



The Importance of Choosing Chocolate for Flavor and Sustainability

By **John Kehoe, Amy Guittard & Josh Johnson,**
Guittard Chocolate Company

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flavorless, yet beautiful, heirloom tomato. An odorless long-stemmed rose. As pastry chefs and culinary professionals, you know firsthand how years of propagation and farming for quantity over quality has affected the rich, complex flavors and perfumes of fruits, vegetables and so many other ingredients. The same holds true for cacao, where production worldwide has been affected by the quest for higher yielding varieties, often at the detriment of flavor. In taking such an approach, cacao is on a fast track to losing the diversity of flavor but also losing the flavors unique to each region where varieties are grown. Understanding the sustainability of where your chocolate comes from (as with other ingredients), will afford you the opportunity to invest not only in the flavor that you plate now, but ensure the availability of diverse and interesting flavors for years to come.

Sustainability in chocolate is just as much about a quality end product as it is about income generation for cocoa farmers. As farmers and industry strive for higher yields and disease resistance, chocolate-producing companies play a critical role in empowering cocoa farmers and breeders to recognize and protect their unique, historical flavor profiles by improving yields without compromising flavor. Guittard Chocolate Company has implemented a series of multi-pronged programs worldwide, under Cultivate Better™, that seek to preserve flavor while also increasing yields. Cultivate Better collaborates with farmers and cooperatives within the supply chain as well as with governments and research institutions in producing countries to recognize and protect their historic flavor profiles, ensuring both a quality end product and better, long lasting

income generation for cocoa farmers. We've collaborated with multilateral donors to ensure that this work is far reaching and long lasting.



Six years ago, USAID/World Cocoa Foundation's Africa Cocoa Initiative partnered with us to establish a Flavor Lab at the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG) and to train a sensory panel, which continues to expand, grow and train. In 2019, our partners in Ghana helped us set up a lab for their sister cocoa producing country, Côte d'Ivoire at the Centre National de Recherche Agronomique, CNRA. We will do the same in Nigeria and Cameroon in the near future. With the support Swisscontact and the Millennium Challenge, a flavor lab was set up in Indonesia at the Indonesian Coffee and Cocoa Research Institute (ICCRI). These institutions' labs and sensory panels are instrumental in providing objective, professional flavor assessment of planting material so that breeding decisions can be made considering flavor together with productivity, disease resistance and drought tolerance.

A second, equally important function of the flavor labs is to train farmers and cooperatives on the importance of harvesting ripe, healthy cocoa, properly fermenting and drying the cocoa to obtain the optimal product and best price. Field training is central to bringing these core tenets to life. Working one-on-one with farmer groups and on-the-ground partners training programs highlight implications of flavor from harvest to the end product. Through our work in Ghana and with the USDA/CNFA MOCA project in the Ivory Coast, samples made at the flavor labs allow farmers themselves to taste the critical difference their practices make. This training helps farmers and cooperatives to make decisions for their businesses that will enable long-term success. From the farm level to factory all the way through to your menu, understanding and celebrating the farmer's work towards cultivating flavorful cocoa illuminates the crucial role farmers play in providing a premium ingredient.





Cocoa sustainability ultimately has to address critical issues like child protection, deforestation and the underlying issues of farmer incomes and community development—which all tie into quality, value and preservation of heritage cacao. By committing to the importance of cultivating for flavor, local government institutions responsible for breeding, farmers and cooperatives invest both in their futures as well as the future of their communities. Chefs and bakers can support sustainability, good labor practices, and ultimately, the preservation of flavor by working with chocolate-producing companies committed to these vital efforts. As Guittard Pastry Chef Josh Johnson explains: “I believe we have a responsibility as pastry chefs, to source ingredients in the same way we source all our farm grown ingredients; Know where your produce comes from and learn as much as we can about the producers, the farmers, and the practices. Every step has an impact on the quality and long-term sustainability.”

The whole truly is greater than the sum of the parts.

Photos courtesy of Guittard Chocolate Company



CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY VERRINE

By **Chefs Josh Johnson & Donald Wressell,**
Guittard Chocolate Company



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he inherent flavor notes of West African cacao come to life in this light and fresh dessert. 72% Onyx delivers rich flavor notes of deep chocolate and spicy coconut, typical of the classic flavors of cacao sourced from Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, pairing well with the tartness of the seasonal raspberry and creamy nuttiness of the almond streusel.

Yield: 6 servings

72% ONYX GUITTARD CHOCOLATE CREMEUX

- 250 g organic heavy cream
 - 250 g organic whole milk
 - 100 g free range organic egg yolks
 - 50 g organic pure cane granulated sugar
 - 240 g 72% Onyx Guittard Chocolate
1. Heat the cream and milk in a medium saucepot.
 2. In a bowl, just before the cream mixture comes to a boil, whisk together yolks and sugar. Temper the hot cream mixture into the yolks while whisking. Return the entire mixture to the saucepot and cook to anglaise stage. Strain through chinois over chocolate. Emulsify with immersion blender.
 3. Divide cremeux among verrine glasses and chill.

SOUS-VIDE RASPBERRY COMPOTE

- 200 g fresh raspberries
 - 20 g pure cane granulated sugar
 - ½ tsp lemon juice
1. Combine all ingredients in a sealable plastic bag and seal. Place in 118°F (48°C) immersion bath and cook for 30 minutes.
 2. Remove and shock in ice bath.

ALMOND STREUSEL

- 115 g unsalted butter
 - 1 g sea salt
 - 125 g natural almond meal
 - 145 g pure cane granulated sugar
 - 120 g sliced natural almonds
 - 75 g unbleached all-purpose flour
1. Combine all ingredients in a stand mixer. Mix on low speed until desired streusel size is achieved. Turn out onto parchment-lined sheet pan and refrigerate.
 2. Bake at 350°F until golden brown. Cool.

SOFT VANILLA ICE CREAM

- 453 g heavy cream
 - 1 vanilla bean, split and scraped
 - 20 g pure cane granulated sugar
1. Whip cream with vanilla and sugar to soft peaks.

SERVING

- Chocolate décor
1. Top cremeux in each glass with Almond Streusel, a little compote and a dollop of the Soft Vanilla Ice Cream. Garnish with chocolate décor.