



The New Taste of Chocolate: A Cultural and Natural History of Cacao with Recipes

By Maricel E. Presilla

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Cacao importer and chocolate expert Maricel Presilla takes chocoholics to new territory, to the almost primeval plantations of Latin America, where the world's first, and today's finest, cacaos are grown. Presilla, who is at the forefront of the revolution in fine chocolate making, explains that the flavor and quality of chocolate depend on the complex genetic profiles of different cacao strains and on cacao farmers carrying out careful, rigorous harvesting and fermentation practices. With 25 recipes from internationally known pastry chefs and chocolatiers like Pierre Hermé and Elizabeth Faulkner, and directions for making chocolate at home, THE NEW TASTE OF CHOCOLATE elevates our taste for this food of the gods to a whole new level. Presilla is a cacao supplier for premier chocolate makers, such as Scharffen Berger and Guittard, and a consultant to the world's top pastry chefs. Over 100 gorgeous location, identification, and food photos.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The first time Maricel Presilla tasted cocoa from her grandmother's farm in eastern Cuba, she expected the papaya-looking fruit to be full of Hershey kisses. Instead she saw lumpy, tan-colored seeds in a sticky, sweet-tart ivory pulp that reminded her of lychees, and it didn't even smell like chocolate. In *The New Taste of Chocolate*, Presilla follows the life of a cocoa pod from a sapling through harvest, fermentation, roasting, and production to arrive at what we all recognize as chocolate. Formally trained in cultural anthropology, Presilla relates the history of chocolate from even before the Aztecs. With attention to detail, she gives an overview of cocoa plantations and their farming practices and the different strains of true cocoa, *Theobroma cacao*. About two dozen unusual, interesting recipes follow, each by a different chef or pastry chef. Wayne Brachman's Pecan-Guaranda Chocolate Tart with Mango and Papaya reminds us of cocoa's tropical roots, while Pierre Hermé's Chocolate Croquettes with Coconut, Pistachio, and Pearl Tapioca Sauce are pure elegance. You'll never look at chocolate the same way again. --Leora Y. Bloom

From Publishers Weekly

Presilla, a marketing consultant for a Latin American chocolate producer, explains the history, science and production of what many consider the world's most delectable snack. Guiding readers into the Latin American tropics for an extended look at *Theobroma cacao*, the "source of every chocolate bar and truffle ever made," Presilla also offers a primer on cacao farming, historical tidbits (e.g., Europeans used to flavor chocolate with aromatics like rosewater and ambergris) and a lesson on chocolate appreciation for would-be connoisseurs. Chocolate fiends in search of instant gratification should flip to the last chapter, a sampling of recipes that includes noted pastry chef Laurent Tourondel's heavenly Two-Toned Candied Cacao Beans Dipped in Chocolate and a recipe dating from the Italian Renaissance for Chocolate Jasmine Ice Cream. However, while some of the writing is wonderfully evocative (cacao pods are compared to "parrots and macaws perched on trees"), much of it is verbose ("The stars of the Marper experiment were several lines of IMCs from the Iquitos Maranon River Area, and the Peruvian Scavinas, Nanay, and Parinari selections"). And while industry professionals may lap up the sections with such titles as "Imperial College Selections 1 to 100," most lay people will find such morsels unappetizing. That's a pity, since on the whole Presilla's is a useful reference work that will appeal to anyone with an interest in artisanal foods and their production. Color photos not seen by PW. (May)Forecast: Chocolate has so many passionate enthusiasts that this book could attract attention, especially if it gets enough advertising. Unfortunately, since the book's primary potential is as an impulse buy or a gift item, it has not been blessed with a catchy title or cover.

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Review

,ÄÜA nuanced history of chocolate. . . . There is much to learn from THE NEW TASTE OF CHOCOLATE.,ÄÜ ,ÄîMiami Herald ,ÄÜStylish and original . . . [THE NEW TASTE OF CHOCOLATE] is truly for connoisseurs. . . . The illustrations make this in-depth study a fascinating read.,ÄÜ ,ÄîOregonian ,ÄÜMaricel Presilla talks about chocolate and the cacao beans from which it's made with an enthusiasm and depth of knowledge as rich as the couvertures she cherishes.,ÄÜ ,ÄîNewark Star Ledger ,ÄÜ[Maricel Presilla] primer on tasting chocolate is a standout.,ÄÜ ,ÄîFood & Wine ,ÄÜBest Illustrated Books. . . . A serious, clear treatise on a wonderful plant, its botany, social history, agronomic past and present,Äîall of it tied together spryly and illustrated with a fascinating array of historical documents, prints, photographs and

maps.,À,ÀWall Street Journal,ÀBest Cookbooks of the Year. . . Chocolate lovers in search of total immersion should find THE NEW TASTE OF CHOCOLATE a handsomely designed guide. . .an in-depth introduction for the apprentice chocolate connoisseur.,À,ÀCorby Kummer, New York Times Book Review,ÀA highly readable history and science book with recipes, answering hundreds of fascinating questions that most chocoholics probably don't even know enough to ask.,À,ÀWine Spectator ,ÀIf you want to understand chocolate in all its sweet and savory and ancient ways,Àincluding knowing how the raw fruit tastes,Àthen you want Maricel Presilla's new book.,À,ÀThe Food Network,ÀAn immense amount of effort, drawing on nearly three millennia of history, religion, art, science, and technology, lies behind every chocolate bar. THE NEW TASTE OF CHOCOLATE makes it clear that remembering, and protecting, this tradition provides a payoff in every bite.,À,ÀSaveur,ÀExhaustively researched . . . a book for chocolate lovers who appreciate culinary and social history as well as science and agriculture . . . a book to dip into now and again or to read into the night.,À,ÀChocolatier Magazine,ÀTHE NEW TASTE OF CHOCOLATE is fascinating and genuinely original. Based on unique, personal knowledge, Maricel's book will serve as a primary research source and change the way chocolate lovers think about and taste chocolate.,À,ÀRobert Steinberg and John Scharffenberger, co-founders of Scharffen Berger Chocolate ,ÀThe book is absolutely gorgeous . . . the delectable bittersweet brown cover only hints at what's inside.,À,ÀDaily Hampshire Gazette ,ÀSure to delight any serious chocoholics,Àand ,Àit contains, truly, everything you ever possibly wanted to know about chocolate and then some.,À,ÀMobile Register ,ÀMore than a recipe book . . . beautifully detailed with good design.,À,ÀAssociated Press ,ÀScholarly without being stuffy and full of an insider's knowledge.,À,ÀCincinnati Magazine

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Hazel Gannon:

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