



Buying Green Chocolate No, We Don't Mean the Color

If chocolate is a part of your Valentine's Day plans, consider buying local and exploring Portland's vast selection of chocolatiers and "green" chocolate options (no we don't mean green food coloring). Portland is home to many local and sustainable chocolatiers. Do a quick online search and you may be surprised at the variety and sustainability you will find – from chocolate dipped bacon to yummy vegan options. To help prepare for your chocolate adventure, review the following chocolate lingo.

Green and Specialty Chocolate Lingo

- **Bean-to-Bar:** refers to producers that process cocoa beans into a product, versus melting chocolate for use in making chocolate confections.
- **Fair Trade/Fair for Life:** farmers receive a guaranteed fair price and good labor conditions, including safe working conditions and fair living wages.
- **Non-GMO:** GMOs, or "genetically modified organisms," are plants or animals created through the gene splicing techniques of biotechnology (also called genetic engineering). Manufacturers are not required to disclose the use of GMOs in their products, so the **Non-GMO Project** certification grew from consumer demand for products that do not contain GMOs.
- **Organic:** cocoa is grown using sustainable methods, which means not using chemical fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides. Conventionally grown cocoa is one of the highest pesticide-using crops.
- **Single Origin:** chocolate beans have been grown and harvested from one specific country or farm. Purportedly, the growing conditions will affect the flavor profile of the chocolate similar to the grapes grown for wine.

Chocolate Definitions

- **Cacao:** refers to the theobroma cacao tree, the fruit it produces, as well as its seeds. The fermented and dried cacao seeds are also often referred to as "cocoa" beans.
- **Cocoa nibs:** the broken pieces of the fermented, dried, and usually roasted, cocoa bean, after the thin seed coat of the cocoa bean has been removed via a process called winnowing. Cocoa nibs may be eaten out of hand, or ground into chocolate liquor, which itself may be used for chocolate making or pressing to extract the fat of the cocoa bean, called cocoa butter.
- **Chocolate liquor:** ground up cocoa nibs, which can be in molten liquid or solid block form. The term chocolate liquor has nothing to do with alcohol in any way, but refers to the nibs being in the liquid state when they are ground.
- **Cocoa butter:** the fat naturally present in cocoa beans. It melts just below body temperature, giving chocolate its unique feel and texture. The nibs, or centers of the cocoa beans, are 50 to 60 percent cocoa butter. There is no connection to dairy butter.
- **Dark chocolate:** simply chocolate liquor, extra cocoa butter, sugar, an emulsifier (often lecithin) and vanilla or other flavorings. It is also known as semi-sweet chocolate. Darker chocolates often have a higher percent cacao, which means they have a higher proportion of cocoa beans. Unsweetened chocolate, or baking chocolate, is 100 percent chocolate liquor and is typically very bitter and astringent.
- **Milk chocolate:** contains the same core ingredients as dark chocolate, plus milk solids.
- **White chocolate:** uses cocoa butter instead of the cocoa solids.

Want to eat chocolate and work off those calories at the same time?

Consider taking a **walking tour** of Portland chocolate.