



**HSA Webinar
A History of Chocolate Handout**

Additional Reading provided by Sarah Lohman

[Bitter Sweets \(child labor in African chocolate growing\)](#)
[Picking the Best in Bean-to-Bar Chocolate \(with info on the Mast scandal\)](#)
[Everything You Don't Know About Chocolate](#)

Books:

[The True History of Chocolate](#)
[Chocolate Wars: The 150-Year Rivalry Between the World's Greatest Chocolate Makers](#)
[Eight Flavors: The Untold Story of American Cuisine](#) (Sarah Lohman's Book!)

Host a Chocolate Tasting Party

Hosting a chocolate tasting party is a great way to explore our sense of taste. Combine this with watching a recording of HSA's webinar "The History of Chocolate" with speaker and author Sarah Lohman and you will have a fun event.

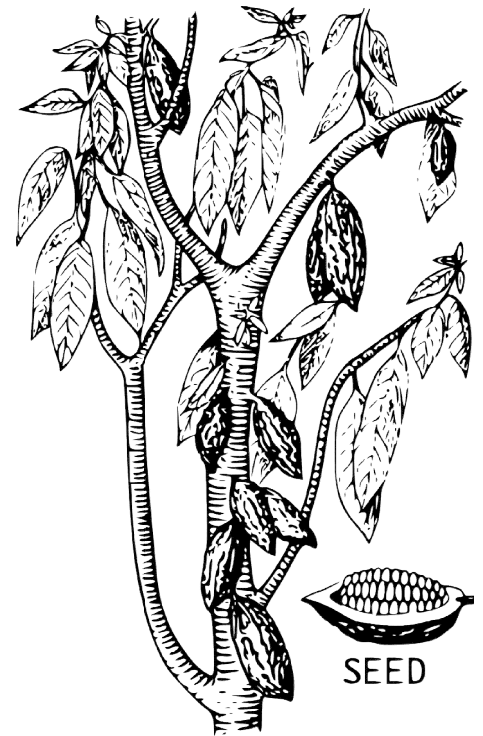
Our Sense of Taste

- The tongue and roof of the human mouth is covered with approximately 10,000 taste buds.
- Salvia helps break down the food we eat.
- Our taste buds contain receptor cells that send messages to our brain; the brain in turn tells us what flavors we are experiencing.
- Our taste buds play the most important role in our enjoyment of food.
- Our taste buds recognize four different kinds of taste:
 - 1.) Bitter
 - 2.) Sour
 - 3.) Salty
 - 4.) Sweet

Our taste buds vary from individual to individual and they change as we age. Interestingly as we age the taste buds on the roof and sides of our mouth fade while the taste buds on our tongue become less sensitive. As a result food that were too strong as children may become more enjoyable as adults.

Preparing for Your Tasting Party

One of the purposes of having a chocolate tasting party (aside from chocolate) is to use our taste buds to explore the differences between chocolates. One way to accomplish this is to select bars that contain



a variety of cacao types. Your nearby chocolatier can help you with making a selection of chocolate for your tasting party. If you don't have a local chocolatier Ghirardelli, Lindt, Taza, or Green & Black's Chocolates are readily available. Better yet try to select a variety of chocolates based on country of origin, amount of cacao, and even mix in some white chocolate. How much to serve? Estimate about a half an ounce of each type of chocolate. While it may not seem like much, the darker chocolates can be intense so it is unlikely attendees will over indulge.

Palate Cleanser

You will also need to offer a palate cleanser. In order to freshen up the palate you will want something a little sour. Apples and lemon water make great cleansers. Green tea and dry ciders are additional options and it is also good to have tart fruits on hand. For an adult event serve wine. Sparkling wines are particularly refreshing.

Host a Virtual Tasting

Host a chocolate tasting virtually! For virtual gatherings, the organizer could send out the chocolate tasting chart (included with this handout) along with a list of chocolates for participants to purchase on their own. This would ensure participants are tasting the same chocolate. You could go so far as to have a "porch pickup" bag for participants that is put together by an organizer.

Common Tasting Terminology for Chocolate*

Astringent: alum, decreases with fermentation, felt all-over mouth

Bitter: taste occurs from caffeine but decreases with fermentation time

Burlap: takes on flavor of a burlap bag. Burlap is used to stored cocoa beans

Burnt: burnt toast, espresso coffee

Caramel: caramel flavor is from the interaction of milk and sugar

Cardboard: bland flavor, for example cocoa butter

Chocolate Essence: intense chocolate liquor, increases with fermentation and degree of roast

Cocoa: cocoa powder flavor which is less intense

Green: raw vegetables like green beans, pea flavor and is caused by under roasted beans

Musty: moldy, damp basement aroma due to low quality beans

Nutty: tastes like nuts roasted in the shell

Strubbery: similar to chewing on a balloon and is a cocoa bean drying method

Tobacco: chewing tobacco aroma that's determined by bean source

Vanillin/Vanilla: unique aroma/flavor of vanilla but too much vanillian can cause a vanillian burn aftertaste.

Woody: aroma/flavor of dry wood or popsicle sticks.



*Source: The Cozy Tea Cart- Brookline, NH

CHOCOLATE TASTING CHART

When tasting let the chocolate liquefy in your mouth without being chewed. Hold the chocolate on the tongue until dissolved. Compare chocolates based on these characteristics and use the table below as a guide to record your findings.

- Appearance/Aroma: First impression of the look and smell before tasting. Look at the chocolate appearance – note color and aroma of the chocolate.
- Texture: The feel of the chocolate in your mouth as you let it melt in your mouth.
- Flavor: The total impression of appearance, aroma and texture combined with the flavors you discover as your taste buds are stimulated. Are characteristics balanced? Identify specific taste attributes: Bitterness, sweetness, sourness, chocolaty, fruity, nutty, caramel-like, toffee-like, vanilla, smoky, flowery.
- Finish: The flavors that remain after tasting. The big question: Do you like it?

TYPE OF CHOCOLATE					
APPEARANCE (color)					
AROMA (scent)					
FEEL IN YOUR MOUTH (texture)					
FLAVOR (bitter, sour, fruity etc.)					
FINISH (lingering taste)					
RATING 1-5					