

DRINKING CHOCOLATE: FOOD OF THE GODS

BY TAMARA MULDOON

CACAO BEANS WERE SO VALUED by the ancient Maya and Aztec people that they used them as currency and consumed a cacao drink in religious ceremonies. The *Theobroma cacao* plant is aptly named, derived from the Greek words *theos* (god) and *broma* (food). Experience this “food of the gods” as delectable drinking chocolate, which is thicker, less sweet and with more intense chocolate flavor than typical hot cocoa.

Savor a cup at a local chocolate shop or order mixes online to enjoy at home or give as gifts. Here are some Northwest sources for quality drinking chocolate.

Frans (frans.com) has four Seattle-area locations: Downtown, Georgetown, Bellevue, and University Village. Their drinking chocolate, made from liquid chocolate and steamed milk, is smooth and velvety with a strong cocoa finish. You can feel good about buying this Fair Trade, organic, vegan and non-GMO product. Tins of their Dark Hot Chocolate mix are also sold at their online store.

Chocolati (chocolati.com) has four Seattle cafes, located in the Greenwood, Wallingford, and Green Lake neighborhoods and at the downtown Central Library. Enjoy the casual coffee-shop vibe where you'll find drinking chocolate, coffee and a tempting selection of their confections.

Their drinking chocolate menu offers a variety of single origin and blends, some with flavorings added. Chocolati's online store sells drinking chocolate mixes in 14-ounce tins, or bulk one- or five-pound bags.

Visit **indi Chocolate** (indichocolate.com) at Seattle's Pike Place Market and watch chocolate making in action. This combination factory, store and café lets you learn, shop and taste all in one location. Try the single-origin drinking chocolate, made from ethically sourced cacao beans.

You'll also find a selection of edible treats, teas, spice rubs and chocolate-infused personal care items. Check out their packaged single-serving drinking chocolate—a block of dark chocolate encasing a wooden spoon. Just stir it in a cup of hot milk until it dissolves.

A Portland-area favorite, **Moonstruck Chocolate** (moonstruckchocolate.com), has been satisfying chocolate cravings since 1993, using ethically sourced cacao to

produce chocolate treats. In addition to their St. Johns factory, there are Moonstruck outlets at Beaverton Town Square and in downtown Portland.

Moonstruck drinking chocolate comes in five favors: a rich, dark chocolate; milk chocolate; milk chocolate with cinnamon and almond; milk chocolate with mint; and milk chocolate “Golden Milk” flavored with ginger and turmeric. All are available online in 9.5-ounce tins or single-serving packets.

Creo Chocolate (creochocolate.com) lovingly crafts their chocolate in-house from cacao beans grown on a single farm in Ecuador. The store on NE Broadway Street in Portland is a chocolate lover's fantasy, with an array of bars, truffles, and other treats with a mind-bending selection of flavors. While pondering purchases, order a cup of drinking chocolate, made fresh with chocolate nibs and cream. So thick you can eat it with a spoon, it's served with sides of whipped cream and palate-cleansing seltzer water.

Creo sells eight-ounce tins of all three award-winning flavors—Midnight Truffle, Minty Dark and Mayan Spice—in the store and online. 🍫

