

VOLUME 2

Islands CHOCOLATE

BARISTA EDITION

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AT ISLANDS, OUR STORY IS AS UNIQUE AS OUR CHOCOLATE.

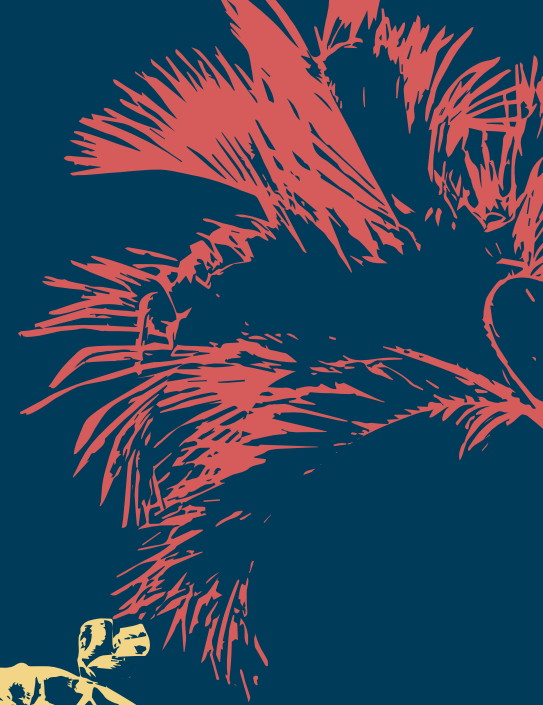
With our own farms in St Vincent and partner farms in the Dominican Republic, we sit in the 0.01% of the chocolate market who are both cocoa farmers and chocolate makers.

Treating our cacao like a fine wine, every tree is nurtured from seed, pods individually hand-harvested, beans carefully fermented and dried to curate the finest flavour, purest quality, Caribbean cocoa.

With this cocoa, we craft award winning chocolates. Bold fruit flavours and savoured acidity make for outrageously good hot chocolates, next level bakes and Michelin standard desserts, beloved by the UK's top chefs, baristas, bakers and connoisseurs.

By managing every step of our chocolate's journey, we can guarantee that the atrocities of deforestation, child labour and slavery, too often the norm with chocolate, are completely absent from our supply chain.

Farming the finest flavour cocoa, we craft chocolates with conscience.



THE ISLANDS WAY

A WORD FROM THE FOUNDER WILF.

Go into any specialty coffee shop and you'll find hot chocolates listed alongside some of the finest, ethically sourced coffees on the market. Despite this fervent interest in the quality, provenance and processing of coffee beans, the majority of hot chocolates on the menu are made of cheap, poor quality cocoa of unknown or disreputable origin.

The big names in coffee are starting to call this contradiction into question, identifying hot chocolates which hold their own in the specialty coffee market

to both increase sales and improve the quality of their overall offering.

Proudly, we sit at the forefront of this change. Originally, our business focused solely on high level cookery and Michelin acclaimed clientele, where the fine flavour, provenance and story of our chocolate was truly valued. Less than a year into this move, our chocolate caught the attention of one of London's most beloved bakeries, GAIL's. Their innovative coffee team quickly identified the merit of our fine flavoured couverture as a hot chocolate and

believed it well suited to their discerning customer. For GAIL's, the taste was made sweeter by the authenticity and traceability of our cocoa, previously unseen in the chocolate market. Meeting their demand, we launched the Hot Chocolate Buttons range in April 2020.

Since then our Hot Chocolate Buttons have perforated the specialty coffee industry, with our range of hot chocolates sold at over 200 artisanal sites across the UK. By our estimations, over 1.2m cups were drunk in 2022 alone!

The appetite for fine flavoured hot chocolate buttons is certainly there, but with the current economic climate, it remains aspirational for some businesses. The hot chocolate powder market is comparatively more commercial and perhaps more suitable for businesses looking to consolidate expenditure.

With that in mind and the market thirsty for a traceable, ethically sourced, delicious alternative, we set to work to find a solution.

After months of field research in the Dominican Republic and countless tastings, I am thrilled to announce the launch of our new Hot Chocolate

Powder! We kept things simple, pairing 45% unrefined Caribbean cocoa with homegrown British sugar and a sprinkling of Cornish sea salt, letting the natural flavours of the cocoa sing through. By sourcing the cocoa directly from our partner farms in the Dominican, and co-ordinating the roasting, pressing and blending of this in the EU, we have been able to create a Hot Chocolate Powder that holds its own to the flavour, traceability and ethical credentials of our St Vincent chocolate.

Throughout this Volume, you can read more about this partnership, and perhaps, most importantly, how to make the most delicious hot chocolate with our buttons and powder!





THE HOT

THE ISLANDS HOT CHOCOLATE RANGE INCLUDES A HOT CHOCOLATE POWDER AND A RANGE OF DIFFERENT PERCENTAGE HOT CHOCOLATE BUTTONS.

CHOCOLATES



THE BUTTON RANGE.

Lovingly crafted using our very own St Vincent cocoa, the button range is the original Islands Hot Chocolate. The hero of our hearts and the king of our cups, we believe that fine flavoured couverture is truly the future of artisanal crafted hot chocolate.

A key difference in flavour between using hot chocolate powders vs a couverture hot chocolate is due to the presence of cocoa butter and a process in chocolate making called 'conching'.

The conching of chocolate is the process by which sugar, cocoa butter and sometimes milk powder are mixed together, heated and refined over a period of time to craft and sculpt the desired levels of acidity, texture and flavour in a finished chocolate. It is this artistry of chocolate making that produces the breadth of flavour found across our different % buttons which in turn, creates an impactful variety of hot chocolates.

When making cocoa powder, the cocoa butter is pressed out to leave the dry, powder substance. When making chocolate, the entire cocoa bean is ground together, retaining the naturally occurring cocoa butter and often taking

additional cocoa butter too.

This cocoa butter adds an indulgent, rich mouthfeel and carries the gentle acidity of the chocolate across the palette, offering a journey of flavour with more dimensions than a cocoa powder comparative. Sourcing our own Caribbean, non-deodorised cocoa butter we add a further depth of flavour whilst also ensuring the traceability of this ingredient. (The majority of cocoa butter used is deodorised, meaning that it is heat treated to remove any trace of odour or flavour. This is because the majority of cocoa butter is pressed from poor quality, mouldy cocoa, resulting in a cheesy, off-tasting cocoa butter which would be unsuitable for chocolate making.)

Once the flavour is crafted, the chocolate is tempered and moulded into small domed buttons around 0.6mm across, designed to melt quickly and with ease for maximum efficiency. As it melts, the chocolate releases powerful fruit flavours and gentle acidity that perfectly balances with rich milks and milk alternatives for a hot chocolate that is utterly indulgent, yet sophisticatedly refined.

	FLAVOUR NOTES	PROFILE	/10
55%	The ultimate cup of cocoa comfort. A creamy hot chocolate oozing with buttery notes of amber caramel and malt.	INTENSITY FRUIT SWEETNESS	4 4 8
65%	A beautifully rich hot chocolate with fruity notes of banana, sweet citrus and dark caramel. One to satiate a sweet tooth and chocolate connoisseur alike.	INTENSITY FRUIT SWEETNESS	6 7 6
70%	A classic hot chocolate, grown up. Developed specifically for drinking, this chocolate boasts a deep cocoa flavour, decadently rich with a pleasant intensity.	INTENSITY FRUIT SWEETNESS	6 4 5
75%	One for the cocoa connoisseurs, a hot chocolate bursting with notes of citrus, sweet spices and pepper.	INTENSITY FRUIT SWEETNESS	8 8 5

HOW TO:

As with any specialty product, care must be taken to achieve the perfect cup. Critical to hot chocolate perfection is the melt, the solid foundation on which all couverture hot chocolates are built. The buttons should first be dosed with a splash of boiling hot water and preferably allowed to sit for just a few seconds to activate melting throughout; then they must be stirred or swirled with love to achieve a perfectly smooth ganache.

From this point on, each Barista can

follow their own path. Perhaps pouring cold milk directly over the ganache and steaming them together, or alternatively steaming the milk separately and gradually incorporating this with the chocolate. Both equally delicious, this is entirely down to personal preference.

Despite common perception, crafting a hot chocolate with buttons should take no longer than a powder equivalent. Any good quality, high cocoa hot chocolate powder will require time to stir and dissolve, just as the buttons do.

STRAIGHT STEAM (SUGGESTED)

- Pour a splash of boiling water in a milk pitcher
- Add the Hot Chocolate Buttons to the milk pitcher
- Whisk, swirl or stir to melt to a smooth ganache
- Add the milk to the ganache, then stretch and heat together with a steam wand

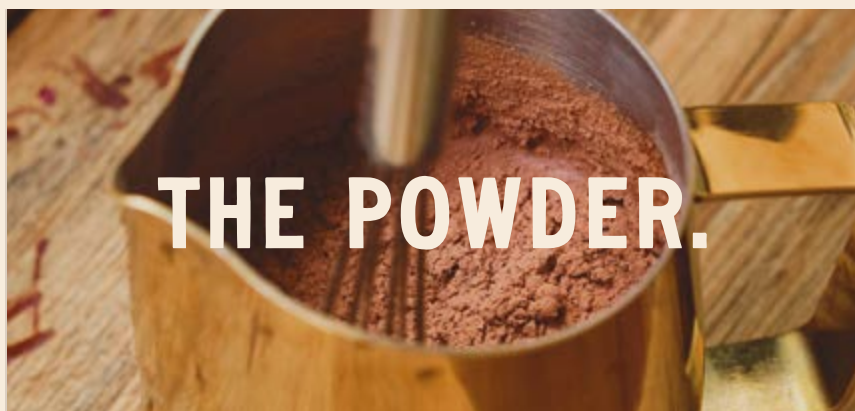
LATTE ART

- Pour a splash of boiling water in a cup
- Add the Hot Chocolate Buttons to the cup
- Whisk, swirl or stir to melt to a smooth ganache
- Steam milk and pour over to create latte art

RECOMMENDED RECIPES:

INGREDIENTS	6oz CUP	8oz CUP	12oz CUP
CHOCOLATE	30g	40g	60g
HOT WATER	0.5 fl oz /15ml	0.7 fl oz /20ml	1.1 fl oz /30ml
MILK	3 fl oz /90ml	4.1 fl oz /120ml	6.1 fl oz /180ml





Launched in November 2022, the Hot Chocolate Powder is the newest addition to the Islands Family.

Many businesses are tempted by the fine flavour, traceability and ethical credentials of Islands Hot Chocolate Buttons but are not yet ready to disrupt the commerciality and economics of their current powder hot chocolate offering.

We responded quickly to this, forming a partnership with a small but exceptionally good processor in our neighbouring Caribbean island, the Dominican Republic. Through meticulous on the ground research, together we found farmers who share our passion for producing specialty cocoa and teams who share our level of expertise in processing and hold the highest ethical standards.

Once the cocoa has been sourced, centrally fermented and dried, it is shipped to the EU for processing. Here the cocoa is roasted, winnowed (outer shell removed) and ground to a liquor. This liquor is then pressed under a high pressure to extract the majority of the

cocoa butter (which we then use for chocolate making) leaving a dry cocoa 'cake'. This is then pulverised to a pure cocoa powder.

We keep our cocoa powder natural, bypassing the Dutching process which is commonplace with the majority of cocoa used for hot chocolate powders. Dutching is the process of washing the cocoa with an alkalising solution of potassium carbonate to reduce the acidity of the cocoa to a neutral pH7 and produce a darker, chocolatey colour powder. This process creates a more uniform flavour, devoid of the natural flavanols of the cocoa. When the cocoa is of poor quality, it is a necessary process to reduce unpleasant flavours and unwanted acidity.

Our cocoa is of the highest quality, meaning we can bypass this process altogether and retain as much of the natural flavanols of the cocoa as possible.

Having sourced the cocoa with a similar genetic and taste profile of our own in St Vincent, our next step was crafting a Hot Chocolate Powder that

stands up to the quality expected of the Islands brand. We set to work in the test kitchen, trialling multiple varieties of sugars and salts with differentiating quantities of cocoa powder. Additions such as vanilla, cinnamon and baobab were hotly debated and tasted but ultimately shunned in favour of a pure cocoa experience. Over 200 hot

chocolates later, we found our perfect blend, combining 45% natural Caribbean cocoa powder with British sugar and a sprinkling of Cornish sea salt.

The result; a Caribbean Hot Chocolate Powder in line with St Vincent chocolate in all aspects of quality, traceability and deliciousness that excels in commerciality for the specialty coffee industry.

FLAVOUR NOTES

PROFILE /10

45%	Prominent deep cocoa flavour creates a rich hot chocolate with a jammy, dark fruit sweetness, creamy mouthfeel and gently acidic finish.	INTENSITY	7
		FRUIT	4
		SWEETNESS	5

HOW TO:

LATTE ART (SUGGESTED)

STRAIGHT STEAM

- Combine Hot Chocolate Powder with boiling water and mix to make a smooth paste
- Add steamed milk and pour over latte art
- Combine Hot Chocolate Powder with boiling water and mix to make a smooth paste
- Add milk, stretch and heat with a steam wand

RECOMMENDED RECIPES:

INGREDIENTS	6oz CUP	8oz CUP	12oz CUP
CHOCOLATE	15g	20g	30g
HOT WATER	0.7 fl oz /21ml	1 fl oz /28ml	1.4 fl oz /42ml
MILK	3.6 fl oz /106ml	4.7 fl oz /140ml	7.1 fl oz /210ml

THE MOCHA.

Single-farm coffee beans. Skillfully, meticulously roasted. Expertly brewed. Unhomogenised organic dairy, steamed with care... Poor quality, mouldy cocoa, harshly roasted, alkalised and smothered in sugar? Something's not adding up.

We continue to be baffled by the contradiction of the average mocha. When the utmost care, attention and

consideration has been placed on procuring and crafting a coffee, it should follow suit that every other ingredient with that coffee should equate in standard and quality.

We're here to rectify that, curating the ultimate coffee-chocolate pairing list for magnificent mochas, with hot chocolates that rise to the challenge of specialty coffee.

COFFEE BEAN PAIRING SUGGESTIONS:

55% Sweet caramel, malty notes work well with a medium-dark roast, rich Italian style espresso.

65% Grapefruit citrus and banana notes complement coffees with chocolate, nut and biscuit flavours.

70% Mellow acidity and deep cocoa flavours work well with more floral, complex coffees.

75% Caramelised honey and sweet pepper works well with stone fruit flavours and sweeter roast profiles.

**45%
POWDER** Less complex than the buttons making it the most versatile for mochas, working with most coffee profiles

HOW TO:

-
- Place your Hot Chocolate Buttons/ Hot Chocolate Powder in a cup (30g Buttons/20g Powder for a single espresso)
 - Brew your espresso directly over the chocolate
 - Stir to a smooth consistency
 - Add steamed milk





A simple stroll down a bustling, urban high-street when the sun shines will prove the lure of an iced drinks offering to any doubter. As our summers get longer and hotter, and palettes, trends and expectations evolve, so too must these menus. Coffee shops and cafes must adapt to go beyond a singular iced coffee option and encompass a variety of choices on par with the hot drink menu.

The majority of our iced drinks use a syrup made with our 45% Hot Chocolate Powder. Whilst this can be made a la minute in a single portion using a measure of powder and boiling water, it is our recommendation to batch prepare this ahead of time. Doing so will improve the efficiency and finish of your chosen drink.

THE CHOCOLATE POWDER SYRUP

- Take 200g 45% Hot Chocolate Powder and pour over 280ml boiling hot water, whisk until smooth and pass through a sieve and chill (scale up according to demand)
- Place in a squeeze bottle or pump dispenser
- Use within 5 days of preparation and keep refrigerated

INGREDIENTS	8oz	12oz
CHOCOLATE SYRUP	20g	30g
MILK	110ml	165ml
ESPRESSO	Single	Double

METHOD:

- Place Islands 45% Hot Chocolate Powder in a milk pitcher
 - Brew espresso directly over it
 - Stir to make a smooth paste
- Pour the milk directly into the jug and stir again
- Fill the cup with ice and pour the mocha over

THE COFFEE/COCOA COMPARISON

Coffee and cocoa are very comparable, both in growing and processing, plus how and where they are served.

A fervent interest in specialty coffee first started to develop in the 1970's and still continues to evolve today, becoming increasingly specific, localised and scientific.

By contrast, the advent of bean-to-bar, artisanally produced chocolate first

started around 2000. The establishment of the internet and resulting consumer buying power accelerated a rapid growth in this minority chocolate industry. Yet still today, it sits around 20 years behind coffee in terms of development, science, consumer expectations and education.

We're on a mission to close that gap.

COFFEE

GROWING REGION:
25N-30S equator

ALTITUDE:
Robusta 0-600m asl,
Arabica 1000-1800m asl

VARIETALS:
Robusta, Arabica

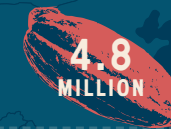
COCOA

GROWING REGION:
10N-10S equator

ALTITUDE:
0-600m asl

VARIETALS:
Theobroma Cacao; Ten main genetic strains within that, namely Criollo and Amelonado, Nacional, Contamana, Curarary, Guiana, Iquitos, Maranon, Nanay, Puras (Big cocoa commonly uses terms such as 'Trinitario' and 'Forestaro' but these are not varieties themselves but rather loosely identify origin)

TONS PRODUCED EACH YEAR:



COFFEE BELT

COCOA QUARTER

HISTORY OF COFFEE

First evidence of coffee farming (c.15th century)

Coffee popularised as a beverage in Europe (c.1700)

Adopted by mass-marketers (c.1890)

Creation of low-quality instants, price driven down to farms leading to poverty, slavery and child labour endemic within the industry (c.1910)

Developing interest in artisanal coffee (c.1970)

Automation of 'artisanal' coffee production by global companies (c.1978)

Growing awareness of origins and roasting styles (c.1980s)

Emergence of meticulous focus on the barista craft (1980s - 1990s)

Higher culinary appreciation of beans, origins, processing, roasting and barista skill (c.2000)

In depth knowledge of origins, bespoke roasting styles and experimentation with brewing techniques (c. 2010)

HISTORY OF COCOA

First evidence of cocoa farming (c.1200 BC)

Cocoa popularised as a beverage with the European elites (c.1600)

First chocolate bar created (c.1847)

Chocolate becomes a mass-market, household luxury

Industrial production drives down cocoa prices leading to an inescapable cycle of poverty, slavery, and child labour

Growing industrial production, with prominent emphasis on confectionary creativity, masking poor quality chocolate

Emergence of craft, bean-to-bar chocolate producers with an emphasis on single origin sourcing, lighter roasting, and minimising additional flavourings (c.2000)

Islands: Scientific exploration of cocoa varieties lead by the search for fine-flavour. Meticulous management of the processing of cocoa to capture desired flavours. Craft chocolate making. Full transparency and traceability of cocoa supply chain. (c.2018)



ST VINCENT + DOMINICAN REPUBLIC ORIGINS



	ST. VINCENT	DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
SIZE:	133 sq mi	48,671 sq mi
GROWING REGION:	All over	Predominantly north eastern region, San Francisco de Macoris
AV. RAINFALL:	78"	59.1"
CLIMATE:	Tropical rainforest, winds	Tropical rainforest in coastal & lowland areas, Tropical savanna in norther regions. Diverse typography leading to varied climates.
POPULATION:	100, 455	10,700,000
SOIL:	Volcanic	Mixed soil types. Predominantly volcanic in cocoa growing regions
HARVESTS:	All year round, high season in November - January	Two seasons: March - May and October - December
VARIETALS:	Predominantly an Criollo- Amelonado hybrid	Predominantly Criollo and Amelonado

COCOA & THE CARIBBEAN

The Caribbean is ripe for growing cocoa. Nutrient rich volcanic soils and tropical climates offer the ideal growing conditions. Today the Caribbean is leading the industry in the cultivation of rare and flavourful cocoa varieties, shunning the high yield, low pay business models of West Africa and Brazil.

However, we must acknowledge that the roots of the Caribbean cocoa industry are not without fault. Shrouded in a history of slavery and colonisation, cocoa farming was first introduced to the Caribbean in the 17th century by European conquistadors. The industry

expanded rapidly, driven by the demand for drinking chocolate in Europe.

With the eventual abolition of the slave trade in the early 19th century, and the increasing cultivation of cocoa in India, New Guinea, Samoa, Philippines, Indonesia and eventually Africa, demand for Caribbean cocoa dropped.

In recent history, the growing interest in bean-to-bar, artisanally produced chocolate has fuelled a resurgence in the Caribbean cocoa industry. With a significant production of criollo cocoa, the most highly prized cocoa for flavour, demand for Caribbean cocoa continues to increase.

ST. VINCENT

St Vincent offers exemplary cocoa growing conditions. Deep valleys provide the ideal natural shade for nurturing young cocoa; a 14m rich, volcanic topsoil supplies a diverse biome of nutrients; and the combination of tropical rainforest climate and fresh ocean wind creates the perfect balance for processing cocoa beans.

Despite this, the cocoa industry is still relatively new to St Vincent. It was only in 2011 that organised farming was established and prior to that, only a handful of cocoa farms grew largely unmanaged dating back to the 1950s. There was a wealth of nutrient rich, unused farm lands remnant from a once thriving banana trade which crashed in the 1980's, meaning a new agricultural

industry could thrive without deforesting and provide a valuable contribution to the local economy.

As cocoa takes up to 7 years to come to full fruition, it wasn't until 2018 that we achieved our first significant yield and with that, launched Islands.

For the time being, we have chosen to reserve our St Vincent cocoa exclusively for our couverture button ranges. We believe in the quality of this product for cooking, hot chocolate, and eating alike and while the Vincentian cocoa industry is still relatively young, all of our cocoa harvest will be directed to these purposes, but who knows what the future holds.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The Caribbean terroir lends itself to cocoa production, exemplified in the Dominican Republic's status as world leaders in the export of fairtrade and organic cocoa. Much like St Vincent, the soil is volcanic and plentiful in nutrients. The climate in most cocoa growing areas is similarly tropical and the farming standards are closely monitored in line with certifications.

The industry is firmly established with about 150,000 hectares of dedicated farmland. This provides a wealth of cocoa, readily available in large quantities with certain guarantees of farming practices due to the largely organic status.

Despite the industry as a whole thriving, smaller rural farmers do not always feel the benefit. The stringent

rules around certification mean their ability to run small holdings effectively is often hindered leaving them in financial difficulty and often leads to them selling their land to larger commercial scale farms. While these larger scale farms are not inherently bad, the effect they are having on the poorer communities needs to be considered with any ethically driven sourcing.

Thanks to the field research of our team, we were able to find farms, farmers and processors we found to be ethically and environmentally sound. The equitable terroir, cocoa genetics, exemplary processing and flavour of Dominican Republic cocoa made it a logical partner in the search for the perfect cocoa powder.



INDUSTRY INTERVIEWS

BY REBECCA AT ISLANDS.

WE'VE HARPED ON ABOUT OURSELVES A LITTLE TOO LONG. LET'S HEAR WHAT SOME OF OUR FAVOURITE CLIENTS HAVE TO SAY...



ROOSA

Head of Production at The Gentleman Baristas

Prior to my conversation with Roosa, I had a list of questions jotted down. In all honesty, I'd never interviewed someone before and was slightly apprehensive of the process.

I needn't have been.

From the moment I answered the phone, the conversation was GO. Roosa's infectious passion for coffee percolated through the phone. Within minutes I'd acquiesced to cancel my

standing order of a coffee blend in favour of devoting my morning caffeine fix to an exploration of speciality coffees.

With my list of questions tossed aside, the conversation flowed and Roosa proffered her expertise on the growing significance of hot chocolates in the coffee community.

Expertise she has a-plenty, with over 'twelve years working in the wonderfully

addictive, creative, sensory world of coffee. First working as a barista while studying at university Roosa was curtailed from her studies to pursue a career that would lead her to Head of Production for one of the UK's finest roasteries, judging coffee competitions, qualifying as a Q Arabica Grader and coaching for the World Barista Championships.

'When I started in coffee, the industry was very different. Fortunately, the first cafe I worked in prioritised sourcing but this was exceptional for the time. We were using a hot chocolate powder blend with cocoa from Peru. Admittedly hot chocolate was then very much a by-product of the barista job. I needed a basic understanding of it for mochas but that's about as far as my interest went.

My eureka moment came in 2015 when I started working at a roastery. Realising that the farming, fermenting and roasting processes of cocoa held a lot of similarities with coffee, I took a much greater interest in chocolate. Learning that a lot of the small farmers we source coffee from also grow cocoa deepened my understanding of the relationship between these two speciality foods.'

A special relationship indeed. For us at Islands, it's a pleasure to share our story to those in the coffee community. Like Roosa, many are ahead of the consumer trend when it comes to considering sourcing with chocolate. Much like coffee, the flavour of chocolate is crafted at every step of its journey, from farm to fermentation,

roast, conch and temper, to where it finally arrives at the hand of a barista or chef. The coffee-nerds among you have a great depth of understanding of how these processes affect coffee and can reasonably translate this to cocoa and hot chocolates.

With Roosa's impressive career, understanding of processes and highly regarded palette, I was eager to hear about her journey with our chocolate.

'I was first drawn to Islands Hot Chocolate at a blind tasting. After selecting them as our hot chocolate offering based purely on flavour, I was impressed to learn about their story.

Most of the chocolate industry sits about 50 years behind coffee in terms of craft, taste, science and development, but Islands are rapidly closing that gap. They align so much with specialty coffee in terms of their supply chain transparency, connection to the farms, farmers, consideration of processes and focus on flavour. These are all things we look for in coffee, and it's inspiring to finally see and taste that in a hot chocolate!

Her favourite? 'I love the 55% Milk Chocolate Buttons'. They are our favourite at The Gentleman Barista's. For me, a great point of difference is that they are chocolate buttons, rather than powder or flakes. I think it immediately suggests a higher quality which is further confounded by the taste.'

For us, the story and traceability of Islands is key. We have many clients who want to know everything; where it's from, who grew it, how it is processed, and with Islands, we have the answers!'



KRAG

North Star Coffee Roasters

Krag is the co-founding COO of Leeds based coffee roasters, North Star.

Setting up shop in 2013, Krag and the team recognised the 'deep seated issues in the global supply chain' of coffee and embarked on a mission to 'prove that an approach based on quality and impact can improve the viability of business models across the coffee supply chain.'

Immediately here we recognise the similarities with our own journey at Islands, wading through the bittersweet truths of the cocoa industry to prove that ethically sourced, quality chocolate can truly be delivered at scale.

Back to Krag, a flat white drinker (Colombian origin) with a particular soft spot for Kenyan coffees, who describes our 55% Hot Chocolate made with oat milk as 'the one'.

Fresh out of university he and fellow co-founder Holly launched North Star, evolving from boutique roastery to the wholesale heroes they are today, supplying some of the UK's finest independent coffee shops. Krag's role has evolved with the business, stepping away from the roaster to now oversee operations, production, finances and of course, selecting the finest hot chocolate on the market.

'Prior to learning about Islands, I found it difficult to find truly ethically sourced, sustainable and impactful hot chocolates' says Krag. 'Islands is an absolute breath of fresh air in this sense and a real game changer for the industry.'

'Blown away' by the variety of flavour between each percentage chocolate, Krag began listing Islands Hot Chocolate

Buttons for their wholesale clients in 2021 to great success; 'Everyone who tries, it loves it!'

'It's still slightly challenging to get our customers to engage in hot chocolate and tea in the way they do coffee, but with Islands on board we are getting there.'

Undoubtedly, consumer and industry interest in hot chocolate is growing, but despite this 'the wider chocolate industry is lagging behind the coffee industry in terms of supply chain impact and ethics' says Krag. With a unique position and both cocoa farmers and chocolate makers, with guarantees on traceability and quality 'Islands Chocolate is rapidly

closing this gap and leading the way on this front.'

This kind of recognition is always affirming. Ours can sometimes feel like a David & Goliath battle, competing with a market that keeps its costs artificially depressed by exploiting those most vulnerable in their supply chain. Many in the coffee industry are hyper-aware of supply chain and it is these clients who are beginning to truly appreciate our commitment to farming the finest flavour cocoa to craft chocolates with conscience.



THE

The cocoa industry has historically been shaded under a canopy of dark secrets and unfortunately, still is. The atrocities of slavery, poverty, child labour and deforestation remain rife despite big-business' attempt to greenwash themselves clean with token investments, initiatives and developments into a truly broken system.

There are an abundance of investigative articles and a quick 'Google' will easily send you down a

wormhole of revelations and leave you swearing off mass-produced chocolate.

Whilst we would rather not dwell on the negatives of the cocoa industry, we feel an urgency to educate consumers on the atrocities of mass market supply chains. Only with this knowledge will consumers be empowered to make the right choice, and understand why and how the expected price of chocolate has been artificially depressed for so long.

COCOA

The majority of the world's cocoa comes from West Africa, namely Ghana and the Ivory Coast. The cocoa is predominantly farmed, fermented and dried by impoverished small holders. It then passes through a string of larger and larger traders, each taking a profit, before reaching ports and being sold to the world market. Due to the structure of the industry, it is largely impossible to trace cocoa back to the farm it was grown on, making it difficult to offer any credible assurance of supply chain.

Cocoa from here is generally considered to be largely poor quality and inferior in flavour to Caribbean and South American cocoa. West African cocoa is largely referred to as 'forastero', which literally translates as 'foreigner', simply referring to cocoa not of the highly prized Criollo variety. Forastero is less disease prone, cultivated to produce high yields quickly with little consideration for longevity of the cocoa plant and the land it is grown on.

INDUSTRY

CYCLE OF CHILD LABOUR

- ▼ Farmer underpaid for cocoa
- ▼ Can't afford to employ adults
- ▼ Uses their own children to work on the land, preventing them gaining an education to escape poverty
- ▼ Uses a child from another family too poor to keep them at home, comes to work and lives on the farm. They essentially 'pay' for their board by working and do not attend school
- ▼ A child is trafficked from a neighbouring country, is sold and forced to work unpaid, unable to escape

CYCLE OF DEFORESTATION

- ▼ Farmer uneducated in sustainable farming practices
- ▼ Driven by 'big chocolate' demands to produce yields quick
- ▼ Farms cocoa in monocrop system, stripped of shade for maximum yield speed
- ▼ Lack of shade and intense use of fertilisers and pesticides strips soil of nutrients
- ▼ Soil can no longer sustain yield demands, so farmers clear new land to farm on

KEY STATS:

1.6M CHILDREN working on cocoa farms in Ghana and the Ivory Coast with 89% of children working in hazardous conditions

90% of protected forest in IVC has been converted to cocoa farming and **40% OF IVC COCOA COMES FROM PROTECTED FOREST**

1.7M ACRES OF INDONESIAN FOREST CLEARED for cocoa between 1988 - 2007

A dark chocolate bar made with cocoa from deforestation = same carbon pollution as driving **4.9 MILES IN A CAR**

*From the Mighty Earth report 'Chocolates Dark Secret'



SUPPLY CHAINS

ISLANDS VS COMMERCIAL CHOCOLATE

So we can talk-the-talk. Now let's walk-the-walk and take a stroll through our supply chain. As a point of comparison, take a look at the supply chain over there.

THE ISLANDS WAY



COMMERCIAL CHOCOLATE



WHAT'S IN

THE BAG?



LOW COCOA %?

Poorly sourced cocoa is more often than not riddled with mould and contaminants. To make the cocoa safe to eat and homogenise different types, origins and fermentations, the cocoa is roasted hard at high temperatures. This leaves a harsh, bitter cocoa which need to be balanced with high sugar quantities to make it palatable.

SUSPECT STAMPS!

Research has found deforestation and cocoa farming in West African protected forests to be an 'open secret.' Due to the nature of these supply chains, compliance of farmers with these certifications is difficult to monitor.

NATURAL?

Unless explicitly stated, the cocoa powder is most likely Dutch processed. Dutching is an alkalisng process of washing the cocoa with a potassium carbonate solution, reducing the acidity and with it, the quantity of natural cocoa flavanols. The process makes the cocoa powder darker in colour and uniform in flavour.

SINGLE ORIGIN?

If the hot chocolate states Single Origin, with no further detail other than the country of origin, it gives little assurances of quality, sourcing or supply chain ethics.

BRITISH SUGAR

Transparency of all ingredients. British sugar offers the same levels of traceability and ethical guarantees as Islands cocoa, as opposed to alternative sugars which can largely only be traced to country of origin.

45% COCOA

High cocoa content which balances the commercial expectations of a sweet hot chocolate with a fine-flavour cocoa experience.

NATURAL

The cocoa powder has not been Dutch processed. It's light in colour with a vibrant acidity, offering a more complex and truer experience of the cocoa flavours.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Country of origin immediately upfront, with more information about the farming practices on the back.

WISE WORDS FROM THE COFFEE GURUS



GHILY WELBY-WATSON
HEAD ROASTER



Islands have produced a sensational portfolio of exceptional quality. So much so, that I have been drinking their hot chocolate almost every day. Their approach aligns wonderfully to how we source coffee: transparency, sustainability and quality. The passion and consideration is shining through their work and it is a real pleasure to be working closely with them.

SCOTT JAMES
FOUNDER



Islands is not only a delicious hot chocolate, but it's user friendly, ethical with an incredible story. Farm to cup hot chocolate, made simple.

JO COUPLAND
HEAD OF WHOLESALE



Islands is paving the way for better transparency around chocolate. They came highly recommended for their sustainable practises and complex flavours. Islands chocolate complements speciality coffee amazingly well, farmed direct!

PETER JAMES
OWNER



Islands Chocolate was a very easy decision for us at James Gourmet Coffee. Every ounce of what we do is about people and quality ingredients.' Peter James, Owner

PAUL GRIFFITHS
DIRECTOR OF COFFEE



We are blown away by the knowledge of supply chain, product quality and brand alignment that we have with Islands Chocolate. Their product selection is curated and delicious and we really love working with them.

DEAN MACKAY
HEAD ROASTER



Islands hot chocolate is a specialty beverage that has gained a reputation for its exceptional taste and high standards. Made with only the finest ingredients, this hot chocolate is a delicious treat that is perfect for any occasion. With a great backstory, ease of use, and exceptional taste, it's no wonder that Islands hot chocolate has become a favorite of hot chocolate lovers everywhere.

ALEX WALLACE
HEAD OF QUALITY
& BREW BAR OPERATIONS



Islands Chocolate's commitment to producing high-quality products without compromising on sourcing, their artisan character, and their focus on quality and innovation aligns with Caravan's principles of economic freedom for all, environmental stewardship, and mighty fine coffee. The feedback from both those on the bar and customers has been excellent, and it's a partnership we're very happy to recommend.

THE RANGE



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