africa is the leading producer of cocoa, the major varieties fall into three types they are criollo, forastero, and trinitario. Chocolate was introduced in India by the British in southern parts of the country in the 1700s. Today it has become a major market of its higher population and hefty chocolate consumption. In Europe, Belgium and Switzerland are famous for their special traditional made chocolates. The world chocolate economy today is ruled by multinational giants such as Cadbury, Hershey, Mars, Nestle, etc. Today over 3 billion tons of cocoa are produced which is a 35 billion dollar economy, most of produced are consumed in Europe and the United States. Today chocolate has become even a token of love, it has become a part of human life. They are been used in many forms in all celebrations across the globe. The early Aztecs may not visualize it but we owe them for making our life sweeter.