

From cocoa to chocolate

The great botanist Carl von Linné (Linnaeus) was by no means the first to recognise the unique merits of the plant to which he gave the botanical name of “Theobroma Cacao L.”. “Theobroma” means “food of the gods”. Cocoa was already recognised as such by the Toltecs, Mayas and Aztecs, from whom we got the name “cacauatl”. Around 600 AD the Mayas were already cultivating cocoa in Central America. They used the cocoa beans to prepare a very nourishing drink, which they called “Xocolatl”, from which we probably get the modern word “chocolate”.

The Spanish Conquistadors of the 16th century were also interested in chocolate. In 1528, Cortez took the first cocoa to Spain, along with the equipment needed to prepare the exotic drink, and it soon met with great approval in the Spanish court. In 1615, the infanta Anna of Austria, who grew up in Madrid, introduced drinking chocolate to the French court when she married King Louis XIII. In Paris it became a badge of status and the fashionable drink of the aristocracy, and from there it spread throughout the whole of Europe. Whereas in the 19th century, the importance of drinking chocolate declined, solid chocolate, which had its origins in France in the years following 1830, grew in importance.



Aztecs preparing “Xocolatl”: cocoa beans were roasted, ground, and mixed with water and spices to form a foamy liquid.

Chocolate arrives in Switzerland...

In 1819, François-Louis Cailler opened one of the first mechanised chocolate production facilities in Corsier near Vevey, establishing the oldest brand of Swiss chocolate still in existence today. Thus chocolate had finally arrived in the country where it was soon to find its greatest patrons and pioneers. Philippe Suchard set up a chocolate factory in Serrières in 1826. He was followed by Jacques Foulquier (predecessor of Jean-Samuel Favarger) 1826 in Geneva, Charles-Amédée Kohler 1830 in Lausanne, Rudolf Sprüngli 1845 in Zurich, Aquilino Maestrani 1852 in Lucerne, later moving to St. Gallen, Johann Georg Munz 1874 in Flawil, and Jean Tobler 1899 in Berne.

Daniel Peter founded a chocolate factory in Vevey in 1867. After many attempts, he succeeded in combining chocolate with milk, an obvious but difficult move, thus inventing milk chocolate in 1875. Rodolphe Lindt opened a chocolate factory in Berne in 1879. He developed “conching”, a process which created the world’s first “melting chocolate”.

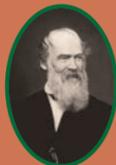
Many other Swiss entrepreneurs set up companies over the next few years, their activities helping to shape the reputation of Swiss chocolate, which soon became known throughout the world.



Where in the past women stood at long tables, and later conveyor belts, carefully placing chocolates in boxes, today robots do the same job in a fraction of the time. Attentive staff check and correct the work of the robots.



François-Louis Cailler (1796–1852)



Philippe Suchard (1797–1884)



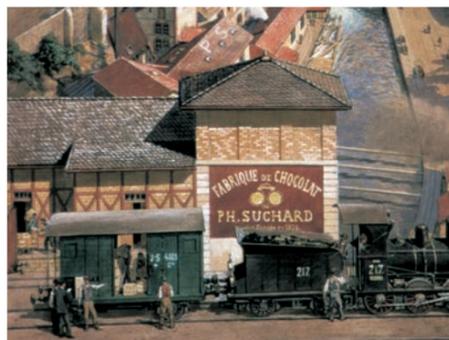
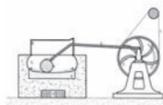
Daniel Peter (1836–1919)



Rodolphe Lindt (1855–1909)

Swiss chocolate flourishes

The years between 1890 and 1920 saw a real blossoming of the Swiss chocolate industry, coinciding with the golden age of Swiss tourism. Members of the top echelons of society throughout the world who spent their holidays in Switzerland came to know and appreciate Swiss chocolate, and took its reputation home with them. The initiative of Swiss chocolate producers conquered the world chocolate market between 1900 and 1918. Up to three quarters of Swiss chocolate was exported. Thus “little Switzerland” became a world power in chocolate. Of course, “Swiss chocolate” owed its global reputation not just to the quantities exported, but above all to its quality, which made it stand out above the great amount of chocolate produced in other countries.



The largest Swiss chocolate production plant at the end of the 19th century was that of Philippe Suchard in Serrières.

Through crises to a new golden age

The late 1920s saw the beginning of hard times for the Swiss chocolate industry. Increased protectionism, and the economic crises of the 20s and 30s, led to the loss of export markets. The Second World War brought strict import restrictions on sugar and cocoa, with rationing being introduced in 1943.

Since 1950, the Swiss chocolate industry has enjoyed constant growth. Automation and new chocolate production technologies have made great strides forward. Advances in economic integration, and the dismantling of customs controls throughout the world, have promoted the international exchange of goods. Manufacturers recognised the signs of the times and extended their market position in many parts of the world.

The development of new products and product forms in keeping with modern consumer habits, the maintaining of quality, the consistent pursuit of modernisation in factories, and the promotion of professional training for employees, are the methods being employed by the Swiss chocolate industry to assert its global market position into the 21st century.



The oldest way of shaping chocolate: the fragrant liquid chocolate is measured out into flat moulds, the shape of which represents the finished product in reverse.



CHOCOSUISSE



CHOCOSUISSE, its members and the Swiss Cocoa and Chocolate Foundation hope that fine SWISS CHOCOLATE will give you great pleasure and enjoyment.

Chocolat Alprose SA
Barry Callebaut Schweiz AG
Chocolat Bernrain AG
Chocolats Camille Bloch SA
CSCC Compagnie de Chocolats et Confiseries AG
Chocolats et Cacaos Favarger SA
Max Felchlin AG
Chocolat Frey AG
Gysi AG
Chocolats Halba
Confiseur Läderach AG
Chocoladefabriken Lindt & Sprüngli (Schweiz) AG
Maestrani Schweizer Schokoladen AG
Mondelez Schweiz GmbH
Nestlé Suisse SA
Confiserie Sprüngli AG
Chocolat Stella SA
Villars Maître Chocolatier SA

For more information, see the CHOCOLGY booklet, available from CHOCOSUISSE and from all Swiss chocolate manufacturers, or see our homepage: www.chocosuisse.ch

© CHOCOSUISSE 2013
This material may be reproduced provided the source is quoted.

CHOCOSUISSE
Association of Swiss Chocolate Manufacturers
Münzgraben 6
PO Box
3000 Berne 7
Switzerland
Tel. +41 (0)31 310 09 90
Fax +41 (0)31 310 09 99

Cocoa

Cocoa is a particularly fine product of the tropics. The cocoa tree grows in the tropical regions to the north and south of the equator. Its fruits, which grow right on the trunk, are harvested twice a year and contain 20 to 30 white cocoa beans each. The beans, after being removed from the skin, are shaken into heaps, covered, and left to ferment. This causes the beans to lose their capacity to germinate, and at the same time some of the chocolate aromas begin to develop. Once they are dry, the cocoa beans are ready for shipping. They are bought by processing companies at the international cocoa exchanges in London and New York.



The fermented and dried cocoa beans as they are supplied to factories.

Harvest on a cocoa plantation. Workers use machetes and long poles to remove the fruits carefully from the trunks. The location is shady, the climate humid and balanced.

How chocolate is made

Chocolate production depends on the ancient craft of the confectioner and the chocolatier. Even today, industrial manufacturing still follows the basic stages of the original craft, although highly sophisticated technical apparatus has taken over the work at every stage. As well as making it possible to rationalise production, this also guarantees consistently high quality.

Cocoa beans are the most important raw material for making chocolate. After detailed quality control checks, the raw cocoa is cleaned thoroughly, crushed, roasted and ground, to produce cocoa paste. Mixing this paste with sugar and additional cocoa butter gives the basic mixture for traditional plain chocolate. If powdered or condensed milk is added, the result is the basic mixture for milk chocolate. For white chocolate, on the other hand, the brown cocoa paste is omitted. These three basic mixtures form the starting point for all types of chocolate.

After mixing, the basic mixtures are ground very finely and refined by "conching". This produces a chocolate mixture which is now ready to be made into solid bars, or bars filled with nuts, almonds, fruit or liqueur, filled chocolates, and many other specialities. Now the delicious chocolates of various sizes are packed into wrappers and boxes, before finally being packed into large shipping cartons to be sent to the dealers' intermediary stores and to be exported all over the world.

Quality

Connoisseurs recognise quality when they break a piece from a bar of chocolate: the break is hard and crisp, the edges of the break are clean, the surfaces do not crumble. The nose can also detect the quality: the smell of a fine chocolate is full and rounded, but never obtrusive. One then becomes very aware of true quality on the tongue: good chocolate melts like butter, does not stick to the roof of the mouth or feel gritty, and leaves hardly any aftertaste. Its flavour is fine, delicate, complete—unique.



View of a chocolate bar plant. The moulds are filled and shaken to remove trapped air before they enter the cooling tunnel.



Connoisseurs recognise quality when they break a piece from a really good bar of chocolate: the break is hard and crisp, the edges of the break are clean, the surfaces do not crumble.

Shelf life

Depending on the recipe, chocolate will remain at its best for up to 12 months, and plain chocolate for as long as 15 months. Chocolate should be kept at a temperature of between 10° and 18°C, protected from light and moisture.

Chocolate is good for you

Seldom do we find concentrated in such a small space in a single food such large quantities of valuable and energy-giving substances such as proteins, carbohydrates, trace elements, vitamins and minerals, all of them completely natural. A 100g bar of milk chocolate provides around 2300 Kilojoules (KJ) or 550 Kilo-calories (kcal) of usable energy.

Chocolate is good and healthy. It supports the balanced diet which should always be our aim, but it does not replace it.



Many confectioners still make their own chocolate products, with a great deal of love and skill, making their own important contribution to the fame of Swiss chocolate. They normally obtain the chocolate in the form of "couverture" from specialist businesses or from the chocolate factories.

Swiss
Chocolate