

**COCOA
NECT.**

Kokoa Kamili, Tanzania



REGION: Kilombero Valley

VARIETY: Trinitario

SOURCE: Social Enterprise

FERMENTATION: Fully controlled,
3 layered box system over six days

FLAVOUR NOTES: Cherry, apple, hay,
good chocolate, high acidity

CERTIFICATIONS: Certified organic

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

Back in 2012 two men with the same dream and vision met each other in Tanzania, the East African country known for its vast wilderness areas. Brian LoBue and Simran Bindra had both wandered the Tanzanian cocoa fields in previous occupations and noticed the ground they walked on had far more to offer than was currently being realized. The combination of a diverse growing environment and strong, well developed genetics, the cocoa beans are very well equipped to give more back to the world, if only the nurturing would be applied with greater care and attention. At this time, there was hardly any incentive for smallholder farmers to process the beans properly because the bulk cocoa industry would take up the beans regardless of their quality.

After a period of driving around the country exploring the rural areas, meeting with local farmers, village people and community heads, Brian and Simran found the best place to start their venture in the Kilombero

Valley part of the Morogoro region. After this instructive road trip, Kokoa Kamili has been set up in a small village called Mbingu, bordering the breathtaking Udzungwa Mountain National Park. This area offers shelter for a diverse range of animals, which, amongst others, includes a population of mountain elephants, a great variety of flora and all kinds of other crops such as rice, maize and bananas. The big river in the valley plus runoff from the protected uplands provides all the flora and fauna water during a dry period lasting 7-8 months.

Kokoa Kamili has created a very happy farmer community in a very short time, by helping them understand the importance of a good growing environment and purchasing the wet cocoa at a premium price. One of their growers is the Mbingu Sisters, a convent in the village, that operates a 30 acre cocoa farm. The income the Sisters earn from their farm goes to support much of the charitable work that they conduct - including operating a hospital, school and orphanage in the area. In total they collect their wet cocoa from 19 adjacent villages and around 2500 different farmers. Each and every single bean can be traced back to the original farmer who has contributed to the total amount purchased.

After purchasing the wet cocoa, it is brought to a custom built fermentation line operating a three layered box system. During the six days of fermentation, the beans are constantly monitored on temperature and shuffled between the boxes on a predefined method. Then the fermented beans are taken out and placed on drying tables where the sun takes care of the drying process until a moisture level of 6.5% has been reached. The beans are then ready for grading and hand selection before they are bagged and palletized. In order to obtain a consistent and even taste profile throughout the whole amount of dried and palletized beans, the final step of the process takes the beans out from the bags and reshuffles them again, before finally putting them back in bags.

“Kokoa Kamili has created a very happy farmer community in a very short time”

In a very short time Brian and Simran of Kokoa Kamili have created a craft fermented and dried bean, which reaches the high standards of the world’s best craft chocolate makers and patisseries. We are very happy

and proud to have established a partnership with these entrepreneurs and cocoa aficionados!



REVIEW BY

Philipp Kauffmann

Chief Grower, Original Beans

This is the first time we fully trust a company other than ourselves to develop a bean. From the 2014 to the 2015 harvest, we have seen fantastic quality improvements and organic certification is on the way. Finally, another excellent fine flavor cacao from Africa is available to craft chocolate makers.



TASTE PROFILE

The beans have a fantastic sourness enriched by fruity notes, specifically apples and cherries. There is a very interesting dried vegetative undertone which is complementary to the pallet of fruity flavors. The after tone has a good chocolatey taste combined with an extremely fruity explosion and a good acidity. The bitterness is a very friendly one.

CHOCOLATE:

ACIDITY:

BITTERNESS:



Mountains of the Moon™, DR Congo



REGION: Mountains of the Moon™, DR Congo

VARIETY: Trinitario / Forastero mix

SOURCE: Social enterprise

FERMENTATION: Fully controlled crate fermentation system, duration 6 days

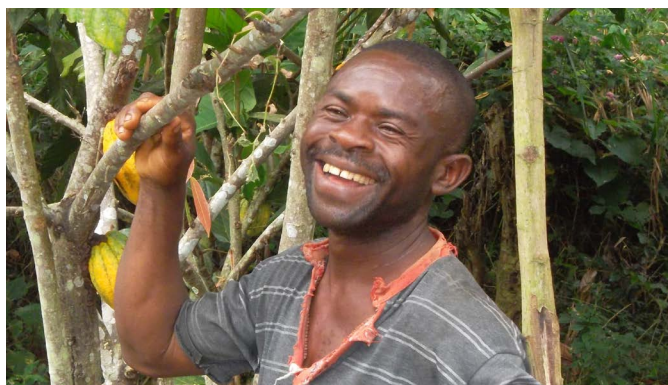
FLAVOUR NOTES: Cherries, apricots and a stir of perky spices

CERTIFICATIONS: Certified organic (EU, NOP, JAS), Fair For Life (FFL), Fairtrade (FLO) in preparation

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

Born and raised in a family of wine growers from the upper Rhine Valley in the South of Germany, Clemens Fehr discovered early in life that his heart and soul were closely connected to nature. After his PhD in forest ecology and 7 years of work experience in South East Asia, he arrived in Uganda in 1999 to train young foresters. At the same time he tried to link his inherent interest in fine food and wine with nature conservation and started a vanilla plantation in a patch of remnant forest. Two years into his stay in the region he married Corinne, the daughter of a French-Congolese family of coffee growers. Together they expanded the vanilla activities on the fertile grounds of the Mountains of the Moon™ right at the border of DR Congo and Uganda.

Also known as the Rwenzori, the snow-covered peaks of the mountain range are the legendary source of the river Nile and originate from the massive tectonic forces that shaped the Albertine Rift valley. The valley



separates the savannah planes of East Africa from the vast rainforests of the Congo basin. These mountains are also part of the Virunga National Park; the oldest and biologically most diverse national park in Africa and home to the rare mountain gorillas. Its slopes are characterized by a unique and very mild micro-climate. Under the canopy of robust nature, this region produces some of the finest fruits and beans. The Arabica coffee from the region was long famed for its smoothness and for making extra foamy espresso. Besides vanilla and Arabica coffee, today many farmers cultivate cocoa, usually in agroforestry systems with shade trees and in combination with a variety of other crops. ►

Clemens and Corinne initiated a project that assists cocoa farmers to establish cooperates and to obtain organic and fair trade certification. In an area of extreme poverty, the partnership realized a cohesive community and now constitute the lifeline for nearly 1000 families. The project also supports farmers in bio-dynamic farming and assures that only fully ripe cocoa pods are harvested. The ripe pods are opened in the field and delivered to a fermentation center the same day where the fresh cocoa is fermented according to strictly defined protocols. In order to obtain the desired flavor, the fermenting cocoa is closely monitored on temperature and aeration over a period of six days. After fermentation, the beans are spread for drying under greenhouse cover. A wooden floor helps to reduce acidity and to obtain a smooth flavor in the cocoa. Before bagging, the cocoa beans are cleaned and hand sorted.

The result is a fully traceable and homogenous selection of finest beans that are grown and processed with love and care, and in harmony with nature.

Touched by the story, the unique taste and rich bouquet of these cocoa beans, the Mountains of the Moon™ deserve a prominent role in the world of craft chocolate making. We are very happy to be part of this journey.



REVIEW BY



Anna and Marc from Blanxart

Sitting on bags of Mountains of the Moon™ cocoa beans

Great care during growing and processing, combined with a clement highland terroir, makes this cocoa outstanding and one of its kind. At Blanxart we had a great experience over the last years. Our Dark Chocolate 82% Congo has become a bestseller because of its amazing taste and hints of red fruits. Fruity and tangy is the perfect combination for a single origin, purist, dark bean-to-bar chocolate!

TASTE PROFILE

We have never encountered a Forastero-Trinitario blend with such a rich and interesting bouquet of distinct flavors of cherries and apricots and a very smooth chocolate taste. The initial sensation is followed by a powerful stir of perky spices. A unique cacao and instantly addictive experience!

CHOCOLATE:

ACIDITY:

BITTERNESS:



Produits des Îles S.A. (PISA), Haiti



REGION: Grand Nord

VARIETY: Trinitario and Criollo

SOURCE: Social Enterprise

FERMENTATION: Fully controlled,
4 layered box system over six to seven days

FLAVOUR NOTES: Rich bouquet of floral
and citric flavors, lemon and hints of
caramel

CERTIFICATIONS: Certified organic (EU
and NOP)

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

More than a century ago, the Dufort family initiated their first activities in the fields of coffee. The fertile Haitian soils have historically been a good ground for growing coffee. Back then, Haiti was among the top producers and the Dufort family was one of the first exporters of Haiti coffee beans. In 1970, they decided to make their own roasted coffee and started the REBO brand that until today is Haiti's number one coffee roasting company. Over the years, they have worked, grown and learned together with farmers and farmer communities. Their commitment to quality has helped creating awareness of the value behind the fruits being grown.

With the same philosophy in hand, the Dufort family started a new operation in 2014, dedicated to help the country's cocoa growers understand the value of their product and increase the appraisal level of the end user. Under the name of Produits des Îles SA (PISA), they have

built a facility in the North of Haiti where the majority of the cocoa grows. Situated in the middle of five main regions and embraced by the mountainous territory of the Plaine du Nord, the premises finds itself less than a three hour drive away from the furthest cocoa plantation in the region. Blessed with a rich soil, the area shelters different crops like coffee, banana and even the oranges used for the famous Grand Marnier liquor.

Under the supervision of PISA co-founder Gilbert and the guidance of experienced agronomist Max Edouard accompanied by French agronomist Aline, the company has created a network of more than 1500 organic certified farmers in a short amount of time. The average size of a plantation is relatively small with a single hectare being the largest. PISA's objective is to create a strong relationship by making the farmers understand the value of their own plantation. They visit the farmers on a regular basis, talk with them, provide them with better equipment and share their knowledge on how to get the best out of their trees. The effects of their efforts are becoming more and more visible, as average production has improved and farmer's income more than doubled. ►

In the past farmers had to bring their cocoa beans to market places where big companies were dominating the purchases. This resulted in poor quality and low prices for the beans.

PISA purchases the wet cocoa straight from the pod, driving around the area six days a week. The PISA truck is accompanied by one quality manager checking whether the pods are ripe and picking the right beans straight after opening the pods. The baba – wet cocoa – is then carried in buckets to the premises where it is put into wooden fermentation boxes. During the next 160 hours, the cocoa beans are monitored closely on temperature and flipped over to four different box levels.

After the fermentation, the beans are sun-dried in tunnels especially designed for optimal air circulation. When the cocoa beans have reached a humidity level of between 6.5 and 7 percent the drying process is completed. Before bagging PISA uses a gravity table to remove all the dust, stones, flats and other non-cocoa related matter, resulting in a batch of clean and properly selected cocoa beans.

The romance started with coffee. Now the same love and care is brought to family-run cocoa plantations. Livelihoods are improving, bringing more opportunities to the households of all the people PISA works with. We are very happy that our paths have crossed and hope we can contribute for a very long time.



REVIEW BY



Jesse Last

Sourcing Manager Taza

We choose our origin partners carefully at Taza Chocolate. Of course, we look for exceptional cacao beans. But we also need to trust our partners and their vision. We believe in PISA's team and the work they do with farmers to transform Haiti's cacao sector.

TASTE PROFILE

PISA beans are like a walk in the park in early springtime overjoyed by early flower blossoming whilst sipping your lemon drink. Floral notes lead the taste experience finished with a good presence of lemon at the end. The good amount of chocolate taste and wide range of fruity and floral notes makes it one of the richest beans out there!

CHOCOLATE:

ACIDITY:

BITTERNESS:



Gran Colombia Hartón Pacifico, Colombia



REGION: Tumaco

VARIETY: Trinitario

SOURCE: Social Enterprise

FERMENTATION: Fully controlled, 3 staged wooden box system over five to six days

FLAVOUR NOTES: Silk softness combined with sweet banana, walnuts and floral notes

CERTIFICATIONS: None

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

Passionate about the genetics of cocoa beans and the impact of the post-harvest process on the flavor profile of cocoa, three years ago, Alvaro Afanador and his partners decided the time was right to look for a unique proposition of variety, terroir and post-harvest control mechanism. Alvaro has spent more than thirty years working in the fields of cocoa as a technical agronomist, and has been influential to the Colombian cocoa development. As a member of the Colombian cocoa federation, co-founder of Cooperative Cooproagro and currently as co-founder of Gran Colombia, he has seen almost every inch of cocoa plantation Colombia nurtures.

In selecting the right variety and productive soil, Alvaro has always found something unique in the Tumaco region. The tropical climate with an abundance of rainfall during the year contribute to the existence of a good amount of rivers, both big and small, such as the Mira and Canaupi. The flat land with small valleys harbor peaceful jungles and mangroves providing a

home to many animals. The biodiverse landscape offers an excellent ground for the native cocoa tree producing regional hybrids as a part of the Trinitario family. In general the trees are relatively high with a thick trunk and white bark, making it one a kind.

Back in 2006, Alvaro was introduced to Ms. Gladys Ramos, Venezuelan cocoa expert and author of many scientific cocoa related articles. Gladys is now in charge of the facility running the post-harvest process of Hartón Pacifico located in Inguapi del Carmen in the middle of several smaller villages and rural municipalities in the department of Nariño. Together they work very closely with the farmer families, currently not more than 150 in total. The farmers produce their cocoa pods from native (Hartón) cocoa trees and grow their fruits in a natural way, without any nonorganic inputs.

The people of Hartón Pacifico assist the farmers, sharing knowledge in the treatment of trees using the appropriate tools, the right time of harvesting, selecting



the healthy beans from the pods and many more. The result creates a consistent quality wet cocoa bean. The extra care and efforts are encouraged by the farmers receiving a higher price than what they normally would get for their beans.

On the same day of the harvest, the cocoa beans will arrive at the facility of Hartón Pacifico where they will undergo a fermentation and drying protocol, which is officially registered as "Flor de Baba". Where normally the cocoa would have been fermented in buckets or sisal bags close to the farmer's home, now the cocoa beans enter a purpose built fermentation room where temperature and ventilation are controlled in order to administer the fermentation process. During the next five to six days, the cocoa beans stay in wooden boxes and are turned around three times before fully fermented. The drying takes place outside on wooden drying beds and inside a plastic covered tunnel. Sunshine, proper ventilation and shuffling the beans regularly take out the acidity and leave you with perfectly dried cocoa beans.

On the Pacific coast of Colombia's far southwest, in one of the poorest and politically troubled areas of Colombia, Hartón Pacifico cherishes the existence of the ancient native cocoa trees. They help the local farmers and provide the market with a new quality cocoa. We are very enthusiastic to add this specialty quality cocoa to our preferred selection of beans.



REVIEW BY



Sue Tavares and Tomoko Suga

from Feitoria do Cacao

Cocoa beans from Tumaco Hartón Pacifico have a unique character. Delicate and complex aromas, elderberry flowers, providing a noble and elegant chocolate. Soft as silk, spreading rich flavors and a loving aftertaste. These cocoa beans are precious like a jewel!

TASTE PROFILE

A very smooth and rich chocolate taste enriched by a natural sweetness due to the presence of sweet bananas. A taste of walnuts will bring your feet back on the ground led by a charming floral end note.

CHOCOLATE:



ACIDITY:



BITTERNESS:



Nahua, Costa Rica

REGION: Upala

VARIETY: Trinitario

SOURCE: Social Enterprise

FERMENTATION: Fully controlled, 4 staged wooden box system over five to six days

FLAVOUR NOTES: Rich notes of cherries, subtle grapefruit and the full body of caramel

CERTIFICATIONS: None

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

For over four centuries, family members of Juan Pablo Buchert, founder of Nahua, have been involved in agriculture. Although he started his professional career in the financial consulting industry, his path accidentally crossed into cocoa plantations where he made an instant and subsequently lifelong connection. He now continues his family's agricultural tradition with passion, commitment and confidence as the leader of Nahua, a social enterprise committed to quality, craft produced cocoa that makes a positive social impact.

In the northernmost reaches of Costa Rica, in the small hamlet of San José de Upala, Nahua has built an impressive, modern facility to manage the highest quality fermentation and drying of cocoa beans sourced directly from smallholder producers. From this strategic location, Nahua has good access to the unique selection of native cacao trees in the Upala and Guatuso regions. The oldest plantations are located on the banks of peaceful rivers, whose waters flow into Lake Nicaragua.

Other plantations are more remote; each with its own history and fascinating mix of trinitario and criollo genetics. In general, the region has an abundance of fertile soil that nourishes the cocoa trees and contributes to the unique flavor profile of the cocoa beans.

The Nahua team works closely with smallholder growers in the Upala area, around 240 are part of the sourcing community. Nahua has initiated several programs to improve smallholder producer livelihoods. Before Nahua's involvement, farming knowledge and basic resources were underdeveloped and in many cases nonexistent. Now, Nahua's field technicians directly advise smallholder producers on how to nurture and maintain their trees while increasing productivity and embracing sustainable growing practices.

Nahua has launched an innovative Cacao Renovation Program, which focuses on increasing productivity and family income of smallholder producers. This includes pruning and shade management, part of which is financed by Nahua and returned through a producer pay-back scheme.

Nahua is committed to contributing to environmental and social development of communities by reinforcing reforestation and sustainable farming. Nahua also ►

supports initiatives that strengthen smallholder grower communities; this includes mobilizing volunteer doctor visits to perform health checks and medical services to rural families who live in remote areas.

As part of their strictly controlled post-harvest protocol, Nahua has built a custom facility with a pre-defined fermentation process that allows cocoa beans to develop in accordance with the desired physical and biochemical changes, matching the high standards and consistency of prized cocoa beans. Nahua's field team directly sources freshly harvested cocoa beans from smallholder plantations and brings them to the post-harvest facility within twelve hours. Once arrived, team members place wet beans in large, custom-built wooden boxes on four separate levels. The beans descend each level in the fermentation process under the watchful eye of Nahua's post-harvest management team, approximately one and a half days per box. After five to six days, the fully fermented beans are placed on elevated beds in an expansive greenhouse subjected to solar drying. Over the next ten days, appropriate airflow, consistent agitation and skilled oversight ensure that the beans reach a 7% moisture level. Nahua's skilled post-harvest team meticulously removes any non-cocoa matter to ensure the finished product is a clean selection of high quality cocoa beans.

When talking with Juan Pablo one notices the passion and devotion he has for bringing out the real value of superior quality and the commitment to making a meaningful social impact. We are honored and delighted to be a part of this mission.

REVIEW BY



From left to right: Kiwook Shin, Sukhyun Choi, Inchul Kang

Inchul Kang

from The Roasting Masters

Korean consumers have extremely high standards and expect both outstanding quality and deep authenticity in their products. Nahua's cocoa beans have exceeded these expectations, and have brought smiles to the faces of many customers. The complex and deep flavor profile of the Maleku beans and the fruity, balanced acidity of the Caracche beans are both excellent choices for crafting exceptional bean to bar chocolate.

TASTE PROFILE

The Nahua cocoa beans embody the rich taste one expects when tasting Costa Rica. The warm and full cherry taste combined with subtle grapefruit notes and the full body of caramel elements make you think you're enjoying a full glass of Bordeaux Grand Cru red wine. Warm, sturdy and gentle at the same time.

CHOCOLATE:

ACIDITY:

BITTERNESS:



Finca Aguas Claras, Colombia



REGION: Meta

VARIETY: Criollo & Forastero

SOURCE: Finca Aguas Claras Estate

FERMENTATION: Fully controlled, 3 staged wooden box system, for 8 days

FLAVOUR NOTES: Chocolate, fresh fruits, citrus notes and nutty flavours

CERTIFICATIONS: None

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

When working with Finca Aguas Claras cocoa, it's hard to imagine that this estate in Central Colombia has only planted their first cocoa trees seven years ago. In this short time, the team managed to build a burgeoning cocoa business and produce beautiful beans, despite being in an area which until recently was a major conflict zone.

The Meta region first and foremost is a stunning region. Part of the Llanos tropical grassland plain, its distinct wetlands which are created during the wet season, are home to over 70 different species of water birds. The region's warm climate, averaging 29° C throughout the year, is favourable to the birds and perfect for the cultivation of tropical food crops.

The region is known for its beauty, but also as one of the countries' post-conflict zones, as it was heavily affected by guerillas and illegal drug trading in the past. With

living circumstances improving and a very fertile land, many ambitious agriculturists have started to settle down in this area and plant fruit trees, palm oil and cocoa.

Henry Guiza Santamaria set up his farm in the municipality of Fuente de Oro in 2011, and called it Finca Aguas Claras. The farm already had some fruit plantations, and he experimented with different crops including fine flavour cocoa. As cocoa doesn't thrive in the full sun, Henry chose to plant banana plants and citrus fruit trees alongside the young cocoa trees. These would not only function as shade trees, but also positively influence the flavour of the cocoa.

After Henry's passing following an unfortunate accident, his son Harvey continued his father's work. An agronomist himself, Harvey currently runs the 20ha estate with help from technician Joaquin Gil, and 10-15 employees. Harvey, Joaquin and the rest of the team, work hard to preserve the unique flavours of these criollo/forastero hybrid varieties.

For the fermentation, Finca Aguas Claras built a box system. The fermentation process takes up to 8 days during which keeping an even temperature is of the utmost importance. ►

Drying of the beans takes place on wooden tables, under the bright sun, though they are shielded by a plastic cover to prevent rain from damaging the beans. Drying the beans for 5 days after the fermentation, ensures the maximum humidity level of the beans lowers to 7 percent.

Although the cocoa crops are relatively young, Finca Aguas Claras has already decided to put their focus on cocoa. Parts of the farm where they cultivated palm oil before, have now been planted with new cocoa and citrus trees. In this decision, they were aided by the strong collaboration with neighboring farmers in the area. Farmers that are cultivating the same variety of cocoa and with the same devotion to the post-harvest treatment. And most importantly, farmers that share a drive to constantly improve and keep up the high standards for this unique cocoa.

The outcome of Finca Aguas Claras' devotion to fine flavour cocoa are beautiful fruity beans. We can't wait to taste all the different translations of this cocoa.



REVIEW BY



Sophie Jewett

from York Cocoa House

We've found the Meta cacao to have a flavour that just reminds me of a baked spiced banana loaf, it's delicate and creamy with a really low astringency. It's beautiful to discover such characterful flavours in the cacao that's clearly been cultivated and kept so diligently. We're looking forward to exploring more interesting combinations marrying our own dishes with the cacao from Meta."

TASTE PROFILE

The Finca Aguas Claras beans express a rich bouquet of fruity flavours, the same you may encounter sipping a glass of fine port. The cocoa will wrap you in warm and intense flavours of dried cherries, raisins and caramel.

Let these great beans warm your heart, sit back and wait for the incredible fresh aftertaste.

CHOCOLATE: 

ACIDITY: 

BITTERNESS: 



Fazenda Camboa Estate, Brazil



REGION: Bahia

VARIETY: Trinitario

SOURCE: Fazenda Camboa Estate

FERMENTATION: Sweatboxes in rows, covered with banana leaves for 5-7 days

FLAVOUR NOTES: Red fruit, hints of jasmine tea and a well-balanced deep, dark chocolate base.

CERTIFICATIONS: Certified Organic (NSDA, EU)

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

In the tropical rainforest in the Bahia region in Brazil, the Carvalho family has been growing cocoa since the 1940's. In 1989, their farms, including the Fazenda Camboa estate, were hit by one of the most widespread disease attacks known in the history of cocoa. The 'Witches Broom' fungus, which causes deformity of cocoa trees through uncontrolled growth of shoots, wiped out 70% of the country's cocoa sector in the subsequent years. Many cocoa farmers were forced to move elsewhere, leaving their cocoa plantations with trees that bore no more fruit.

Unlike many other farmers in the region, the Carvalho brothers Arthur and Eduardo decided not to abandon cocoa. Instead they made it their mission to revitalize the cocoa trees on the Fazenda Camboa farm. Throughout the 1990's they worked with tireless devotion together with an agronomist, and managed to develop several techniques to gradually rehabilitate the once-infected trees at their estate. The farm is now applying organic practices to support a rich diversity in natural enemies

of fungi, and to control diseases with integrated pest management.

Spread across more than 300 ha of lush rainforest, Fazenda Camboa is located in one of the most beautiful parts of the world. There are thousands of plant species to be found, and the cocoa grows along a vast array of banana, açai and coconut trees.

On the estate, you will not only find the orange, red and yellow cocoa pods growing on the base of the cocoa trees, it is also home to many exotic animals. Hundreds of different species of colorful birds can be spotted flying above the trees, while different types of monkeys jump between the branches and curious looking sloths can be found high in the trees, lazily munching away on leaves and branches.

The organic farming proved valuable to the rainforest, and led to a noticeable increase in birds at the plantation (specifically many multi-colored parakeets can now be spotted). It also means that the runoff from the farm which ends up in the nearby river and ultimately the ocean, is no longer contaminated with toxic chemicals.

After the widespread losses in the 1990's, the cocoa trees at the farm are healthy once again. The Camboa ►

brothers obviously didn't do this alone. Having grown up on a cocoa farm, Arthur and Eduardo live and breathe cocoa, and they form a close-knit team with their workers.

Next to their salary, the workers receive an additional compensation depending on the amount of cocoa they harvest or process, which leads to an above average income. This in turn is one of the reasons Fazenda Camboa is a popular place to work and has a very low turn-over of staff. Also, the Carvalho brothers support the workers' families, specifically their children, by supporting the local school and the local bus system.

The rich biodiversity of the region and the special care during harvest and post-harvest, are reflected by the unique and fruity flavor profiles of the Fazenda Camboa cocoa beans. To consolidate the rich taste, the beans of the different cocoa varieties (Trinitario and Forastero) are separated during post-harvest, as Trinitario beans require a longer fermentation to capture the best flavors.

The brothers and their workers are always looking to improve the fermentation processes. After conducting experiments, they found out that faster transportation and using smaller fermentation boxes led to a higher quality cocoa and more uniformity between batches. Once the fermentation process is finished, the drying takes place using the natural warmth of the sun, usually for 7 days. After a final quality check, the cocoa is then packed in bags, and ready to enchant chocolate makers across the globe.

It is thanks to the hard-work and perseverance of Eduardo, Arthur and their team, that the world once again can enjoy the beautiful beans from the Fazenda Camboa estate. We are proud to be a partner of the Carvalho brothers and want to aid their mission to revive the cocoa farming in Bahia. Most importantly: we welcome chocolate makers around the world to turn these cocoa beans into mind-blowing chocolate.



REVIEW BY



Xavier Palau
Pangea Chocolate

"Just opening the bag the smell of the beans captivates you and when sorting the beans, you realize that the waste is very low and that they are treated with great care at origin. Fruity, creamy, wood and molasses notes from these beans are excellent characteristics to captivate in a single origin bar."

TASTE PROFILE

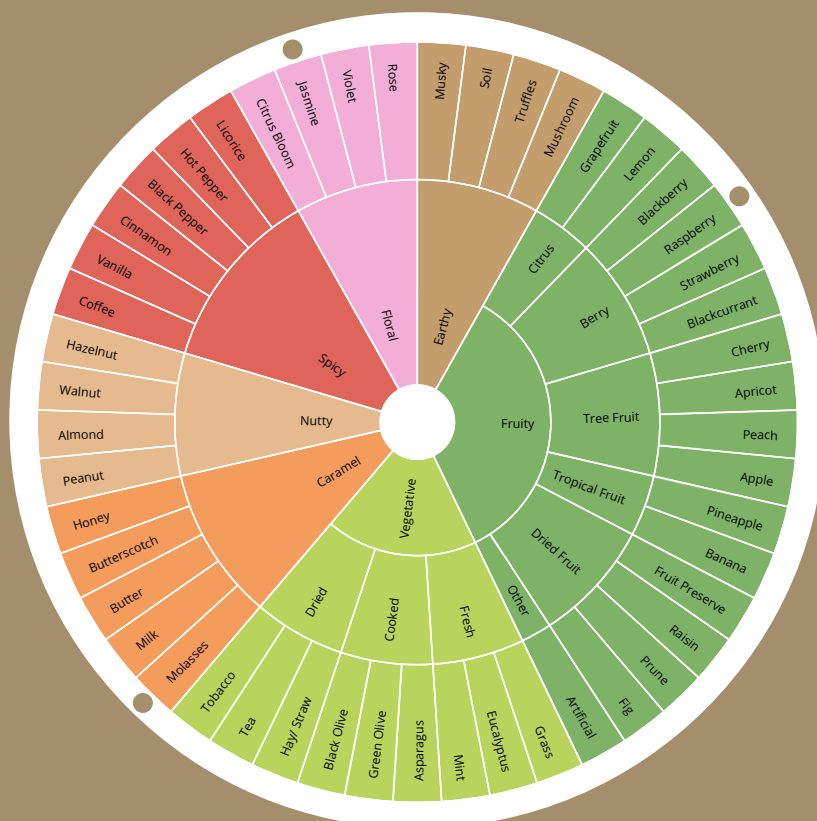
No need to buy a ticket to the tropics, as the tropics are coming to you!

You can instantly taste the rich flavors of the lush Brazilian rainforest in these beans. Distinct flavors of red fruit, especially raspberry, will charm your taste buds. Notes of red wine and jasmine tea as well as a deep dark chocolate base are also part of the mix. This is a fierce type of cocoa simply screaming to be made into a lush bar of chocolate.

CHOCOLATE:

ACIDITY:

BITTERNESS:



UCLS, Madagascar



REGION: Sambirano

VARIETY: Mix of trinitario, forastero and criollo

SOURCE: Union of cooperatives

FERMENTATION: fermentation boxes located in local collection centers

FLAVOUR NOTES: citrus, floral and cherries overtone

CERTIFICATIONS: Certified organic

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

Madagascar's cocoa history dates from the 1800's, when French colonialists first started planting cocoa trees on the Red Island. The trees adapted to the Malagasy climate and soil, and the cocoa has some unique fruity flavors which are celebrated by chocolate aficionados. In order to bring these beautiful beans to bean-to-bar makers around the world to have them turned into mouthwatering chocolate, Cocoonect established a partnership with the Union de Coopératives Lazan'ny Sambirano, or UCLS.

The cocoa of UCLS grows in the Sambirano region in the north-west of Madagascar. In this area, the cocoa grows amidst tall fruit trees with branches full of mangoes and bananas. Other food crops such as coffee, vanilla, peppers and pineapples can also be found in abundance. Even more special are the fragrant plants such as ylang ylang, vetiver and patchouli which make the air thick with humidity and aroma. Colorful wildlife

can be spotted amidst all this wilderness, with lemurs, an endemic primate, being one of the most rewarding to spot.

Because of limited infrastructure, many cocoa farmers in Sambirano were initially dispersed and non-organized. Therefore, they mainly sold their beans to middlemen, resulting in high price fluctuations and uncertain availability of transport means. By forming cooperatives, the farmers started to strengthen their negotiation position in the local market. Eventually, the UCLS union was created in 2009, which covers 24 small cooperatives and 400 farmers.

To add value to the cocoa beans of its members, UCLS started to export directly to foreign buyers. In addition, a bean quality program was launched which includes farmer trainings on organic agricultural practices, the selecting of best planting materials, and improved post-harvest techniques. Fermentation tanks were distributed to all villages to ensure optimal and uniform conditions. Technicians employed by the union closely monitor all farms of members, the fermentation and drying processes. With dedicated support from buyers - special thanks to Ethiquable - the union managed to increase the quality and value of their beans. All of ►

this has led to a vast increase in the quality and value of the cocoa. In 2016, Cocoonect started collaborating with UCLS and the French development organization SIDI to increase the Union's access to financial loans. This allowed further expansion of the Union's export activities and a secured off-take of organic premium beans and revenues to farmers.

Another important step was taken together with the French NGO Agriculteurs Français et Développement International (AFDI). A drinking water project in four villages was implemented and over 80% of the farmers' part of UCLS now have access to clean drinking water.

UCLS also mobilizes cocoa farmers to protect the Sambirano's unique rainforest ecosystem that is so important to both the characteristics of the cocoa beans and for local eco-tourism. With support from Rainforest Alliance a project was launched to plant new trees to battle soil erosion, and farmers are encouraged to grow the cocoa under a canopy of indigenous shade trees, which creates buffer zones around primary forests. This reduces the environmental pressure of monoculture on the habitat of the famous lemur monkeys in remaining forest fragments, and supports thousands of different species of birds, insects and lizards.

“Farmers are encouraged to grow the cocoa under a canopy of indigenous shade trees”

We not only believe the taste of this cocoa will blow you away, but moreover the cooperative's grass roots organization is something we celebrate and support to the fullest. Cocoonect is inviting new partners to support further growth of the union, and to expand agroforestry activities to protect Madagascar's unique flora and fauna.



REVIEW BY

Michael Coady

Suma Chocolate

The UCLS beans are really beautiful and have a great fat content. They are easy to work with and have very subtle and delicate flavours when processed.



TASTE PROFILE

These beans will surprise you with beautiful flavors, including some distinct orange notes. Tones of vanilla and light brandy notes can also be found, and there is a very rewarding citrus aftertaste. Fresh, friendly and full of flavor: these beans are simply screaming to be made into a fabulous bar of chocolate.

CHOCOLATE:



ACIDITY:



BITTERNESS:



Unocace, Ecuador



REGION: Los rios, Bolivar, Guayas and El Oro

VARIETY: Arriba Nacional

SOURCE: Cooperative

FERMENTATION: Fully controlled, 4 staged wooden box system over 4-5 days.

FLAVOUR NOTES: Earthy, dried plums and a touch of olives

CERTIFICATIONS: fairtrade, organic certified

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

Unocace's recipe for success is both brilliant and simple: high-quality fine flavour Arriba Nacional cocoa, a unified post-harvest protocol and an excellent quality control system. Put these ingredients together and the result is an outstanding cocoa bean which is praised by chocolate makers around the world.

The Unocace cooperative was born out of a project initiated by the European Union in 1996. This was, not coincidentally, around the time CCN51 quickly spread across Ecuador. CCN51 is a cocoa variety with some alluring benefits, including a high productivity and better resilience against diseases. Compared to Arriba Nacional however, there is a great loss in flavour. When many cocoa farmers switched from native varieties to CCN51, it became clear that the country's fine flavours needed to be conserved.

The Unocace cooperative accomplishes this by doing things differently. Not only do they pay farmers above market prices for their Nacional cacao, they also encourage them to use agro-forestry techniques. Chemical fertilizers and insecticides are widely available in the cocoa growing regions in Ecuador, making it a deliberate choice to farm organically. At Unocace they believe organic is the only choice

When entering a small-scale family Unocace farm, one immediately notices the difference with a non-organic CCN51 plantation. Instead of having trees planted in straight lines, the Unocace plantations offer a much livelier sight due to their intercropping system. The air is filled with sounds and aromas. The buzzing insects and the chatter of birds intermingle with the soft cackling of the chickens parading around the trees. Fragrant fruit trees grow among the cocoa, and provide the shade cocoa trees need to thrive. Of the different eco-friendly techniques that are used to improve the quality and quantity of the cocoa, one stands out. A growing number of Unocace farmers now has an irrigation system on their farm, which greatly benefits the crops during the dry season.

It is not only this natural way of farming which is ►

an essential step in securing top-notch quality, also the meticulously organized post-harvest protocol is imperative. Unocace built 11 buying stations across the 4 regions they work. The cocoa farmers harvest the cocoa pods and remove the pulp and beans from the husk on their farm, this so-called 'wet cocoa' is then transported to the nearest buying station. Here the fresh cocoa beans are fermented in wooden boxes, for around 96 hours, and turned every 2 days. Afterwards the cocoa beans are transferred to drying tables. These tables, covered with a mesh fabric, are set-up in a greenhouse like structure with an open ceiling. The beans are there to dry for 7 days, and diligently stirred every hour. Combined, all of these measures ensure that the beans are fully fermented and that the moisture can be released into the air so the cocoa dries evenly.

Once fully dried, the cocoa beans are transferred to Unocace's main buying station, ready to be bagged. Like in the previous steps, they spared no effort in optimizing their quality control in this final stage. Every lot arriving at the warehouse from the buying stations is checked. A random sample is drawn, and taken to their cocoa lab. Here they perform a cutting test to check the state of the beans, and even go as far as to make cocoa liquor out of the sample beans. Only if the cocoa has been fermented and dried to perfection, the cocoa has reached its full potential and is ready to be sent to chocolate makers.

***"Fragrant fruit trees grow among the cocoa,
and provide the shade cocoa trees need to thrive. "***

In a country where an increasing amount of cocoa is grown as an industrialized, monoculture crop, we are proud to have found a partner with a focus on high-quality fine flavour Nacional cocoa. Using innovative techniques and strictly organic practices, Unocace's hard work is a major contribution in protecting Ecuador's fine flavour heritage.



REVIEW BY



Martin Mayer

Martin Mayer Schokoladen

Cacao from Unocace is characterized by a very consistent fermentation. The pleasant, discreetly intense cacao note of this cacao has earthy approaches, and is rounded off by some green olive and dried plums.

TASTE PROFILE

This cacao has two sides which complement one another wonderfully well: a very smooth and rich chocolate taste *and* some fierce flavours originating from a hint of green olive and dried fruit. The intense chocolate notes have very decent acid, and are guided by a well-balanced bitterness. Together it gives you the perfect ingredient for a delicious bar of chocolate.

CHOCOLATE:

ACIDITY:

BITTERNESS:



GoGround, India



REGION: Idukki

VARIETY: Trinitario, Forastero

SOURCE: Social enterprise

FERMENTATION: Fully controlled box fermentation

FLAVOUR NOTES: Floral, spices and hints of red fruit

CERTIFICATIONS: organic certified

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

The green hills of the Idukki region are a delight for cocoa trees. The region sees plenty of sunshine and rainfall, and the cocoa pods are surrounded by fragrant spices and tall coconut trees. Despite these excellent conditions, fine flavour cocoa never received much attention in the Idukki region in South-India. Until GoGround entered the stage.

The GoGround team is headed by Ellen and Luca, a husband-and-wife team with an engineering background and a passion for creating change in rural communities. With support from the Italian RIVA foundation, GoGround set out to build a dedicated fermentation and drying center in Udumbannoor, Idukki, India.

At the farms in Idukki you can find an impressive number of food crops. Mango, papaya and coconuts grow everywhere, but even more enchanting are the fragrant spices. Pepper, nutmeg and cardamom grow in abundance on the farms in this region, and fill the air

with a spicy aroma.

GoGround buys from farmers which range from very small, some with just a few cocoa trees in their farm, to farmers which set more land available to cultivate cocoa. Driver Jilsmon and his assistant Baiju or Luca, drive across the region every week to buy the wet cocoa directly from the farmers. This weekly meeting helps to discuss the development of the harvest, and to give feedback on the bean quality and how this can be improved. They are committed to buying all the cocoa each farmer has available, regardless of the quantity or the season. And they make weekly payments when buying the cocoa, which is a welcome steady flow of income for the for the smallholder farmers.

This dedicated relationship is beneficial both ways as the farmers can trust the team comes every week, they will wait with breaking the pods until collection day. This ensures that only the freshest wet cocoa reaches GoGround's fermentation boxes.

The GoGround team built a post-harvesting facility with fermentation boxes in four rows, each row consisting of three boxes. Certified organic and non-organic are separately processed. As can be expected from two engineers, the research on processing the fresh cocoa beans are endless. Ongoing experiments ►

with variables such as pulp reduction, aeration and moisture-levels, ensure the team finds the best protocol which fits the beans and the seasonal and climatic circumstances. A big help in this are the test-batches of chocolate which local chocolate makers regularly make out of the GoGround beans. Discovering the nuances in flavour and how the quality of the bean translates into the finished product, has been invaluable to their work.

After fermentation, the cocoa moves to one of the seventeen drying tables. On these tables, the beans are constantly shuffled and monitored by a dedicated team of four ladies from the nearby village.

Once the drying stage is completed, the beans are sorted, and bagged in the bright white GoGround bags. These sturdy bags with inner liner protect the cocoa beans from the very humid conditions in South-India, and keep the beans safe during transportation.

In just a few short years the GoGround team managed to build a flourishing cocoa processing facility. But the young couple is eager to do more. On top of their wish list is hiring an agronomist, to give their farmers more hands-on support and organize agronomic training sessions. Adding another farmer group in a neighbouring region to their list of suppliers is also one of their ambitions. This would enlarge their impact and add new, slightly different flavours which they can't wait to unlock. Finally, their never-ending curiosity leads them to exploring alternatives beyond the beans – commercializing cocoa juice being one of them.

At the core of GoGround's philosophy is building committed relationships with their farmers, and creating a positive socio-economic impact in the beautiful Idukki region.

Their hard work is clearly paying off, and we are very happy to support the further growth of the Go Ground social enterprise and their efforts to put Idukki on the fine flavour cocoa map.



REVIEW BY

David Senk

Areté Chocolate



These beans are a delight from the time we open the bag until they are tempered and molded. You can tell that a great deal of thought and care goes into the post-harvest treatment, and the naturally high cocoa butter content makes the finished chocolate a dream to mold and gives it a wonderful mouthfeel and texture. Most important to us, though, is the flavor – and that's where Idukki shines – it is creamy with notes of butterscotch, honey, and subtle floral notes...simply delightful.

TASTE PROFILE

Please your grinder with these flavourful beans, the high fat content will have it spinning with delight. The result will be a chocolate, so sweet and creamy, it will make your mind spin as well. Butterscotch, caramel and honey notes, topped off by some very interesting fruity and floral notes... This cocoa is all you need for a mindblowing chocolate.

CHOCOLATE:



ACIDITY:



BITTERNESS:



Makira Gold, Solomon Islands

REGION: Guadalcanal, Makira, Western Province

VARIETY: Amelonado, Trinitario, Criollo

SOURCE: Social Enterprise

FERMENTATION: Box system

FLAVOUR NOTES: Honey, caramel, fruity, malty

CERTIFICATIONS: none - working towards organic

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

On the Solomon Islands, cocoa grows everywhere. Brian, half Solomon Islander, half Australian and his Solomon Islander first cousin Ronnie, saw the enormous potential of the brightly coloured cocoa pods. Not just potential for the cocoa beans to become amazing chocolate, but maybe even more importantly, the potential to boost rural development on the islands. The cousins joined forces and Makira Gold was born.

But how does one start a cocoa venture in a country consisting of more than 900 islands situated in the middle of the Pacific Ocean? Ronnie and Brian began close to home, by improving the quality of the cocoa that came from the farms from their extended family. Meanwhile, Brian realised that especially with the steep transportation costs, they needed to operate on a larger scale to create a real impact.

Makira Gold now buys directly from nine farmers, with plantation spread over three different islands. The farms

range from 1 ha to 40 ha and are a great example of a flourishing multi-crop system. On all plantations, you'll find bountiful tropical flora, including gorgeous orchids and tall fruit trees which double function as shade trees for the cocoa.

Cultivating cocoa in this tropical paradise comes with its own set of demands. While the humid conditions are excellent for growing cocoa, they make drying the beans very difficult. The hot air dryers that are traditionally used to speed up the drying process, often lead to smoke contamination. This makes most beans unsuitable for specialty single-origin chocolate. Therefore, Makira Gold only works with farmers who sun-dry the beans. Drying the beans on sago palm mats under the bright sun is a delicate and time-consuming process, but it does wonders to the taste of the bean. Innovation has arrived though, and solar dryers are now used by a growing number of farmers. These dryers shelter the beans from the rain, while hot air flows through to dry the cocoa consistently and evenly.

For Solomon's cocoa farmers a lack of commitment from buyers is especially a harsh reality, and as a result you'll see perfectly fine cocoa pods rotting away when an order fails to come in (on time). Makira Gold is

quality driven, and wants to support the farmers that are willing to put in the time and effort that is needed to go from a good bean, to a great bean. Therefore, not only do they guarantee regular purchasing, but they also pay 2 to 3 times the average market price. On top of that the enterprise provides practical support such as distributing grainpro bags and collecting full bags of cocoa when they arrive at the central wharf. In just a short while this adherence has proofed successful. Cocoa farmers are eager to join the Makira Gold family, as demonstrated by the number of bean samples piling up in Brian's kitchen where his table top grinder is spinning fulltime to make test batches of chocolate.

The Solomon Islands' unreliable infrastructure in transportation, banking and telecommunication makes Brian and Ronnie's perseverance even more admirable. Picture cocoa beans in jute bags on a breezy beach, where they are loaded onto a wobbly boat. From there the bags are carried on board a larger ship and sailed to the central warehouse. After a rigid final check and re-bagging, the long journey in containers can begin. Anyone would agree that this is a challenging process at best.

A seemingly uneventful introduction of grainpro bags, can make all the difference in this part of the world. Now that the Makira Gold cocoa beans are packed in these much sturdier bags, they are protected from both sea water and rain during the long voyage across the Pacific. This introduction, together with countless other small and big interventions, characterizes their endless motivation to improve cocoa farming on the islands.

Ranked 156 out of 188 countries in the UNDP Human Development Index, rural development in the Solomon

Islands is crucial. Cocoa farming has the potential to be a significant accelerator for sustainable economic growth. Although setting up a fine flavour enterprise is clearly a tough bean to crack in this remote location, Ronnie and Brian have shown they can face the countless challenges. Their continuous efforts directly contribute to an impactful and sustainable change for the island communities. Therefore, we are very glad to be Makira Gold's partner and from our side of the world be a part of their journey to stimulate change in rural communities through wonderful fine flavour cocoa.

REVIEW BY



Iris & Bob

Solkiki Chocolate

Solomon Islands is a new origin for us and the flavours of these beans are distinctively different from other origins that we have. It's wonderful seeing new origins appearing with great quality cacao with great flavour profiles, and see a more diversified market develop with more choices of great chocolate."

TASTE PROFILE

Ready for a flavour voyage? With nutty, honey, caramel and toffee flavours all in the mix, these beans are ready to take you on the trip of a lifetime. Let your grinder spin with delight, while the beans release their distinct bouquet of flavours and delicious aromas.

CHOCOLATE:



ACIDITY:



BITTERNESS:



Garyth, Ecuador



REGION: Santo Domingo De Los Tsachilas

VARIETY: Arriba Nacional

SOURCE: Single Estate

FERMENTATION: Fully controlled box fermentation

FLAVOUR NOTES: Ripe fruit, chocolate, banana

CERTIFICATIONS: Organic Certification
August 2018 onwards

THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

In the heart of Ecuador's cocoa growing area, the Cedeño Aguilar family farm stretches out among the rolling hills. The farm is not only renowned for its slightly unusual name (the name Garyth was inspired by sons Gabriel, Alberto and Ricardo and parents Yolanda and Thomas's initials) but also for its high quality *arriba nacional* cocoa, which they cultivate without shying away from innovation.

When you see the farm today, with its flourishing fine flavour operations, it's hard to believe that before 2005 the land was used to grow oil palm. Switching to *arriba nacional* cocoa was primarily fuelled by a drive to protect and expand Ecuador's fine flavour heritage. On top of that the family were curious about the endless possibilities cocoa could bring. The family made the switch to cocoa farming to be part of a supply chain that brings the joy of high quality chocolate to the world, and upon seeing the growing demand of chocolate makers for pure and exciting flavours.

In a few short years, the family and their team have established a thriving cocoa business. This success can be largely attributed to Thomas' passion for farming, which shines through when walking around the well-cared for plantation. Over 30 years of experience working in agronomy is evident when you see the healthy, meticulously pruned trees, which hang heavy with large colourful pods.

It is thanks to Thomas Cedeño Aguilar's extensive knowledge of organic farming practices, that there are hardly any fertilizers or pesticides used on the plantation. Instead you will find an intrinsic system to protect the trees from diseases. Chromotropic traps, which look like large adhesive sheets, hang among the trees to attract and trap pests. To welcome pollinating insects, banana plants are left to decompose between the cocoa trees. On the plantation and in the on-site nursery where new cocoa seedlings are nurtured, Thomas and his team continuously experiment with nutrition, grafting and nursing. Only the finest young cocoa seedlings are selected. This high level of care and attention helps to ensure continuous high quality.

The Garyth plantation is trailblazing not only in its dedicated cultivation of fine flavour cocoa, but also in its high-tech solutions to post-harvesting. ▶

Next to the family's house, just a stone's throw away from the plantation, there is a 1,200 m2 building which houses the impressive fermentation and drying centre. Here the fermentation of the cocoa beans takes place in a three-tier wooden box system. After six to nine days, the fermented beans are transported in electric wagons to the other side of the building for the drying process. While sun drying is common among smaller fine flavour operations, at the Garyth plantation they have built a remarkable heat inductor. Fuelled by palm husk, a waste product from extracting palm oil, the machine sends gusts of hot air through the cocoa for four to five days, during which time the cocoa beans slowly reach the correct moisture levels.

Yolanda, Thomas' wife, is another vital ingredient of their success. She has been making test batches of chocolate since the very first harvest. This constant testing enables her to explore the full potential of their beans, and to taste how the quality translates into the end product. Building upon the experience she has gained over the years, Garyth chocolate has now become a full-blown chocolate brand, and Garyth chocolate bars can be found lining the shelves of local shops.

Since the start of their fine flavour adventures, Thomas has made a big investment in both his farm and the post-harvest centre, with great rewards. Not only has he reaped the benefits of this in the form of some divine chocolate, but he was also the very first farmer to be awarded the 'Denominación de Protección de Origen Cacao Arriba' certificate. This certificate highlights the fact that the entire plantation is *arriba nacional* cocoa, with zero mixing of other varieties.

The cocoa from the Garyth farm is among the tastiest Ecuadorian cocoa we have come across, cultivated with some of the most progressive cocoa farming methods. The best news is that there is space for growth, a willingness to cooperate with neighbouring farms and an eagerness to supply even more chocolate makers across the world with pure Ecuadorian *Arriba Nacional* cocoa. We're confident this cocoa is going to take the chocolate world by storm.

REVIEW BY



Alex, Barry & Stewart

Harris & James chocolate

"It is easy to tell by the quality that the grower has taken immense pride and care in growing, fermenting, and drying these beans. It's a good plump bean with very little waste, and the chocolate has a complex flavour profile".

TASTE PROFILE

Fasten your seat belts and get ready for this cocoa to take you on a wild chocolatey ride. With its intense ripe fruit flavours, this cocoa is sure to ignite chocolate lovers' palates, and keep them coming back for more.

CHOCOLATE:



ACIDITY:



BITTERNESS:



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