

History of Chocolate



1500-400 BC

First recorded use of cacao bean - Olmec Indians, Mexico.

900 - 250 BC

The Ancient Maya of Mexico and Central America made chocolate into a spicy drink (cacao paste mixed with chili peppers, vanilla and other ingredients) used in ceremonies.

1200 - 1500

The Aztecs used cacao for trade and the cacao seeds as a form of money.

1500 BC

AD 0

1200

1300



1519

Spanish Conquistador, Hernán Cortés, arrives in Central America. He sees Moctezuma II, Aztec Emperor, drinking 'Xocolatl', the earliest known hot chocolate and realises its great value.

1671

Pralines are invented when an accident occurs that combined pecans, chocolate and burnt sugar.

1753

The cocoa tree was given an official latin botanical name from Linnaeus: *Theobroma cacao*. The name refers to the mythical background of the tree and means literally: "cocoa, food of the gods".

1400

1500

1600

1700

1502

Christopher Columbus is the first European explorer to come into contact with cacao in Nicaragua.

1528

Hernán Cortés establishes a cacao plantation for trading. He takes the beans back to Spain with him along with the chocolate drink recipe.

1540

When the Spanish brought cacao home, they added cinnamon and other spices to the bitter brew and began sweetening it with sugar.

1657

The first chocolate house was opened in London. Cacao was an expensive import only those with money could afford. In France, chocolate could be drunk only by the royal family!



1830

'Eating Chocolate', the first real, moulded chocolate bar, is produced by J.S Fry and Sons of England.

1861

Introduction of the first mass marketed boxes of chocolates by the Cadbury brothers, England.

1875

After eight years of experimentation, Daniel Peter from Switzerland puts the first milk chocolate on the market.

1941-45

The American military decided to include three chocolate bars, in a soldier's "D-Ration," to sustain and nourish the men. The chocolate is still a standard issue in the military.

1765

Chocolate was introduced to the United States when Irish chocolate maker John Hanan and Dr. James Baker built the first American chocolate mill.

1789

During the Industrial Revolution, the steam engine was invented, which made it possible to grind cacao and produce large amounts of chocolate cheaply and quickly.

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1800

1900

1894

Milton S. Hershey built a chocolate factory and started to produce milk chocolate using modern, mass-production techniques that made the product more affordable to all.