

Chocolate & ...

The following notes refer to pairings with pure chocolate and not with chocolate desserts. The search for a perfect match with a chocolate dessert would require the analysis of all the ingredients contained both in the recipe and in the chocolate.

Matching chocolate with a wine or a distilled beverage in order to bring out its aromatic characteristics is an extremely interesting pursuit, especially given the wider and wider range of products produced as the years go on.

Chocolate pairings with wine or distilled beverages are based on the fundamental principles of concordance and contrast. A full-bodied chocolate (more than 55% cocoa solids) might be coupled with a wine or distilled beverage with the same structure (principle of concordance). If a chocolate has bitter nuances, you might pair it with a delicate and smooth beverage (principle of contrast).

With aromas, you have to follow the principle of concordance: a chocolate with complex flavours and notes is usually matched with a wine or distilled beverage with the same characteristics.

Although pairings with fortified wines or distilled beverages are the most common, they're not the only ones: some dry red wines with a high percentage of alcohol by volume (14-16% ABV) and with specific vinification characteristics are good for tasting combinations.

Even beer can be good for matching: through the years, producers have put more and more individual types of beer on the market – beers characterized by complex flavours and by a percentage of alcohol by volume as high as 13.5% and refermented in the bottle (like Champagne) – making for some interesting pairings.

Finally, as chocolate can be tasted at any moment in the day, it can also be paired with tea and coffee. Here, the principles of concordance and contrast are also valid: if it's a full-bodied chocolate, better to choose tea or coffee with an intense and spicy flavour (Indian black tea, for example); or perhaps an Asian or African robust blend with a strong and distinctive flavour.

Some of the best pairings are made with:

Banyuls
Barolo Chinato
Cognac
Marsala Vergine
Vintage Port
Rum
Sherry
Whisky

recipe

Pralina Moleskine

ingredients

200 grams (7.05 oz) cream

500 grams (17.64 oz) dark chocolate mono-origin (in callets)

40 grams (1.41 oz) butter

30 grams (1.06 oz) glucose

cocoa powder

spices: choose from among Tahitian vanilla, cardamom, cinnamon, Sarawak black pepper, Mexican pepper (see notes below)

preparation

Put the cream in a saucepan over a medium heat and when it boils filter it through a chinois (fine mesh sieve) to remove the spices.

Put 400 grams of chocolate in a bowl, add the butter, glucose and cream and stir until well-blended.

Pour the mixture onto a tray and put it in the fridge to cool for one night.

Take a bit of the mixture (12-15 grams) and shape some small spheres using the palms of your hands. Set them aside in the fridge again for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, put the remaining chocolate in a bowl and melt it in a bain-marie (don't go over 32 °C); put some cocoa powder on a plate.

Roll the spheres in the liquid chocolate and then in the cocoa powder.

garnish

notes

1 Tahitian vanilla pod, split in two lengthwise (left to infuse in cold cream for 48h)
 5 cardamom seeds, chopped (left to infuse in cold cream for 24h)
 ½ cinnamon stick (left to infuse in cold cream for 48h)
 10 berries of Sarawak black pepper, finely ground (left to infuse in cold cream for 48h)
 5 grams of Mexican pepper (to add to the cream before it boils)

difficulty



serves

about 40 pralines

preparation time



90'
 + infusion time
 + fridge time

special equipment



chinois (fine mesh sieve)
thermometer

process time



1 night
 (the mix)
 + 30'
 (the spheres)



other

pairings



rating



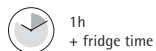
difficulty



serves



preparation time



special equipment



thermometer
pastry bag

process time



other

pairings



rating



recipe

Chocolate Mousse

ingredients

150 grams (5.29 oz) dark chocolate (chopped or in chips)

300 grams (10.58 oz) whipping cream

1 small glass of dark cocoa powder

preparation

Put the chocolate in a bowl and melt it in a bain-marie at a temperature of 45 °C.

In another bowl, whip the cream and mix in the molten chocolate, stirring gently to blend all the ingredients.

Put the chocolate mousse in a pastry bag, squeeze into the chosen serving dish or dishes and put in the refrigerator for about 2 hours.

garnish

Dust the mousse with cocoa powder.

notes

recipe

Chocolate Tart with Candied Ginger

ingredients

chocolate shortcrust pastry (see page 60)

chocolate cream (see page 60)

preparation

Roll out the pastry with a rolling pin until it is about 3 mm thick. Grease a cake tin (22-24 cm diameter) with butter and place the shortcrust over the base. (Set aside some scraps of pastry to decorate the tart.)

Fill the pastry-lined cake tin with chocolate cream and level the surface with a spoon.

Now decorate the tart: make some strips (1 cm width) from the remaining pastry and put them on the tart side by side. Place more strips crosswise to form a "grid".

Preheat the oven to 180 °C. Bake the tart for 35 minutes, set aside to cool and then remove gently from the cake tin.

garnish

notes

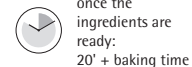
difficulty



serves



preparation time



special equipment



rolling pin

process time



other

pairings



rating



The recipes that follow make the correct amount for the Chocolate Tart with Candied Ginger on page 59.

recipe

chocolate shortcrust pastry

difficulty



preparation time



25'
+ 4h in the fridge

ingredients

150 grams (5.29 oz) butter
150 grams (5.29 oz) caster sugar
3 eggs
275 grams (9.7 oz) flour
25 grams (0.88 oz) cocoa powder
2.5 grams (0.09 oz) salt
7 grams (0.25 oz) baking powder
3 grams (0.11 oz) vanilla powder

preparation

Mix butter and sugar, then add eggs and other ingredients.
Leave to rest in the fridge for several hours.

notes

recipe

chocolate cream

difficulty



preparation time



5'

ingredients

300 grams (10.58 oz) custard (see page 61)
300 grams (10.58 oz) ganache (see page 61)
150 grams (5.29 oz) chopped candied ginger

preparation

Pour the custard in a bowl, add the ganache and mix with a wooden spoon until well-blended.
Add the candied ginger.

notes

recipe

custard

difficulty



preparation time



15'

ingredients

215 grams (7.58 oz) full-cream milk
½ vanilla pod
12 grams (0.42 oz) plain flour
4 grams (0.14 oz) potato starch
2 egg yolks
35 grams (1.23 oz) caster sugar
sugar for dusting

preparation

Pour the milk into a saucepan and add the vanilla pod split in two lengthwise. Place the saucepan over a medium heat.
Meanwhile, put the flour and the potato starch into a bowl, add the egg yolks mixed with sugar, and then add a bit of hot milk, stirring with a whisk.
When the milk boils, remove the vanilla pod and add the mixture of flour and eggs. Cook, stirring constantly with the whisk, for about 3 minutes.
Pour the custard into a bowl and dust with a little sugar to prevent a skin forming.

notes

Custard can be stored in the fridge for 2 days.

recipe

ganache

difficulty



preparation time



15'

ingredients

120 grams (4.23 oz) cream
180 grams (6.35 oz) dark chocolate (chopped or in chips)

preparation

Pour the cream into a saucepan and put over a medium heat.
When the cream has come to the boil, add the chopped chocolate.
Stir with a wooden spoon until smooth.

notes

Useful Measures and Conversions

U.S. liquid measures

1 cup	8 fluid ounces (1)	1/2 pint	237 milliliters	16 tablespoons
2 cups	16 fluid ounces	1 pint	473 milliliters	
4 cups	32 fluid ounces	1 quart	946 milliliters	
2 pints	32 fluid ounces	1 quart	946 milliliters	
4 quarts	128 fluid ounces	1 gallon	3.785 liters	
8 quarts	one peck			
4 pecks	one bushel			
dash	less than 1/4 teaspoon			
1 teaspoon	1/6 fluid ounce	5 grams	about 5 milliliters	
1 tablespoon	1/2 fluid ounce	15 grams	15 milliliters	3 teaspoons
2 tablespoons	1 fluid ounce	28.35 grams	29.57 milliliters	1/8 cup
8 tablespoons	4 fluid ounces	1/4 pint	118.28 milliliters	1/2 cup

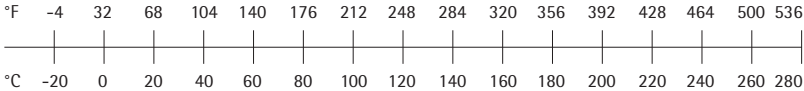
(1) water only: 1 cup = 8 fluid ounces = 8 ounces weight

U.S. dry measures

1 pinch	up to 1/8 teaspoon			
3 teaspoons	1 tablespoon	1/2 ounce	14.3 grams	
2 tablespoons	1/8 cup	1 fluid ounce	28.35 grams	
4 tablespoons	1/4 cup	2 fluid ounces	56.7 grams	
5 1/3 tablespoons	1/3 cup	2.6 fluid ounces	75.6 grams	
8 tablespoons	1/2 cup	4 ounces	113.4 grams	1 stick butter
12 tablespoons	3/4 cup	6 ounces	.375 pound	170 grams
16 tablespoons	1 cup	8 ounces	1/2 pound	226.8 grams
32 tablespoons	2 cups	16 ounces	1 pound	453.6 grams
64 tablespoons	4 cups	32 ounces	2 pounds	907 grams

1 U.S. fluid ounce	1.0408 imperial (UK) fluid ounces	0.0296 liter
1 U.S. liquid gallon	0.8327 imperial (UK) gallon	3.7854 liters
1 U.S. liquid quart	0.8327 imperial (UK) quart	0.9464 liter
1 imperial (UK) fluid ounce	0.9608 U.S. fluid ounce	0.0284 liter
1 imperial (UK) gallon	1.2009 U.S. liquid gallons	4.5460 liters
1 imperial (UK) quart	1.2009 U.S. liquid quarts	1.1365 liters
1 imperial (UK) pint	20 imperial (UK) fluid ounces	0.5683 liters
1 liter	33.8140 U.S. fluid ounces	35.1951 imperial (UK) fluid ounces
1 liter	0.2642 U.S. liquid gallon	0.2200 imperial (UK) gallon
1 liter	1.0567 U.S. liquid quarts	0.8799 imperial (UK) quart
1 liter	1,000 milliliters	

temperature



°F = (°C x 9/5)+32 °C = (°F -32) x 5/9

recipe

difficulty



ingredients

serves



preparation time



special equipment



preparation

process

time



other

pairings



garnish

notes

rating



difficulty

recipe

ingredients

serves

2

4

6

8

...

preparation time

special equipment

preparation

process

time

other

pairings

garnish

rating

notes

recipe

ingredients

serves

2

4

6

8

...

preparation time

special equipment

preparation

process

time

other

pairings

garnish

notes

rating