

Let's embark on an expedition into the sweet life of our favourite treat, the king of all flavours - chocolate. Once an anonymous plant, this delight is now everywhere in the form of cocoa butter, chocolate powder, candy, and much more. Take a glance at cocoa's exotic journey with Ragini Singhal, AIS Gur 43, XI S.



Rare Fact

The Aztecs named chocolate as xocolatl.

5300 AD

Region: Ecuador

Leading producers: Mayo Chinchip

Quintessence: The extraction of chocolate from cocoa has been

documented first in the Olmec civilisation of Mesoamerica. The Mayans drank cocoa's juice bitter and cold during ceremonies. They exported it to the Aztecs in 1300 AD.



Rare Fact

Cocoa contains theobromine which has properties to prevent heart diseases, cancer, diabetes etc.

16th century

Region: South America

Leading producers: The Spaniards

Quintessence: On his fourth voyage to America, Columbus and the Spanish colonialist, Hernán Cortés, looted a native canoe filled with cocoa beans. They took it to Spain, but the cocoa beans did not gain prominence there until the 1500s when it was used for medical purposes like curing stomach aches, asthma, bronchitis and digestion problems.



Rare Fact

The first American chocolate house opened in the year 1628 in Boston.

17th century

Region: America

Leading producers: Switzerland

Quintessence: In 1641, chocolate was brought to America on a Spanish ship. The value of the much sought after delicacy became quite evident when it began to be used as a mode of payment to soldiers during the revolutionary wars and was even distributed to the military as ration.

Charm au chocolat



18th century

Region: Europe

Leading producers: English, Dutch, Spanish, and French

Quintessence: The development of the first water-powered machinery to grind cocoa, and the founding of the chocolate company,

Fry's, steered the production of cocoa into the industrial era in 1726. Soon followed the invention of Dutch chocolate which mixed alkaline salt and milk to the chocolate to reduce its bitterness.



19th century - present

Region: Britain and America

Leading producers: Swiss and Britishers

Quintessence: In 1850, cocoa powder was created by the Swiss chocolatier Daniel Peters and in 1875, labels like Nestle, Cadbury, and Hershey created the present forms of chocolate. Mars Wrigley Confectionery is the biggest distributor of chocolate, creating a 22 billion USD empire from it. Cadbury Dairy Milk is the most sold chocolate product.

Rare Fact

It took Daniel Peters eight years to figure out the recipe for chocolate milk

Rare Fact

Swedish scientist Carl von Linné identified three types of cocoa called - Criollo, Forastero, and Trinitario.

