

Posted on Wed, Feb. 11, 2004

Pairing wine and chocolate

By ALEXANDRA LEAF
For the Daily News

With Valentine's Day approaching this weekend, chocolatiers around the country will be piping, dipping, rolling and molding chocolates, from champagne-filled truffles to star-anise accented bon bons, the demand for hand-crafted candies is at its height.

Keeping step with these New American chocolatiers are adventurous chocolate lovers who are hungry for new ways to enjoy these mouth-watering confections. It's no longer a matter of passing around a plate of milk chocolate almond bark or coconut cream candies at dinner's end.

Serious chocolate aficionados are pairing lavender honey, green tea, jasmine or bergamot-flavored bonbons with a wide range of fortified wines, sparklers and still wines. And vineyards on both coasts are making Valentine's Day wine and chocolate tastings annual events.

Generally considered to be a difficult match because of the tannins in wine, pairing wine and chocolate is both an art and a science because some flavors marry well while others just clash. Most importantly, though, what you choose should be what you like. Palate taste, like taste in general, is highly individual. If you want to experiment with pairing at home, the general rule of thumb is this: Whatever you're drinking should be sweeter than what you're eating.

Dessert wines are the obvious first choice here because they are quite sweet. By law, they must contain an alcohol level of at least 15 percent to be labeled as such. California's award-winning Quady Winery has been in the dessert wine business for more than 20 years now and produces a small range of truly stellar products that marry well with chocolate.

One of their most popular wines is Essencia, made from 100 percent Orange Muscat grapes. Aged for three months in French oak, the wine is redolent of orange blossom and apricot. Magenta-colored Elysium is made from another Muscat varietal known as Black Muscat. Its roselike aroma led owner Andrew Quady to name the wine Elysium, which is Greek for heaven. Less sweet than Essencia and Elysium and containing only 4 percent alcohol is Electra which Quady describes as "a bouquet of flowers with the taste of peach and melon."

Starboard is the winery's version of vintage-character port. Light in tannin with rich fruit notes, its chocolatelike flavor makes it ideal as a match for a variety of bon bons. If you're wondering about the name, think along nautical lines. As this wine does not pretend to be a Portuguese Port (where only true Port is made), it is a Starboard.

Port wines are a classic match for chocolate. Ruby Port, for instance, has butterscotch qualities, making it a great foil to milk chocolate. Tawny Port (which ages for a minimum of 10 years), has

nutty characteristics. Port wines can also exhibit toffee, honey, or creme bruleelike finishes. If you opt for complementarily as opposed to contrast in your matches, chocolates with caramel, coffee, toffee, mocha, praline or butterscotch centers will pair well with Port.

White Port, on the other hand, because it is vinified dry is not a suitable choice for chocolate pairings. As for vintage Port, it is almost always enjoyed alone in order to most fully experience the wine's unique qualities. It would almost be a shame to sip a glass while eating a piece of chocolate, no matter how fine the bon bon.

In the sparkling wine category, one wine comes up tops: Brachetto d'Acqui, and specifically Banfi vineyard's Rosa Regale. New York-based wine educator Rose O'Dell King, insists, "If you're writing about wine and chocolate pairings, you must include Brachetto. It is truly one of the best wines in the world to pair with chocolate. It's got lively acidity and a lush decadence to it. You'll always remember the first time you tried it and it's all about romance."

Named for a little-known grape varietal from the Piedmont region in Italy, this slightly sweet, ruby-red spumante offers up loads of delicious ripe berry and cherry flavors. Low in alcohol - a mere 7 percent - Brachetto makes a lovely aperitif wine as well.

Champagne, though frequently paired with chocolate, is generally not a great choice. Brut Champagnes are too dry to complement chocolate. A demi-sec, if sweet enough can work, but champagne chocolate pairings will probably require some experimentation in order to be successful.

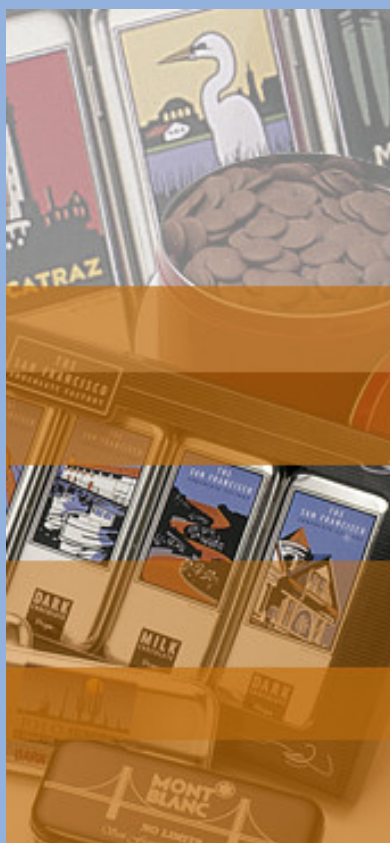
As for the still wine category, this is the trickiest of all because the tannins in wine have a tendency to spoil the taste of the chocolate, at least in the dessert category. Some chefs have been experimenting with chocolate in savory dishes and Merlots, Cabernet Sauvignons and Pinot Noirs have been turning up as partners.

If the idea of a "tutored" tasting of chocolate and wine appeals, check Jubilee Chocolates' Web site www.jubileechocolates.com for a spring schedule of tastings. The Philadelphia-based chocolate-maker, in response to a demand from its customers, will begin offering paired tastings this spring. Jubilee was recently featured on the cover of Gourmet magazine and cited for its high quality, handmade products. This Valentine's Day the company has packaged an array of its chocolates - mint, raspberry, and coffee whiskey, to name a few flavors - in handsome wooden boxes. Festively wrapped in a wide satin ribbon, each holiday assortment is adorned with an English wax seal in the shape of a heart.

So whether you're the milk chocolate type or the dark chocolate lover, pairing the right chocolate with the right wine may just be a match made in heaven.

THE SAN FRANCISCO CHOCOLATE FACTORY

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The Wine Lover's Chocolate Collection is a distinctive and elegant offering from the San Francisco Chocolate Factory. Discs of dark chocolate with increasingly rich cocoa intensities are packaged in six signature Wine Country tins; each tin is also labeled with the wine varietal to which that specific chocolate is ideally matched. Our dark chocolates are produced with high quality criollo cocoa pods from Ecuador and Venezuela, and this quality is evident in the deep, rich, smooth taste of our Wine Lover's Chocolates.

At the lighter end of the Wine Lover's Collection spectrum are chocolate discs comprised of 54% cocoa solids, and paired with Port wine. At the more intense end are the 72% dark chocolate discs, for which the suggested pairing is Zinfandel. Other classic California red wine varietals—Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Merlot, Syrah—are represented in the Wine Lover's Collection as well. (Bottles of red wine are not included in the Wine Lover's Collection; we trust that our customers prefer to select their own wines!)

The natural affinity between dark chocolate and red wine is no secret: restaurants often suggest pairing an after-dinner wine with chocolate desserts, and many desserts themselves incorporate both chocolate and flavors that are often found in red wine, such as berry, mint or coffee. Indeed, many red wines are described as being "chocolatey" or having cocoa flavors that surface during a thoughtful tasting.

The San Francisco Chocolate Factory takes this common pairing one step further, by creating a way for people to experience the subtleties of wine and chocolate—and the delicious union of both—without a lot of pretension or expense. The pairing suggestions noted in the Wine Lover's Chocolate Collection packaging came out of both a formal knowledge of wine as well as informal tastings. Chocolate is similar to wine in that both are made from a fruit—cocoa pods or grapes—that takes on the characteristics of the soil and climate in which it is grown. Chocolate is also similar to wine in that it can vary dramatically in intensity depending on how it is produced and blended, and a rich, dark chocolate will naturally be


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[Week of June 3, 2000; Vol. 157, No. 23 , p. 0](#)

Chocolate Therapies (with recipe for Janet's Chocolate Medicinal Mousse Pie)

Janet Raloff

Chocolate has made news over the past few months for the apparently heart-healthy properties of some of its components—antioxidants known as flavonoids (see [Chocolate Hearts](#):

<http://www.sciencenews.org/20000318/bob10.asp>.) These findings, together with data reported several years ago on the treats' ability to turn on opiate receptors in the brain (SN: 10/12/96, p. 235), threaten to transform the image of chocolate from dietary vice to herbal medicine.

To meso-American anthropologists, however, the idea that chocolate can be health-promoting is old hat—*very* old hat.

Revered by cultures throughout the Americas for some 3000 years, chocolate has been in cultivation since at least the time of Christ. Referred to for much of that time as a "food of the gods," this botanical product has occasionally, in centuries past, even stood in for currency—its value on par with gold's. For much of this illustrious past, chocolate has also been a venerated staple of the herbal pharmacopoeia, observes Louis E. Grivetti of the University of California, Davis.



Recently harvested cacao pods. Each holds several dozen seeds, from which chocolate and cocoa are made.

At the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting last month in Washington D.C., Grivetti shared findings from his new historical investigation of chocolate's medicinal history. His team turned up medical texts describing chocolate therapies dating back to 1522. Though written by Europeans, they described remedies brought back by explorers who had visited the New World. So compelling were their reports that soon Europe was importing huge quantities of cocoa beans to serve a growing market for therapeutic chocolate.

The earliest texts suggested that cocoa was merely a vehicle for helping make less palatable medicines go down. Soon, however, it was regarded as an active ingredient in cures being offered for a broad range of ails.

Healers pounded cocoa beans into a paste. Diluted into a drink, they gave it to people suffering from fevers, liver disease, and kidney disorders. Physicians prescribed ground beans, mixed with resin, to cure dysentery. A cocoa drink was reputed to foster needed weight gain—especially if augmented with ground maize. Hot chocolate was even prescribed as a laxative and aid to digestion.

By the early 1600s, European researchers were reporting indications that chocolate may affect moods. Grivetti found a 1631 treatise by the Spanish physician/surgeon Antoino Comenero de Ledesma, for instance, that said chocolate makes people amiable, and "incited consumers to . . . lovemaking."

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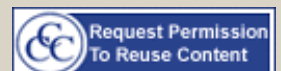
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Indeed, Grivetti says, because chocolate was perceived as an intoxicant, it was deemed unsuitable for women or children—at least until the 14th century.

By Ledesma's time, however, healers realized that chocolate was not for men only. A love potion, drinking chocolate helped women conceive, he reported. If hot cocoa was drunk during pregnancy, it helped smooth labor and delivery.

Three decades later, Henry Stubb published a monograph that claimed a drink made by mixing chocolate and vanilla would strengthen the brain and womb. Mixed with Jamaican pepper, chocolate was supposed to stimulate menstrual flow. Combined with resin, it was reputed to boost breast-milk production. Cocoa-bean oils even helped heal a nursing mother's cracked nipples.

Few conditions aren't improved by chocolate, according to the texts that Grivetti's team of scholars uncovered and translated. The botanical product was used to treat tuberculosis, toothaches, and ulcers. It was alleged to cure itches, repel tumors, and foster sleep. By the 1680s, reports emerged that chocolate could restore energy after a day of hard labor, alleviate lung inflammation, or strengthen the heart. By the 1800s, cocoa was being mixed with ground amber dust to relieve hangovers. Combined with other ingredients, it became the basis of treatments for syphilis, hemorrhoids, and intestinal parasites.

In traditional healing recipes, chocolate often included little or no sweetening. Moreover, the Native American view of medicine in which chocolate therapies evolved was somewhat different from that practiced in Europe. Rather than illness being caused by disease, Native Americans viewed health as the state of being in balance with the environment. Losing that balance—perhaps through a perturbed diet—could create sickness. Chocolate was viewed as one means for restoring lost balance.

European adventurers often sampled the native cocoa-based drinks with scorn, according to Historicus in his late-19th century book, *Cocoa: All About It*. These beverages, frequently laced with cinnamon, chili peppers, oregano, or cloves, struck the European palate as vile.

Travelers nonetheless brought home recipes for the strange drinks, together with tales of their reputed therapeutic prowess. Sugar crept into the recipes, and almost at once, Europeans developed a huge appetite for chocolate. Today, some of the most prized chocolates emerge from European candy factories.

In the United States, per capita chocolate consumption already exceeds 12 pounds per year. Europeans tend to eat even more. Though physicians no longer prescribe chocolate as aids to digestion, lung ailments, or ulcers, research suggests that self-medicating ourselves with at least some of these products—especially those made from dark chocolate—may achieve real benefits, especially in maintaining cardiovascular health.

While this should not be interpreted as reason to overindulge in these fat-rich confections, Norman K. Hollenberg of the Harvard Medical School in Boston



Copy of 1688 engraving by Phillippe Sylvestre Dufour of South American native with a chocolate pot and drinking cup at his feet and a molinet to stir the medicinal brew in his left hand. In his book *The Chocolate Tree*, Allen M. Young of the Milwaukee Public Museum relates one possible derivation for the drink's name. As individuals stirred the drink into a bubbly froth using a molinet—a paddled device—they heard a choco-choco sound. The end of the word chocolate may have come from *atte* or *atle*, which is Aztec for water, he notes. (Johnson & Wales' Culinary Archives & Museum)

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Wednesday, August 11, 2004

Profile: Deconstructing Callebaut

A Canadian visitor to chocophile.com asked some very interesting questions about Callebaut and the confusion between Barry-Callebaut (the Belgian chocolate manufacturer) and Bernard Callebaut, the Canadian chocolatier.

Barry-Callebaut is now one of the largest chocolate manufacturers in Belgium, Europe, and the world. The company was founded in 1911 and was purchased by the Swiss company Suchard Toblerone in 1980. More recently they merged with Cacao Barry to form Barry-Callebaut, and Callebaut is just one of the brands manufactured by the Barry-Callebaut company.

As one of the largest chocolate manufacturers in Belgium Barry-Callebaut makes the chocolate that many Belgian chocolatiers (including Neuhaus) use.

Bernard Callebaut arrived in Canada in 1982 (presumably leaving Belgium as a consequence of the purchase of Callebaut by Suchard Toblerone) and started making confections. The chocolate that Bernard C (as we shall refer to the Canadian company henceforth) uses is made by the Callebaut company.

Callebaut makes something like 400 different formulas, we have been told, many of which are custom blends for chocolatiers such as Bernard C. Only some of these approximately 400 blends are available to the general public. The [Chocosphere](#) web site has a list of some Callebaut products and includes blend numbers in their catalog listings. For example, the Thick Bittersweet Block (formula Belgian

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FAIR TRADE

Craig and Jo visited Belize on holiday and drank a local drink flavoured with cocoa beans and spices made by Mayan farmers whose ancestors had originally domesticated the cocoa bean. Inspired by the taste and aroma of the rainforests, they decided to recapture them in Green & Black's Maya Gold chocolate - a blend of intense dark chocolate with a refreshing twist of orange, perfectly balanced by the warmth of cinnamon, nutmeg and vanilla. Maya Gold was the first product to be awarded the Fair Trade mark.

DISCOVERY

They discovered a large chocolate corporation had offered these Mayan farmers lucrative prices to plant hybrid cocoa trees instead of the indigenous variety, only to subsequently slash prices as world cocoa prices plummeted, leaving the community in economic ruin.

We offered to trade direct with the growers, paying them a premium for their organic cocoa and an additional Fairtrade price.

We now have a long-term contract with them, guaranteeing to buy all the cocoa they can produce. This security has helped them to improve the quality of life and provide a better education for their families.



ORGANIC

When we started making chocolate it soon dawned on us that organic and fairtrade are inextricably linked. What's better for the planet has to be better for the people working on it.

Unlike plantation-grown cacao, our farmers grow their cocoa trees under the shade of indigenous trees alongside other crops, including avocado, pineapple, coffee, papaya and bananas. The canopy of shade trees - mahogany, cedar and teak - are grown above the cacao trees and ginger is occasionally grown underneath.

BIODIVERSITY

By having a variety of cocoa and shade trees as well as interspersing this with other plants the biodiversity within the organic cocoa farm is greatly increased. This is one of the major elements, which can help fight off some of the many diseases like black pod, that can decimate a cocoa crop.

We don't spray our cocoa with pesticides, so the farmers working on it don't suffer from the health related problems that farmers growing the cocoa conventionally may suffer from.



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Background

Daniel Peter, founder of the Peter Chocolate Company, started his career as a candle maker in Vevey, Switzerland. When the use of oil as lamp fuel began to develop, he looked to other business opportunities. Coincidentally, he found himself smitten by the eldest daughter of François-Louis Cailler, a Swiss chocolate manufacturer who perfected the chocolate manufacturing process and invented the first refiner. Peter converted his candle making manufacturing facility and soon became a successful manufacturer of chocolate.

Competition grew quickly and Peter realized he would have to work on creating a unique chocolate product. In 1867 he began experimenting with milk as an ingredient. Eight years later, he was able to market his new product -- milk chocolate -- after resolving one final problem; removing the water content from the milk to prevent mildewing.

Peter was helped by a neighbor, a baby food manufacturer named Henri Nestlé, who was encountering the same problem in his manufacturing process. By working together, a solution was found. Over the next several years, Peter refined his recipe and began winning medals at world expositions for his chocolate creations. His highest honor came in Amsterdam in 1883 where he won a gold medal. Peter has since been hailed as the inventor of milk chocolate and the formula he developed is still in use today.

In 1901, a principal of an American sales company happened to be in England and tasted Peter's "Gala" bar, as it was called in that country. Quite taken by the flavor, he arranged for his firm -- Lamont, Corliss and Company -- to be the North American sales representative of Peter's chocolate, all of which was imported.

Business grew and in 1908, the Swiss Peter's Chocolate Company began manufacturing in the United States at a plant in Fulton, New York. Eventually, Lamont, Corliss and Company purchased the Peter's Chocolate Company, which became Nestlé's Chocolate Company in 1951.

In 2002, Peter's Chocolate was purchased by Cargill, Incorporated. Peter's sells a wide variety of high quality chocolates and other products, including: Milk, Semi-sweet, Bittersweet, Unsweetened Chocolates (Liquors); Peter's Original" White Chocolate, Breakups (Milk & Semi-sweet), Icecap® Coatings, Peter's Firstcoat, Peter's Gourmet Chips, Peanut Icecap®, Premium Ice Cream Coatings, Peter's Bulk & Liquid Caramel; Sugar Free Coatings in Milk, Dark and White. These products are sold in all 50 states and Canada by a sales force of 6 District Managers. Customers include: confectionery manufacturers, bakeries, candy craft supply shops, and ice cream novelty manufacturers.

We encourage you to contact our experienced Peter's District Sales Managers to assist in satisfying your needs.

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Characteristics	Total Fat Content	Approx. 32.0%
	Water Content	Max. 1.0%
	Fineness	Approx. 20 - 22 µm
Article #	Bittersweet Chocolate Couverture 6438	1603840758
Composition	Cocoa Mass	48.0%
	Cocoa Butter	12.0%
	Sugar	40.0%
	On top of this recipe, we add 0.3 to 0.5% Lecithin E322 and 0.01% natural vanilla.	
Characteristics	Total Fat Content	Approx. 38.0%
	Water Content	Max. 1.0%
	Fineness	Approx. 18 - 20 µm
Article #	Milk Chocolate Couverture VM 32 (Continental)	2203240758
Composition	Cocoa Mass	12.0%
	Cocoa Butter	21.0%
	Whole Milk Powder	19.0%
	Sugar	48.0%
	On top of this recipe, we add 0.3 to 0.5% Lecithin E322 and 0.01% natural vanilla.	
Characteristics	Total Fat Content	Approx. 32.0%
	Milk Fat Content	Approx. 4.9%
	Water Content	Max. 1.0%
	Fineness	Approx. 18 - 22 µm
Article #	Milk Chocolate Couverture VM 36/50 (Superior)	2253640758
Composition	Cocoa Mass	8.0%
	Cocoa Butter	26.0%
	Whole Milk Powder	22.0%
	Sugar	44.0%
	On top of this recipe, we add 0.3 to 0.5% Lecithin E322 and 0.01% natural vanilla.	
Characteristics	Total Fat Content	Approx. 36.0%
	Milk Fat Content	Approx. 5.7%
	Water Content	Max. 1.0%
	Fineness	Approx. 20 - 22 µm
Article #	Milk Chocolate Couverture VM 38/60 (Super Premium)	2263840758
Composition	Cocoa Mass	10.0%
	Cocoa Butter	26.0%
	Whole Milk Powder	27.0%
	Sugar	37.0%
	On top of this recipe, we add 0.3 to 0.5% Lecithin E322 and 0.01% natural vanilla.	
Characteristics	Total Fat Content	Approx. 38%
	Milk Fat Content	Approx. 7%
	Total Cocoa Solids	Approx. 36%
	Water Content	Max. 1%
	Fineness	Approx. 20 - 22 µm
Article #	White Chocolate Couverture WN (Premium)	2503340758; 2503380758
Composition	Cocoa Butter	30.0%
	Whole Milk Powder	15.0%



Without a doubt, this is the finest couverture that we have ever created. Extreme Dark" has a 75% cocoa content. This exquisite chocolate is a blend of some of the world's finest cocoa beans. The beans have been carefully roasted to perfection, finely milled, and then conched for forty hours in our state-of-the-art facility in Germany.

Extreme Dark" Chocolate has an irresistible bouquet, and a complex flavor reminiscent of the world's finest red wines. With a cocoa butter content of 40%, this superb couverture can be used for molding, enrobing, and for any baking application where you want intense flavor without the bitterness or sour notes that are characteristic of some other high cocoa content couvertures.

Extreme Dark" chocolate is available now from Schokinag, the European chocolate "without the attitude".

Storage Conditions	At temperatures below 20 °C and at a relative humidity of below 60% in odor free atmosphere.
Shelf Life	At storage conditions mentioned above: Min. of 20 months.
Packed	In foilbags of 10 kg 1 bag per carton (800 kg per pallet)

Article #	Extreme Dark" Chocolate Chips 1754070758	
Composition	Cocoa Mass	75%
	Sugar	25%
	On top of this recipe, we add 0.3 to 0.5% Lecithin E322 and 0.01% natural vanilla.	
Characteristics	Total Fat Content	Approx. 40%
	Total Cocoa Solids	Approx. 75.0%
	Water Content	< 1.5%

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GUANAJA

The Bitter Dark Valrhona Chocolate Grand Cru of Dark Chocolate from South America - 70% cocoa

Guanaja is the best known of the Valrhona Grands Crus as it was the first to delight the lovers of bitter dark chocolate.

On 30th July 1502 Christopher Columbus landed on the Island of Guanaja, offshore from Honduras. Valrhona has given this legendary name to the most powerful of its chocolate Grands Crus.

Valrhona has rediscovered the best cocoas, Criollos (tree) with the aroma of flowers and fruit, and the Trinitarios (tree) typified by a strong bouquet to mix them all together in an exceptional bitterness.

Its intense taste brought out by hints of flowers reveals intensity - exceptionally long on the palate.



- Case with 4 squares of chocolate
- Chocolate bar for tasting occasions - 75g
- Tin box with 18 squares of chocolate
- Presentation box with 57 squares of chocolate