

YUMMY NORTHWEST

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HOME *SWEET* HOME

If you like candy, you live in the right place. The Pacific Northwest is home to many varieties, some that even resemble other things here. Mountain Bars – mounds of nut-studded chocolate with a cream filling – depict Mount Rainier, while Idaho Spud Bars look like friendly potatoes.

Seattle Chocolate, Dilettante, Fran's and Boehm's are native to the Seattle area. Liberty Orchards in Cashmere, Wash., offer Aplets & Cotlets, and in Tacoma is Brown & Haley, home of Almond Roca. Oregon has Dagoba Organic Chocolate and the Endangered Species Chocolate Company. Idaho gives us the Idaho Candy Company (the "Spud" people) and Dream Chocolate.

October brings in Halloween, the candy holiday. Let's celebrate!



When is a treat not a treat?

Many **Yummy** readers have strong opinions about what they call a treat and what they consider a mockery of the word. Read on.

[Best] I can't remember any specific things except that I preferred the bars which were all chocolate (with nuts) over anything with toffee, caramel, or worst of all, marshmallow.
[Worst] Candy corn, as I despise it, and used to get lots of it, which I would have to eat despite my dislike.

- S., Long Beach Peninsula, Wash.

My favorite treat was those little bags that people would put a bunch of things in. I certainly don't remember my worst, but last year my daughter got some Mary Kay cosmetics samples and she was pretty flabbergasted!

- N., Seattle

[Best] A full-size Hershey bar.
[Worst] "Cheapo" hard candies. Those definitely went in the "do not consume until desperate" pile.

- J., Los Angeles



What do you know... about Halloween candy?

"The distinction between 'candy' and 'Halloween candy' can be summed up this way: The latter is exactly the same as the former, only there's more of it."

- Bill Barol, "Slate" article

The National Confectioners Association reports that 50 percent of trick-or-treaters prefer chocolate. But watch out, kids! ... 90 percent of parents admit to sneaking candy (preferably miniature bars) out of their children's bags.

You either love the tri-colored triangles or you hate them, but somehow October 30 became National Candy Corn Day. When these candies were introduced in 1900, folks, particularly farmers, went nuts over them.

Halloween is the time when the most candy is sold in the United States; \$2 billion is spent to give innocent children a sugar high. Easter comes in a close second.

[Best] My mom's homemade popcorn balls. Not really candy, but REALLY tasty. And sticky. Very sticky.

[Worst] You know those little tan chewy candies in black and orange wrappers? Someone must stop them from ever being handed to another unsuspecting trick-or-treater ever again. I can still taste them, 24 years later. They probably haven't even left my digestive system.

[Comment] My sister and I would "trade" candy after our stroll around the neighborhood, and I managed to convince her that mini candy bars were not as good as lollipops, which, naturally, last longer. Talk about a sucker.

- L., Seattle

[Best] 3 Musketeers bar – the big size!

[Worst] Popcorn ball...blech!

[Comment] My motto about candy (and most everything else): If it isn't chocolate, why bother?

- G., Redmond, Wash.

[Best] Any chocolate bar, but – and you have to remember this was a loooong time ago – the nickel Hershey bars that were a decent size were always treasured.

[Worst] Those nasty pink-beige marshmallow peanut-shaped things. Yuk!!

- L., Kirkland, Wash.

My husband and I loved the candy corn and didn't want to get apples. I love fruit, but for Halloween, we wanted that sugar high!

- S., Herndon, Va.

[Best] Popcorn ball.

[Worst] Bit o'Honey (which I dislike).

[Comment] Carmel apples are way messy but good.

- R., Bisbee, Ariz.

Candy Bars! Candy Bars! The miniature kind were always fun. The very worst treats were apples or popcorn balls. Even though we went trick-or-treating in an established neighborhood, there was always the dread of a needle or razor blade stuck inside. I never heard of it happening, mind you, but it was a possibility. Plus, fruit is such a disappointing alternative to Candy Bars!

- M., Seattle



Chocolate-Peanut Butter Bars

I think these easy-to-make bars taste a bit like Reese's Peanut Butter Cups. What do you think?

1 cup melted butter (2 sticks)
1 cup peanut butter
1 3/4 cups graham cracker crumbs (about 24 squares)
2 1/2 cups powdered sugar
2 cups chocolate chips (12 ounces)

In a medium bowl, combine butter, peanut butter, graham cracker crumbs and powdered sugar; mix well. Press into a 9-by-13-inch pan and cool.

Melt chocolate chips in the microwave. Spread melted chocolate over peanut butter mixture. Cool and cut into bars. (Ed. Note: To cut, I recommend using a sharp knife dipped into hot water, then wiped dry – the chocolate topping will otherwise crack into chunks.)

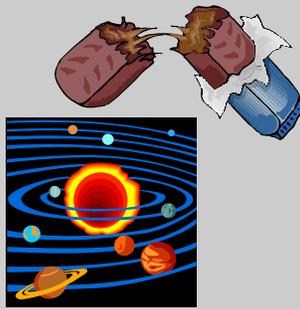
I'll have seconds

Dilettante "Cherry Seconds" and the Brown & Haley outlets in Fife and Tacoma all provide a delectable experience for the chocoholic, as long as you are not one to judge candy by its appearance.

Candy that doesn't fit in boxes, oozes out where oozes are not pretty, or generally doesn't meet the high appearance standards of these two companies finds itself sitting on shelves waiting for hungry bargain hunters.

Call the Dilettante store on Cherry Ave. in Seattle at (206) 328-1955 before making a special trip to shop there. Despite stated hours, the place doesn't seem to be open all that often.

But once inside, you'll find yourself surrounded by chocolate from every season of the year, plus powders and sprinkles and oddly shaped truffles, all still in satisfyingly edible condition. If you want current seasonal offerings, you have to "wait until they start messing up" according to a salesclerk.



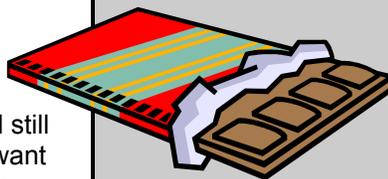
Universally loved

What do Mars and Tacoma have in common? Many folks would be quick to come up with some answers, but the one I'm thinking of has to do with candy.

Here's the story from the Mars candy company website at www.mars.com:

"It all started with Frank Mars back in 1911 when he and his wife Ethel started making and selling a variety of butter-cream candies from the spotless kitchen of their home in Tacoma, Washington. In 1920, after visiting a local drugstore with his son, Forrest, he thought what a good idea it would be if they could produce a version of chocolate malted milk that could be enjoyed anywhere. The result was the Milky Way bar – known in Europe as the Mars bar. It was an immediate success."

Now headquartered in McLean, Virginia, Mars sells more candy than anyone in the world.



Brown & Haley's funny pink hut outside their Tacoma factory has been a landmark since the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. You can't tour the factory, but there are plenty of things to look at inside the seconds store. Almond Roca "Boo-boos" and "Mishaps" are for sale alongside chocolate-covered pretzels, mints, s'mores, sandwich cookies, truffles and other intriguing offerings that you might not have known the company makes.

In Fife, a bigger outlet store was recently built to house Brown & Haley seconds as well as other Washington-made products. A nostalgic candy museum is sure to make you smile.

Be sure to ask for samples – a good way to try the new low-carb and sugar-free varieties as well as Cashew Roca.

Look for directions and more information at www.brown-haley.com.

It's not all fun and merriment

I did so love Halloween! My best treat was a Sugar Daddy decorated to look like a broomstick. My worst treat was a mushy apple.

The best AND worst treat I ever got was a candy popcorn ball, which was a traditional treat in my area. I loved the way they smelled and how they looked in their colored cellophane. But I could never eat one. I'd take one bite, like from an apple, and my teeth would be stuck fast in the candied bit. It was awful! I'd try not to panic, but then drool would start running down my chin which would automatically make me cry. My mother almost always saved me, though the drool sometimes melted some of the sugar off the popcorn ball.

- P., Seattle

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. Yummy_Northwest@hotmail.com

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