

A gourmet is a person with a discriminating palate and who is knowledgeable in fine food and drink. Gourmet is often used to modify another noun: gourmet cooking; gourmet restaurants.

Certain events such as wine tastings and bake-offs cater to people who consider themselves gourmets and publications such as Gourmet Magazine often serve gourmets with food columns and features.

Chocolate is Fattening but Worth it!



The Aztecs were credited with the discovery of chocolate. The Olmec Indians of South and Central America, ancestors of the Aztecs, were the first known to use the fruit of the cacao tree. Mayans first created a beverage made by roasting and pounding the raw cacao beans with maize and Capsicum peppers and letting the mixture ferment. Cacao is the Mayan word meaning "God Food"

The Aztecs could not cultivate the cacao tree, as they existed at a much higher altitude where the climate was not suitable. They acquired the beans through trade - and war. The Aztecs used cacao beans for religious services, gifts and even as currency.

The Aztecs created their own beverage by roasting the beans and grounding them into a paste. They mixed them with water and maize flavored with chilies. It was called xocolatl (pronounced "shoco-latl").

In 1519 AD, Montezuma introduced Spanish explorer Hernan Cortéz, to the drink. Finding the name hard to pronounce, he called it Chocolat - which was later changed to Chocolate. Montezuma, who valued chocolate more than gold or silver, said of it, "The divine drink, which builds up resistance and fights fatigue. A cup of this precious drink permits a man to walk for a whole day without food."

Chocolate has long been thought to help improve libido and was given as an offering by the Aztecs to the God of Fertility. Casanova was known to take a cup of cocoa before bed as an aphrodisiac. Science has proven that there are valid reasons for these claims. The following elements support this theory:

- **Phenyl ethylamine** - is similar to an amphetamine, which raises blood pressure and blood glucose levels and gives a person a natural high.



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- The amino acid, **Tryptophan**, also contained in chocolate is the same thing that is in turkey. It helps the body produce the B-vitamin Niacin, which in turn, produces a calming agent in the brain known to play a role in sleep. Consuming chocolate also produces endorphins.
- **Endorphins** are a group of substances formed within the body that naturally relieve pain. Their chemical structure is similar to morphine. They have an analgesic affect and are thought to play a part in controlling the body's response to stress and determining mood.
- Another chemical in chocolate, **Ana amide**, targets the same cell membrane receptors as the active ingredient in marijuana and hashish. Experiments have shown that this chemical plays important roles in the regulation of mood, memory, and appetite and pain perception.
- And lastly, chocolate contains **caffeine**. Most of us are aware of the affects of caffeine on our bodies. At moderate levels, caffeine can cause pleasant effects with improved attention and concentration.

So, the next time you're feeling stressed but don't want to make it worse by eating, consider a chocolate bar! It may very well be better than "an apple a day", and in any case, it certainly tastes better!

Maintaining a healthy diet is the practice of making choices about what to eat with the intent of improving or maintaining good health. Usually this involves consuming necessary nutrients by eating the appropriate amounts from all of the food groups. Since human nutrition is complex a healthy diet may vary widely subject to an individual's genetic makeup, environment, and health. For around 20% of the planet's population, lack of food and malnutrition are the main impediments to healthy eating.