

# Chocolate Cravings

The smell of chocolate actually may relax you.

The creamy sensation of melted chocolate is an enticing thought. Rich and luxurious with each and every bite, the sweet flavor fills your mouth—and hopefully doesn't melt in your hand. This feel-good treat has many therapeutic benefits, and it also is believed to elevate sexual desire as an aphrodisiac—although it only contains small amounts of a mild mood elevator called phenylethylamine. The smell of chocolate actually may relax you by releasing endorphins.



## Facts

Processed chocolate, especially milk chocolate, is high in calories because it is made with sugar. However, the treat also contains protein, riboflavin, calcium and iron, and is chock-full of flavonoids, which are naturally occurring compounds found in fruits, vegetables, red wine and tea. The cocoa butter in chocolate contains oleic acid, a monounsaturated fat that also is found in olive oil and may raise high-density lipoprotein, or HDL, otherwise known as “good cholesterol.” Adding nuts, such as almonds and peanuts, increases the nutrient content of the treat as well.

## In the kitchen

Chocolate often is the key ingredient in many sweets, from drinks to cakes and everything else in between. Dipped fruits are popular, such as chocolate-covered strawberries, and ice cream sundaes look naked without a little chocolate syrup. Spas around the world include chocolate on their dessert menus. Royal Parc Evian in Evian-Les-Bains, France, features Guaraja Chocolate Cream—a rich baked cream served with grated white chocolate. The Chocolate Chip Cookies found at the Golden Door in Escondido, California, use prune purée as a nutritious alternative to butter. Red Mountain Spa in St. George, Utah, offers clients No Butter Brownies to satisfy their cravings. Or drizzle Nonfat Chocolate Sauce from Rancho La Puerta Spa Resort in Tecate, Baja California, Mexico, to enhance any dish. See the recipe for **Cocoa Seared Scallops With Burnt Orange Sauce**, courtesy of The Spa at The Hotel Hershey in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

In addition to these tasty delights, there are a number of ways to add chocolate to any service. Chocolate candies and a low-fat chocolate shake

## Cocoa Seared Scallops With Burnt Orange Sauce *From The Spa at The Hotel Hershey in Hershey, Pennsylvania*

*Makes 10 servings*

1 tablespoon kosher salt  
2 teaspoons powdered sugar  
30 U-10 scallops (3 per order)  
small lettuce leaves  
olive oil  
salt and pepper to taste

### **Cocoa Crust**

1 ½ cups cocoa powder  
2 teaspoons ground nutmeg  
½ cup ground white pepper  
2 tablespoons ancho chile pepper powder  
4 teaspoons sesame seeds  
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1 tablespoon paprika

### **Burnt Orange Sauce**

8 ounces shallots, chopped  
4 ounces garlic, chopped  
1 tablespoon whole black peppercorns  
kosher salt and pepper to taste  
¼ cup parsley, chopped  
¼ cup thyme, chopped  
1 cup white wine  
2 quarts orange juice concentrate  
1 quart heavy cream



1. Combine salt and sugar.
2. Dust scallops with salt mixture.
3. Dust scallops in cocoa crust mixture.
4. Sear scallops on flattop cooking surface to a medium-rare temperature.
5. Drizzle burnt orange sauce over cooked scallops.
6. Garnish with small lettuce leaves, tossed in olive oil, salt and pepper.

**For Cocoa Crust:** Combine all ingredients together. Reserve for further use.

**For Burnt Orange Sauce:** Sweat, or simmer covered slowly over low heat, shallots and garlic in a heavy-bottom saucepot. Add peppercorns, salt and pepper, parsley and thyme; sweat an additional 5 minutes. Deglaze, or heat in remaining juices, with white wine. Add orange juice concentrate; reduce until mixture produces a caramel texture. Add heavy cream. Simmer for 45 minutes. Strain and cool.

*Recipe courtesy of The Spa at The Hotel Hershey.*

or cup of hot cocoa can add value to any spa package. For group events, offer clients a low-fat fondue bar to enjoy after their treatments. Make sure to provide a variety of healthy dipping options, such as fruits and cheeses.

### In the spa

Chocolate is becoming an increasingly popular ingredient for a wide array of skin care products. From body care to scented candles, the scrumptious aroma is satisfying consumers without the calories. Karin Herzog offers its cocoa fix with a Chocolate Cleanser that delights the senses while removing dirt and makeup. Aqua Dessa Spa Therapy's Chocolate Espresso Body Scrub is enriched with antioxidants, and its Chocolate Milk Foam Shower Gel purifies and pampers. Give your skin a healthy sun-kissed glow with Fake Bake's Sheer Chocolate Mousse, or pick up some SlimDelices Slimming Chocolate to help curb cravings.

The sweet treat has become common as a spa treatment option as well. The Spa at The Hotel Hershey in Hershey, Pennsylvania, is well known for its unique chocolate body services. Begin with a cool Chocolate Bean Polish that gently exfoliates using cocoa bean husks and walnut shells, and then soften skin with a Cocoa Body Moisturizer. Next, truly relax with the Chocolate Fondue Wrap that covers the client in warmed moor mud and uses the essence of cocoa to revitalize and nourish the skin, followed by a body brushing and fondue application.

Dip into some Chocolate Indulgence with this scrub and wrap combo at The Spa Hyatt at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake Bay Golf Resort in Cambridge, Maryland, where clients choose between chocolate mint-, chocolate raspberry- or chocolate cake-infused body oil. The menu at Gauthier Total Image Spa in Sherman Oaks, California, features six decadent chocolate-based services, including Dripping in Chocolate—a scrub, body wrap, manicure and pedicure combination, complete with a chocolate biscotti and a cup of hot chocolate. And at Transition Salon & Day Spa in Escondido, California, the menu highlights a chocolate delight services section that includes wraps, hydrotherapy treatments, body polishes, salt glows, pedicures and paraffin dips.

### Make it with chocolate

Tempting, alluring and delicious, chocolate enhances any spa menu. Dip into chocolate, and discover the possibilities. ✂



## Quick Facts

- Chocolate comes from the cacao (kah-KOH) tree, which was discovered 2,000 years ago in the tropical rain forests of Central and South America. The pods of the tree contain seeds that are processed to make chocolate.
- The ancient cultures of Central America first mixed ground cacao seeds with various seasonings to make cacahuatt, a spicy, frothy drink. Spanish conquistadors brought this recipe back to their home country, prompting the drink's spread across Europe.
- Throughout the centuries, cultures have used cacao seeds as sacred symbols in religious ceremonies, as well as in medicinal remedies.
- Innovative machines in the mid-1800s made it possible to mass-produce solid chocolate candy.
- The caffeine in one ounce of milk chocolate is about as little as that found in one cup of decaffeinated coffee.