

YUMMY NORTHWEST

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WHAT A GLORIOUS YEAR!

Thank you, dear readers, for making this past year a happy one for the staff of **Yummy Northwest**.

Publishing this modest newsletter is possibly my most rewarding activity. I especially enjoy the flow of ideas from you all. Who knew there were so many interesting food-related stories in our corner of the world?

Please bear with me as I celebrate this first anniversary with another hot chocolate indulgence. It won't surprise you that I have discovered more places to tell you about that are worth their weight in chocolate. (One sells 50-pound chocolate Santa Claus figures at Christmas; read on to find out the address!)

Happy Yummy anniversary!



Yummy Front Page News!

*In an article appearing December 8, 2003, the American Chemical Society reported that **hot chocolate tops the healthy foods list**. If you don't want to wade through the original abstract, here is the more readable format as seen online at chemical.org.*

A leader has emerged in beverages with high antioxidant capacities. Researchers at Cornell University report that hot cocoa contains more antioxidants per cup than similar servings of red wine and black and green teas.

While it has been known for some time that cocoa is rich in antioxidant compounds, the study, which appeared in the December 3



Chocolate! It's healthier than prunes!

Top antioxidant foods
ORAC* units per 100 grams

Dark Chocolate 13,120
Milk Chocolate 6,740

Compare:
Prunes 5,770
Broccoli Florets 890
Oranges 750
Red Grapes 739

*ORAC (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity) is a measure of the ability of the foods to subdue harmful oxygen free radicals that can damage our bodies.

Source: Data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Journal of the American Chemical Society



[2003] issue of "Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry," is the most complete comparison of the antioxidant content between cocoa, black and green teas, and red wine.

Using special analytical techniques, the researchers evaluated the antioxidant content of the four beverages and found that, on a per-serving basis, cocoa has nearly two times the antioxidants than red wine, is 2-3 times higher than green tea, and 4-5 times higher than black tea. (The amount of cocoa used in their tests – 2 tablespoons – was roughly equivalent to the amount of cocoa found in a packet of instant hot chocolate. The researchers used standard 2-gram tea bags and 140 milliliters of California merlot as the serving sizes for the teas and wine, respectively.)

"Although we know that antioxidants are important for good health, nobody knows the exact daily amount required per person," said Chang Yong Lee, head of the study and a professor of food chemistry in Cornell's Department of Food Science and Technology, in a press release. "Nevertheless, a cup or two of hot cocoa every once in a while can provide a delicious, warm and healthy way to obtain more antioxidants."

The researchers noted that antioxidant-rich cocoa also can be found in desserts, liqueurs, sauces and candy bars. However, a normal 40-gram bar of chocolate contains 8 grams of saturated fat compared with the 0.3 gram of saturated fat in a serving of hot cocoa.

Antioxidants have been touted to prevent cardiovascular disease, cancer and Alzheimer's disease, and to decrease the effects of aging by stabilizing free radicals – those unstable menaces of our bodies that plunder electrons from our healthy cells membranes. By generously donating one electron, antioxidants safely placate the free radicals by giving them what they need.

Fruits, vegetables, nuts and grains also are excellent sources of antioxidants. Cranberry juice and coffee are two other popular beverages considered to have high antioxidant capacities, although these were not included in the study.

Worth the visit

As you know, the Yummy staff are always on the prowl for a good cup of hot chocolate.

On a recent trip abroad, in the basement of a London bookshop, the News Café provided a tasty sample of what that fabulous city has to offer. "What kind of chocolate do you use?" the inquisitive Yummy editor asked. "Ghirardelli," came the proud reply. Which goes to prove you don't have to travel to exotic locales to sample the best!

You don't have to go any farther than Seattle or Portland to discover that hot chocolate is not only good for you (see that informative article on page 1), it tastes good, too. Wow!

Here are some great places to get those antioxidants.

In Portland:

Moonstruck Chocolate Co.

526 N.W. 23rd Ave.

(503) 542-3400

Enticed by the sign outside that proclaims "Chocolate Café," I found staff inside who enjoy discussing the intricacies of a cup of hot chocolate. You can get regular or the hard-core "truffle" blend.

Papa Haydn

701 N.W. 23rd Ave.

(503) 228-7317

I'm afraid you'll have to decide if you're here for the famed desserts or to sample the hot chocolate; you won't have room for both. I speak from experience.

Powell's City of Books

1005 W. Burnside

(503) 228-4651

It hardly seems possible that this paradise of books could also provide a comfortable place to sit with a cup of fine hot chocolate, but there it is: they think of everything.

Rimsky Korsakoffee House

707 S.E. 12th Ave.

(503) 232-2640

I won't spoil the surprise, but in all fairness I must warn you to be wary of the tables! After you've enjoyed your hot chocolate, ask for "some water" (heh heh). Then you might want to check out the very cool bathroom upstairs.

Thomas Jefferson's Hot Chocolate

Our founding fathers were an amazingly ingenious lot. They seem to have invented – or at least improved – almost everything. I can't promise this is an authentic recipe, but it's good. Of course, anything that starts with a ganache made from whipped cream must be worth tasting.

2½ oz. unsweetened chocolate
½ cup cold water
pinch of salt
1 cup whipping cream
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

5 quarts milk, heated

In a heavy saucepan, combine chocolate and water over medium heat, and cook until the mixture is dissolved, smooth and thick, whisking out any lumps. Add the salt and sugar and continue cooking and whisking 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool.

In a chilled bowl, whip the cream with vanilla; stir into the cooled chocolate mixture. Transfer to a quart container and store in the refrigerator up to a week.

To make the hot chocolate, place a heaping tablespoon in each cup (or the equivalent in a serving pot). Add 1 cup hot milk per serving, and whisk until smooth and frothy.



In the Puget Sound area:

Dilettante Mocha Café

1400 6th Ave. (near Union)

Seattle, Wash.

(206) 748-7880

Here is where you can buy a 50-pound chocolate Santa. But why wait until Christmas to enjoy their hot chocolate? You will weep with joy as you survey the myriad hot chocolate choices on a menu as varied as the coffee selection at other places. Because you can get whatever hot chocolate fantasy you desire here – including dark, milk or white, with milk or "neat" (hot water only) – this café moves to Number One on the Yummy hot chocolate approval list.

The Library Café

850 N.W. 85th

Seattle, Wash.

(206) 789-5682

Imagine my surprise to discover the tasty hot chocolate in this charming café is made from Hershey's syrup! You won't catch me ever again saying it's impossible to enjoy that stuff – but I now question why everyone who uses it can't do it right.

Wild Wheat Bakery and Café

202 First Ave. S.

Kent, Wash.

(253) 856-8919

Last year's overall number one winner and still a Yummy staff top favorite, these friendly folks have perfected a hot chocolate version that goes well with their ever-amazing choice of pastries and breads.



About YUMMY NORTHWEST

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

Contact the editor

Comments, corrections, topic ideas and submissions are all most welcome.

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