



FLAVOR PAIRING

By **Donald Wressell** and **Amy Guittard**

Flavor pairing is not a new concept. Chefs and pastry chefs alike employ it as a strategy to highlight and heighten the impact of ingredients in any dish. In the case of pastry and confection, with chocolate as the hero, pairings can be employed as a tactic to elevate the effect of chocolate in any dessert or confection. The theory and practice of doing so has the potential to create exponential complementary flavors. Much like color theory, or in a color wheel, the flavor pairings can work together to deliver a particular emotion and tasting journey—however the chef desires.

Flavor pairings have impact not just on the actual physical tastes, but also in the potential to deliver diverse textures, temperatures and flavors that result in a multi-dimensional sensorial experience, all delivered through

the power of pairings. In so doing, taking this approach into account gives the pastry chef another set of tools from which to design an excellent experience for those delighting in a finished dessert.

But every chef has a different method to discover flavors and put them to use. Below is a deep dive into the theory and practice of doing so.

In Theory

Flavor pairing is simply matching foods that share the same flavor compounds together. It's a process that relies primarily on aroma and taste – two of the five senses. It can be traditional or expected pairings, but also unexpected ones. Identifying primary flavors in any food will allow you to select complementary flavors that can heighten the impact.

Finding the Right Match



The trees and plants: Kaffir Lime, Satsuma Mandarin, Lemon Verbena

By tasting our single origin chocolates with these garden ingredients, I found Peru paired well and was able to create an interesting pairing with Kaffir and Verbena. Strawberry and almond components completed the tasting experience.

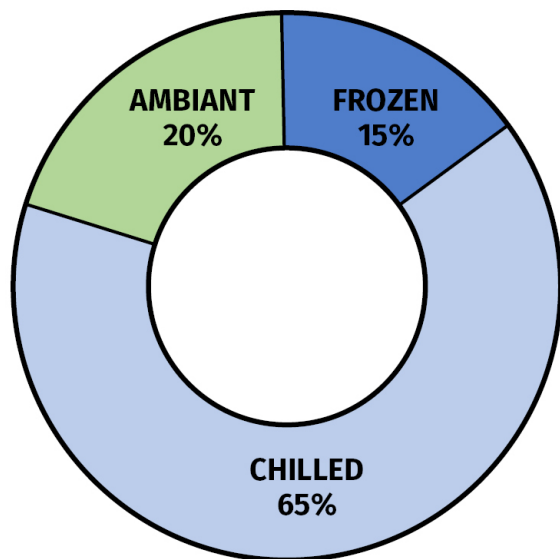


In Practice

The whole is greater than the sum of the parts – when the right ingredient is paired with the right chocolate, it can take desserts and confections to a whole new level. But where do you get inspiration? Like all things, inspiration can come from anything and everything—farmers' markets, everyday ingredients in your spice cabinet, unusual fruits, savory recipes—exploring ingredients you love and discovering new ones from novel sources can inspire you to reinvent a chocolate so that it delivers a whole new tasting experience. First identifying the

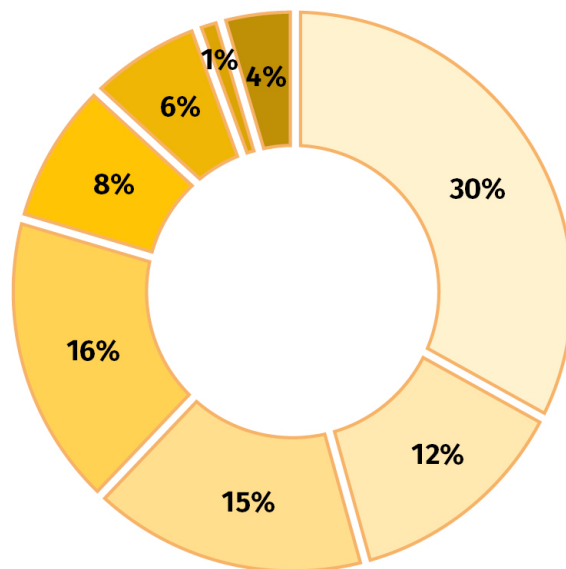
primary scents and tasting notes can lead you toward particular complementary ones. Find the flavor associations you're familiar with and encourage yourself and your teams to translate your previous experiences to this medium. In the same vein, think of unusual pairings that might be relevant to the flavor notes that you've identified. Exploring and discovering sources of flavor pairings are key components to this exercise. The possibilities are all in the eye of the beholder. Prior to making your final selections, be sure to do a side-by-side smell and taste test with selected ingredients to validate and evolve your selections.

Temperature



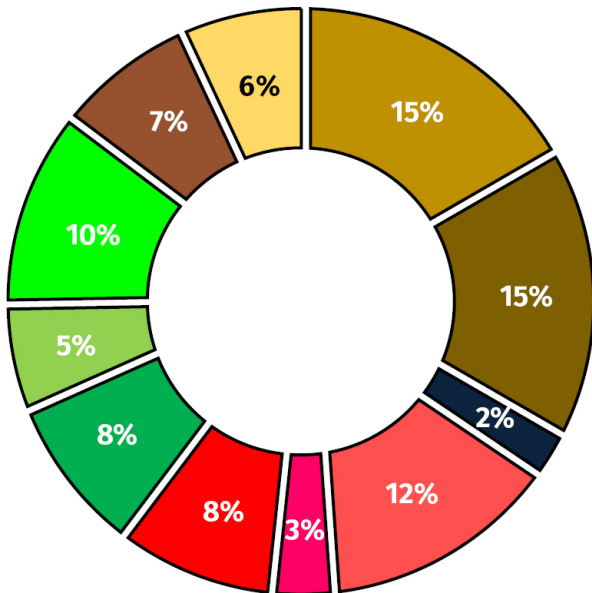
- FROZEN
- CHILLED
- AMBIANT

Texture



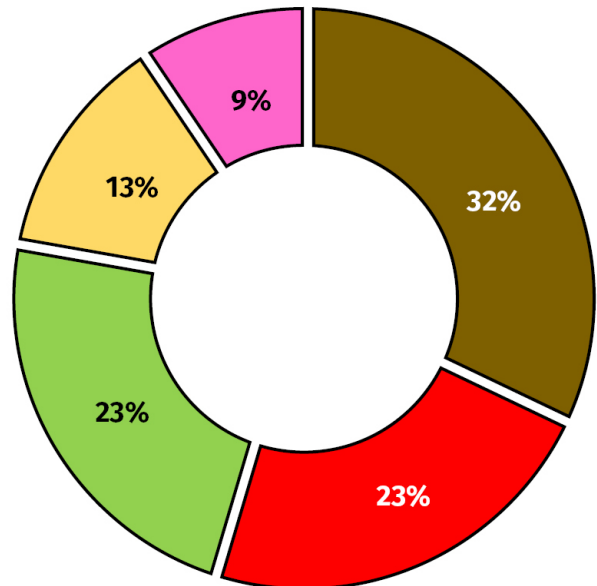
- 30% MOUSSE
- 12% CREAMY
- 15% CREAMY FROZEN
- 16% CAKEY
- 8% GEL
- 6% CRUNCHY
- 1% CHOCOLATE
- 4% FRESH FRUIT

Flavors



- 15% Peru Mousse
- 15% Peru Cremeux
- 2% Peru Garnish
- 12% Strawberry Sorbet
- 3% Strawberry Fresh
- 8% Strawberry Consomme
- 8% Kaffir Zest
- 5% Kaffir Juice
- 10% Kaffir Infusion
- 7% Almond Dacquoise
- 6% Almond Coco Crumble

Flavor by Weight



- 32% Single Origin Peru
- 23% Strawberry
- 23% Kaffir
- 13% Almond
- 9% Pixie Dust

In Bonbons and Plated Desserts

Bonbons and other confections lend themselves nicely to flavor pairings – the compact delivery of flavor encourages finding the right complementary flavors and textures that can be delivered in a single bite. Plated desserts offer a different sort of canvas, where

multiple layers, textures and temperatures can be brought to life in unexpected, surprising and delightful ways. Chef Donald Wressell designed this plated dessert specifically to showcase the potential in designing with pairings in mind, a true expression of the theory that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.