

Gary Guittard **President & CEO – Guittard Chocolate Company**

When Gary Guittard talks about chocolate, it is with a passion and purpose that is infectious. For him, chocolate is not just one of life’s most delightful culinary treats, it is his life – a life to which he was born as a fourth generation member of a family that has been making chocolate in America since 1868.

After graduating from the University of Denver, he worked with a food broker for a couple of years to understand grocery distribution and then spent time in marketing and sales for the bakery supply industry.

He joined the family firm in 1975, working with his brother Jay, who oversaw the wholesale business and his father Horace A. Guittard, the company chairman. In 1989, due to the untimely deaths of his father and brother, Gary began running the company with his family of employees, many of whom had been there for 20+ years and remain at Guittard’s side to this day.

Under his guidance, Guittard Chocolate has continued to thrive, pushing innovations in product, industry and sustainability. The business his great-grandfather Etienne Guittard started with a few bags of cocoa beans on the San Francisco waterfront now produces some of the world’s most sophisticated chocolate.

The *Collection Etienne* line, introduced in 2000 and made from the world’s most select cacao beans, uses the time-honored vintage methods that were employed by his grandfather.

Guittard is an industry leader in his efforts to promote sustainability of the environment of the cocoa growing regions and the well being of cocoa workers. His grassroots and group and petition, “Don’t Mess with Our Chocolate!” made international headlines. He is committed to preserving heirloom fine flavor cacao beans through his involvement with the Heirloom Cacao Preservation group.

Gary Guittard is committed to the chocolate he produces in no small measure because of its effect on others. Ask him what continues to fuel that devotion and he’ll say, “Everyone loves chocolate and it makes people smile...what could be better than that?”

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