

YUMMY NORTHWEST

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WELCOME!

This first edition of *Yummy Northwest* features my favorite beverage: hot chocolate. Spring has come but a chill is still in the air, which means you need something warm to drink.

My quest for the perfect cup of hot chocolate began when I finally figured out that drinking coffee was giving me severe migraines. The caffeine in chocolate is, fortunately, not as powerful, so when I want a warm pick-me-up, I look for chocolate.

Around the world, everywhere I go, I try the hot chocolate. I confess that I cringe when I see the barista squirting in a hefty dose of Hershey's Syrup. Why, that stuff doesn't even qualify as chocolate in my opinion! (Just read the list of ingredients.)

But elsewhere I have been delighted by unique touches: a swirl of chocolate whipped cream, a frothy twirl of foam, a swizzle of *real* chocolate syrup.

The cup may be fine china, ceramic or Styrofoam, but if the contents make me smile, I'll be back for more.

WHAT'S IN IT?

HOT CHOCOLATE
MADE WITH
PROCESSED
CHOCOLATE,
USUALLY
BITTERSWEET

HOT COCOA
MADE WITH
COCOA POWDER



CHOCOLATE CHOICES

BUCARE
CADBURY
CALLEBAUT
DILETTANTE
NESTLE
NEWMAN'S OWN
VALRHONA

COCOA CHOICES

CADBURY
GHIRARDELLI
GODIVA
HERSHEY'S
MCSTEVEN'S
NESTLE

Review: The Best

You'll have to come to Kent, Washington, for what may well be the best hot chocolate in the world. The Wild Wheat Bakery not only provides delectable pastries and heavenly rustic breads, but the friendly staff will also serve you a mighty tasty cup of hot chocolate.

Manager Mark Handman was willing to share the secret: ganache. If you've heard of ganache, you probably first think of smooth icing on a cake or a delicious filling. But mix it with hot milk and your toes will curl with joy as you sip the result.

Sure, you can make this at home now that you know the secret, but why bother? Visit Wild Wheat, sit down with a choice pastry, sip that soothing hot beverage, and enjoy life for a few minutes.

Wild Wheat Bakery
202 First Ave. South, Kent, Wash., 98032
(253) 856-8919



PLAIN AND SIMPLE

The recipe on the back of the Hershey's Cocoa can remains a classic.

Hot and Creamy Cocoa

3 tablespoons sugar

2 tablespoons Hershey's Cocoa

¼ cup water

1-3/4 cups milk

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Combine sugar and cocoa in saucepan; stir in water. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture boils; stir in milk and heat. **DO NOT BOIL.** Remove from heat; add vanilla.

2 servings.

Fast Chocolate

So you're in a hurry and you still want tasty hot chocolate. Those national brand packets at the grocery store are OK – especially with an added splash of half-and-half – but maybe there's something else out there...

McSteven's, in Vancouver, Wash., produces a variety of hot and cold drink mixes, their hot cocoa coming in so many intriguing flavors, I won't list them here. But you can see them and order them at www.mcstevens.com.

In the past, Dilettante sold chocolate shavings for baking and drinking, but on a recent visit to their Pike Place Market store I

GANACHE

"A MIXTURE OF MELTED OR FINELY CHOPPED CHOCOLATE AND HEATED CREAM THAT ARE BLENDED TOGETHER UNTIL VERY SMOOTH."

RECIPE

8 OUNCES BITTERSWEET CHOCOLATE, FINELY CHOPPED

¾ CUP HEAVY WHIPPING CREAM

MELT CHOCOLATE IN TOP OF DOUBLE BOILER OVER HOT WATER.

MEANWHILE, IN A SAUCEPAN, HEAT THE CREAM OVER MEDIUM HEAT UNTIL JUST BELOW A BOIL.

REMOVE BOTH PANS FROM THE HEAT. POUR THE CREAM INTO THE CHOCOLATE AND STIR UNTIL THE MIXTURE IS COMPLETELY BLENDED AND SMOOTH.

POUR THE GANACHE INTO A CONTAINER AND COVER TIGHTLY. IT WILL KEEP REFRIGERATED FOR 2 MONTHS OR FROZEN FOR 6 MONTHS.

FROM THE INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF DESSERTS, PASTRIES, AND CONFECTIONS BY CAROLE BLOOM

was told they no longer have that product. Luckily, however, I did find their baking chocolate available online at www.dilettante.com.

I strongly advocate shopping locally. You'll find many locally produced brands or unusual brands sold in local stores in your area. Buy local when possible!

But having said that, I also have to admit I am an adventurer at heart. Many before us and among us have blazed new and delicious hot chocolate trails I am eager to follow wherever they may go.

So...search the Internet for more far-flung sources. For example, Mariebelle in New York City (mariebelle.com) has a unique, strongly flavored product called Aztec that is somewhere between cocoa powder and grated chocolate.

Tell me about your hot chocolate adventures!



About YUMMY NORTHWEST

Each monthly issue highlights an edible delight available in the Pacific Northwest.

Contact the editor

How do you like what you've read so far? Comments, corrections, topic ideas and submissions are all most welcome. Yummy_Northwest@hotmail.com