

## SHORT PORTRAIT

## WAGNER PRALINEN

Germany (Brunsbüttel)

www.wagner-pralinen.de

Processing stage: **Couverture**

Price category: €€€

The history of Wagner Pralinen began in the year 1891. Emil Wagner already maintained a fishery, a fish smokehouse and a delicatessen shop. His son Willy Wagner began with the production of confectionery in 1920. Reinhard Wagner senior went to Switzerland in 1953 to learn the art of confectionery production. Today, the company is managed by Reinhard and Jörg Wagner in the fourth generation. Wagner produces mainly confectionery, but for some years also flavored chocolates.

## The following products were tested in the first issue:

- White: Violeta, Points: 59.05
- White: Fragaria, Points: 52.88
- Bar: Lemon-Ginger-Nibble, Points: 68.10
- Bar: Blueberry-Nibble, Points: 52.00
- Bar: Kir-Royal-Nibble, Points: 50.00
- Confectionery: Box Red Rose, Points: 59.69
- Varieties: Jamaica-Rum-Marzipan, Irish-Choco-Truffle, Vanilla-Truffle, Whisky-Cream-Liqueur, Prosecco-Truffle, Rum-Cream-Praliné, Mousse au Chocolat, Butter-Cream-Truffle, Almond-Butter-Truffle.

## Summary:

The tasting was no fun and disappointment outweighs. Once more it also became clear that a department store is simply not a sales channel for confectionery. The premises are mostly not air-conditioned and the sensitive products suffer. The use of non-natural flavoring agents simply has no place in the trade of a confectioner and has a not insignificant share in the poor rating. As so often, the confectionery lacks flavor and the chocolate is of simple quality. The fillings are often fatty-buttery and overall very sweet. All of that without finesse and creativity or subtlety.

## WEISS (CHOCOLATERIE WEISS)

France (Saint-Étienne)

www.chocolat-weiss.fr

Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€€

Eugène Weiss founded the Chocolaterie Weiss in 1882 in Saint Étienne. In 1907 Weiss began to produce his own chocolates straight from the bean. He was a pioneer with the production of chocolate and began to experiment with the different cocoa varieties at a very early stage. In 1926 he invented the Carré de chocolat, small, bite-size, individually wrapped, chocolate pieces. Eugène Weiss passed away

in 1939 but the company remained in family ownership and has remained faithful to its heritage to this day. The couvertures from the Chocolaterie Weiss are very popular with confectioners world-wide.

## Product ratings

- Milk: Lait Entier 37 %  
Points: 67.00  
Milky-creamy chocolate with pleasant melt, but somewhat too sweet. With a subtle cocoa character and flavors of cream toffee, caramel and honey.
- Flavored: Plaisir Sésame 35 %  
Points: 86.00  
Milk chocolate flavored with sesame. Fantastic sesame taste, surprisingly low sweetness and also pleasant in the interaction with the sesame, with adequate cocoa character.
- Flavored: Ibaria 67 %  
Points: 74.75  
Dark chocolate flavored with aromatic candied oranges, overall also not too sweet.
- Flavored: Noir Mendant 64 %  
Points: 73.25  
Dark chocolate flavored with almonds, hazelnuts, pistachios and raisins. All of that tastes good, even if the dark chocolate could be a little more aromatic.
- Bar: Grand Praliné 72 %, Points: 66.50  
Dark chocolate filled with nougat. The strong chocolate is too dominant for the subtle aromatic nougat.



## Summary:

The quality of the products is not bad, but hardly any product makes it beyond a good mean average. Only the sesame chocolate can convince due to its fantastic sesame taste. Where, however, I do consider the quality in 2015, compared to the quality in 2011, when I tried it for the first time, as somewhat better.

## WELLINGTON CHOCOLATE FACTORY

New Zealand (Wellington)

www.wcf.co.nz

Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€€€€

The enterprise was already founded in 2010 by Rochelle Harrison and Gabe Davidson, the first chocolates, however were presented to the public in 2013.

Rochelle Harrison's passion for chocolate was inspired by her 19-year activity as confectioner and pâtissier. Back in 2008 she began with research to be able to produce chocolate straight from the bean.

Gabe Davidson spent 13 years in Melbourne, Australia, where he founded several Cafés and a coffee roastery. He returned to Wellington, to bring the new enterprise into being, together with Rochelle Harrison. Both founders are passionately engaged in the hospitality industry and in the food industry.

### Product ratings

- **Dark: Peru Norandino 70 %**  
**Points: 94.40**  
Produced with beans from the harvest of 2014. These are white Criollo cocoa beans of the variety Piura. Mild and pleasantly tart with a somewhat slow full-bodied and fine melt. Very nicely balanced and with wonderful flavors of apricots, honey and cashew kernels.
- **Dark: Madagascar Somia (Åkesson) Plantation 70 %, Points: 92.60**  
The beans are from the harvest of 2013. Mild-tart, with pleasant fruity acidity and with a fine melt. Very long lasting flavors, the fruity sweetness dominates in the finish. With flavors of red berries and plums.
- **Dark: Dominican Republic 70 %**  
**Points: 89.50**  
Produced with beans from the harvest of 2013. In the beginning with a distinct (fruity) acidity and also astringent, tart to slightly bitter. With a very fine and well balanced melt. Towards the middle and during the finish the sweetness increases and the flavors develop very nicely. With flavors of jam, citrus fruits and earthy notes.
- **Milk: Coconut Milk Chocolate 52 %**  
**Points: 88.50**  
Strong vegan milk chocolate, which contains

coconut instead of milk powder and also coconut sugar (from Java, Indonesia). With an intensive cocoa character and a good flavor of coconut. A somewhat softer consistency, cream, slightly sticky and with a somewhat rough mouthfeel. With flavors of cocoa, coconut, malt and caramel.

- **Flavored: Salted Brittle Caramel 70 %**  
**Points: 85.40**  
Dark chocolate flavored with sprinkled on salted caramel sprinkles. The chocolate is a blend of various cocoa varieties and is just as excellent as the pure chocolates. The caramel sprinkle harmonizes very well with the tart chocolate and also the salt can be tasted distinctly.



### Summary:

The chocolates have turned out absolutely superbly and the company has mastered the leap into the world-class of chocolate manufacturers with bravery. If the selection were a little broader and if one could sustain a certain continuity, Wellington Chocolate Factory would be the first candidate for the accolade with six cocoa fruits. Even the current rating with five cocoa fruits and the very convincing individual ratings are a damned good start into the industry for a novice.

## WENSCHITZ

### Austria (Allhaming)

www.wenschitz.at



Processing stage: **Couverture**

Price category: **€€€**

The history of Wenschitz starts in 1890. The great grandfather of Helmut Wenschitz, Karl Wienerroither, establishes a bakery in a farmhouse in Allhaming. In 1920 his son, also called Karl with first name, continues the bakery. In 1956, Maria Wenschitz, nee Wienerroither, together with her husband Josef Wenschitz, operates today's location in Allhaming as bakery. In 1990, Helmut Wenschitz, trained baker and master pâtissier opened a Cafe-Patisserie-Confectionery in Wels and started with the production of confectionery in Allhaming. That's how far the company provides information on its Internet page, which I find rather scanty. I would also be interested to know Mr. Wenschitz's qualification. With the mailing of the samples I also received a copy of an article from the Kronen Zeitung™ (Austria's Bild™ Zeitung, both yellow press newspapers ). This article states that Helmut Wenschitz as Austria's only "Maître Chocolatier" is permitted to process the finest cocoa bean in the world from Peru to the finest chocolate. This happens to be the cocoa bean Fortunato No 4 from the Marañon Valley. There is absolutely no reference that Wenschitz doesn't process the cocoa bean to chocolate but obtains the finished couvertures from Felchlin from Switzerland. On the contrary, everything is done to suggest to the reader that the company Wenschitz actually processes the raw cocoa bean to chocolate. I may react a little sensitively on this subject but I find this behavior towards the manufacturers who actually take the trouble to produce chocolate Bean-to-Bar, not correct. I consider this form of communication as consumer deception and therefore as competitive distortion.

### Product ratings

#### Confectionery Box MiniKonfekt

**Points: 74.70**

The confectionery contains flavorings and one can taste that. Overall a sound and down-to-earth quality, which, however cannot enthuse.

#### Individual ratings:

- **Knuspernougat: Points: 79.70**  
Nougat with crispy biscuit in dark chocolate. Aromatic-crispy and not too sweet.
- **Kirsche: Points: 77.50**  
Dark fruity-tart ganache with cherry flavor in dark chocolate. A little dry and crumbly, not too sweet.
- **Marille: Points: 76.50**  
Apricot ganache in dark chocolate. Ganache

is somewhat brittle and crumbly, fruity-acidic and with good flavor.

- **Nougat hell: Points: 74.50**  
Nougat in whole milk chocolate. Aromatic, but somewhat too sweet.
- **Nougat dark: Points: 71.50**  
Nougat in dark Chocolate. Firm nougat, which could be more aromatic.
- **Himbeere: Points: 68.50**  
Ganache with raspberry in dark chocolate. The ganache is too tough for me and the flavor of a too artificial impression.
- **Dark: Pure Nacional Fortunato No. 4 68 %**  
**Points: 82.00**  
Mild and subtly aromatic cocoa from Peru. With a very fine and clear melt. Slightly fruity-floral and subtly peaty.



- Bar: Sensual Seduction - Smoked Whiskey Single Malt, Points: 76.40  
Dark and milk-striped chocolate, filled with a whiskey-ganache. Proper flavor, very nice consistency, but somewhat too sweet.
- Bar: Fatal Attraction - Erdbeer Zitronenpfeffer, Points: 72.60  
Milk chocolate filled with fruity-acidic strawberry ganache and with very subtle flavors of lemon pepper. Ganache produced without flavorings and with strawberry puree.
- Bar: Milky Lust - Cafe au lait Points: 69.60  
Dark and milk chocolate, filled with a subtle aromatized coffee ganache. Soft-creamy filling but which lacks coffee character.
- Bar: Moon Struck - Johannisbeer Acai Points: 68.00  
Too high chocolate content of a medium quality. The ganache has a good flavor and is fruity-acidic.
- Bar: Choco Tiger - Orange Zartbitter Points: 67.50  
Dark-orange-striped chocolate with a filling of orange-ganache. Flavored exclusively with flavorings, the chocolate has no fruit character instead a pungent flavor. Technically perfectly produced.
- Bar: Dancing Plum - Rum Zwetschke Points: 66.80  
Dark and milk chocolate, filled with a puree of plums and rum. Aromatizes with flavorings, pleasantly alcoholic.
- Bar: Natural Spirit - Macadamia Points: 65.00  
Filled with a too dry and flavor-flat macadamia cream. Overall also too sweet.

#### Summary:

According to Helmut Wenschitz, the company processes couvertures from Valrhona, Felchlin and Barry Callebaut. Hereby it is noticeable that the expensive and good chocolates are not used for the bars and the confectionery. Wenschitz prefers to use the more inexpensive couverture from Barry Callebaut for these. The melodious names of Valrhona and Felchlin once again purely serve marketing purposes.

## WHITE RABBIT CACAO

### New Zealand (Bannockburn)

www.whiterabbitcacao.co.nz



Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€€€€

In March 2009 Alison Holland and Matt Dicey started with very primitive equipment such as juicer, household coffee roaster, blow dryer and lentil grinder, with the production of Bean-to-Bar chocolates. They sold these chocolates for two summers on the Cromwell Farmers Market, before they decided in 2011 to set up a small commercial production and sell their chocolates commercially. They converted their garage to a chocolate production and had this authorized by the Food Authority. They built the drum roaster from a chicken grill and the cocoa breaker from a storm water fitting and a vacuum cleaner.

#### Product ratings

- Dark: Dominican Republic 70 % Points: 84.80  
Subtly tart, only little acidity and with a nuance of astringency. Fine and clear melt. Very harmonious chocolate with flavors of ripe blackberries, honey, tropical citrus fruits and caramel.
- Dark: Venezuela Mantuano 72 % Points: 83.20  
Very gentle chocolate. Slightly tart, hardly any acidity or astringency. With a fine and fast melt. With flavors of berries, stone fruits and subtly spicy.
- Dark: Venezuela Ocumare 72 % Points: 80.30  
Strong chocolate, pleasantly tart, with distinct acidity and a hint of astringency. Fine and fast melt. With flavors of plums, oranges and peaches as well as slightly peaty.
- Dark: Costa Rica 70 % Points: 79.60  
Slightly acidic and with light astringency. With a fine and clear melt. Flavors of raspberries, green olives and caramel.



#### Summary:

The products have turned out well and are fun. One works with a lot of cocoa butter but at White Rabbit Cacao it doesn't annoy. The young entrepreneurs have created themselves a good basis for the future.

WHITTAKER'S

New Zealand (Porirua)  
www.whittakersworldwide.com

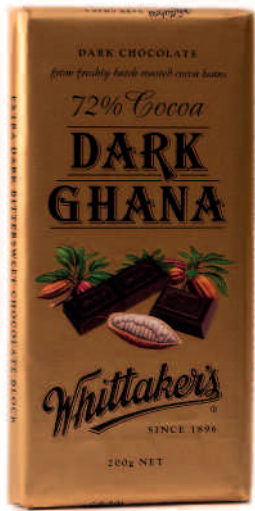
Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€

At the age of 14, J. H. Whittaker worked for a British confectioner and patissier. In 1890 he returned to Christchurch, New Zealand, where he produced chocolate products at home and sold his goods door to door on horseback and in a van. In 1896 he moved to Wellington, where he opened a production site for chocolate. In 1913 his sons Ronald and James became his partners and the company was renamed to J. H. Whittaker and Sons. The company started to supply resellers and grew continuously. The company is still in the hands of the Whittaker family these days and is managed in the third generation by Andrew and Brian Whittaker.

Product ratings

- **Dark: Dark Ghana 72 %, Points: 66.50**  
Mild-tart and slightly bitter. With a fine and slow melt. One can distinctly taste the added vanilla and only subtly the Ghana cocoa. With flavors of vanilla, peat and tropical wood.
- **Milk: Creamy Milk 33 %, Points: 67.00**  
Milky-creamy with very little cocoa character. Heavy, full-bodied and greasy-sticky melt. The sweetness is simply too dominant. With flavors of cream toffee, malt and caramel.
- **Bar: Peanut Butter 33 %, Points: 73.75**  
Milk chocolate filled with peanut butter. Good flavor of the peanut butter, but the sweet chocolate makes the whole thing somewhat too sweet. Paired with the fatty peanut butter this is a mighty matter.



Summary:

The industrially appearing chocolates are of ordinary but not bad quality. It is a mass product and is good as a carbohydrate supplier but a gourmet product it is definitely not. It doesn't have to be because such sweets, honest and with a clean ingredients list, have to be around as well.



SHORT PORTRAIT  
WIEBOLD CONFISERIE

Germany (Elmshorn)  
www.wiebold.de

Processing stage: **Couverture**

Price category: €

The enterprise Wiebold was founded in 1968. Due to the sudden death of his father, Walter Wiebold Junior had to take over the family enterprise at the tender age of 25. Only a few years after the take-over of the business, the company was put to a hard test. Within only a few months, several major customers and with these, a not insignificant share of turnover were lost. Wiebold made a virtue of necessity. In the meantime, the main focus was no longer on the specialized trade, instead on the manufacture of trademarks for the wholesale trade. Therefore, one could not count on being rescued by the specialized trade. The company then took the opposite path and approached the discounters.

The following products were tested in the first issue:

- **Confectionery: Box Spark of the Gods, Points: 57.67**  
Varieties: Marc de Champagne, Brandy, Jamaica-Rum.
- **Confectionery: Box Prali-Nova, Points: 55.00**  
Varieties: Vanilla-Liqueur, Caramel-Coffee, Marc de Champagne.
- **Confectionery: Box Master Pieces Points: 53.67**  
Varieties: Orange Whisky, Cassis, Amaretto.

Summary:

All tested products show significant shortcomings. The fillings are firm, sweet, not very harmonious and badly flavored. As Wiebold products are almost not found in retail, I will leave the issue with this brief description.



WILD SWEETS® (BY DOMINIQUE & CINDY DUBY)

Canada (Richmond)  
www.dcduby.com

Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€€€€€

Dominique and Cindy Duby, the founders and owners of Wild Sweets, learned their craft in such renowned establishments as Lenôtre in Paris and Wittamer in Brussels – and won many gold and silver medals at international competitions.





The Dubys get their inspiration from nature. Their name, Wild Sweets, reflects their approach: fusion of the exotic and the familiar. They believe that everything can work until the opposite is proven.

They let themselves be guided by science and have a major interest in scientific research with the aim of developing new techniques and applying them.

They regard food as a form of art and also integrate various techniques such as thermoforming, stamping or airbrushing in their work.

They use equipment which is not usual for the industry such as, e.g. a vacuum drying system. This is based on microwaves, to convert liquids such as wine to powder and so only lose a minimum of flavor. To extract chlorophyll they use high-speed centrifuges, which allows them to produce aromatic oils.

The couple is also the owner of DC DUBY Hospitality Services Inc. A company located in Vancouver, which offers culinary training and world-wide consulting as well as marketing services, product development, food styling and food photography. Together they have already written several books, the first two having each won the "Best of the World" Award from Gourmand World Cookbook Awards.

## Product ratings

Confectionery Box House Selection

Points: 87.86

### Individual ratings:

- **Passion Pate de Fruit & Walnut Praliné, Points: 93.10**

Semi-liquid passion fruit jelly on walnut nougat in dark chocolate. Fruity-acidic and aromatic jelly on a very aromatic and also crunchy nougat.

- **Vanilla Bean Ganache & Hazelnut Praliné Cream, Points: 92.60**

Dark and soft ganache of vanilla on a hazelnut nougat cream in dark chocolate. Very fine melting ganache, aromatic and soft-creamy on an aromatic hazelnut nougat cream.

- **Passion Ganache & Hazelnut Praliné Cream, Points: 92.10**

Dark passion fruit ganache on a dark hazelnut nougat cream in dark chocolate. Fruity-acidic, aromatic and soft-creamy with fine melt.

- **Raspberry Ganache & Hazelnut Praliné Cream, Points: 89.90**

Dark raspberry ganache on hazelnut cream in dark chocolate. Soft-creamy, tart and aromatic.

- **Mango Pate de Fruit & Coconut Praliné, Points: 89.10**

Mango jelly on coconut nougat in dark chocolate.



Fruity-aromatic jelly on a tasty coconut nougat with coconut flakes. Pleasant consistency and not too sweet.

- **Hazelnut Ganache & Hazelnut Praliné Cream, Points: 89.00**

Dark hazelnut ganache in dark chocolate. Soft-creamy with pronounced hazelnut flavor. Lightly tart and tasty.

- **Apricot Soft Caramel & Whipped Chocolate Cream, Points: 88.00**

Semi-liquid apricot caramel on white chocolate mousse in dark chocolate. Good caramel and apricot flavor but somewhat too sweet white mousse, which is, however, airy-creamy.

- **Red Berry Soft Caramel & Whipped Chocolate Cream, Points: 87.80**

Twice-filled confectionery with caramel of red berries and a white cream in dark chocolate.

Semi-liquid fruit caramel and soft-creamy ganache. Somewhat too subtly fruity, but good caramel taste. The ganache is creamy but somewhat taste-neutral.

- **Coffee Ganache & Hazelnut Praliné Cream, Points: 87.20**

Dark coffee ganache on a dark hazelnut nougat cream in dark chocolate. Soft-creamy, slightly tart and pleasantly aromatic.

- **Almond Black Pepper Praliné & Pate de Truffe, Points: 87.20**

Almond and black pepper nougat on truffle paste in dark chocolate. Crunchy and aromatic nougat with a subtle flavor of the pepper.

- **Caramel Ganache & Hazelnut Praliné Cream, Points: 86.00**

Dark caramel ganache on a dark hazelnut nougat cream in dark chocolate. Subtle caramel taste, mellow and with a soft-creamy consistency.

- **Coconut Sweet Curry Praliné & Pate de Truffe, Points: 84.00**

Coconut curry nougat on a truffle paste in dark chocolate. Intensive curry flavor and a somewhat subtle coconut taste.

- **Flavored: Milk Chocolate Fleur de Sel, Points: 88.10**

Dark milk chocolate produced with Hispaniola cocoa beans from the cooperative "La Red" from the Dominican Republic and a caramel of cane sugar. Flavored with nuts, coffee and with sprinkled on salt. Milky-creamy and with a good cocoa character, not too sweet and slightly tart. One can taste the salt very intensively, it is harmonious with the chocolate. Very fine and good melt. Unfortunately without specification of the cocoa solids.

## Summary:

What the couple Duby offers is confectionery art in the highest form. All varieties are of a stunning delicacy, the quality is absolute world class. The ideas are manifold, and the confectionery has an own identity which cannot be compared to any other manufacturer. A very exciting collection and I am already looking forward to the next collection from Wild Sweets.

## WILKIE'S CHOCOLATE

Ireland (Midleton)

[www.wilkieschocolate.ie](http://www.wilkieschocolate.ie)



Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€€€

Shana Wilkie attended a few courses where hand-made confectionery was produced. That aroused her interest to find out more about chocolate.

Even while she was working as a graphic designer, she spent several years with researching and testing different cocoa beans. When her employer closed down the business in 2011, she used the opportunity to dedicate herself to a new task.

At home in Dun Laoghaire, Dublin, she began with the manufacture of chocolate but then returned to her hometown, to Midleton, Cork, so that her family could support her with setting up the company.

In 2012 the time had come, the first chocolates were marketed and the success of the products was not long in coming.

### Product ratings

- Dark: Amazonas 89 %

Points: 84.70

Strong and tart-bitter. One can immediately taste the freshness of the beans. With a very full-bodied and soft melt. With flavors of fermentation, green grass, red fruits and some peat.

- Dark: Tumbes 75 %

Points: 83.50

Produced with cocoa beans from the region Tumbes in Peru. Very mild and gently roasted cocoa beans. One can immediately taste the flavors of tropical fruits, some peat accompanied by nuances of mild spices.

- Dark: Amazonas 75 %

Points: 83.20

Produced with beans from the Amazon region. Relatively aggressive taste which, however, does not annoy, instead it arouses interest. The chocolate occupies the palate with force. Definitely not for wimps. Pleasantly fruity, with nuances of coffee and tobacco.



- Flavored: Amazonas 75 % with Cocoa Nibs

Points: 90.90

An extremely tasteful chocolate with unbelievably many sprinkled on cocoa nibs. The nibs are perfectly roasted and the chocolate, as opposed to the pure version, far less aggressive. The fruity flavors are distinctly in the foreground.

### Summary:

A successful debut into the world of the Bean-to-Bar chocolates. Most assuredly there are still some things which can improve. But for such a young enterprise a remarkable achievement. For me, the tasting was a lot of fun, even if not everything was perfect.

## WILLIAM DEAN CHOCOLATES

### USA (Largo, FL)

www.williamdeanchocolates.com



Processing stage: **Couverture**

Price category: €€€€€

Full of expectation I traveled to the Chocolate Show in New York in November 2010. Full of expectation, because I had hoped that I could visit the fair booths of renowned manufacturers such as Amano, Dagoba or Scharffen Berger and new stars in the chocolate sky such as Askinosie, Patric or Taza. Nothing of the kind – none of the stated companies presented themselves at the Chocolate Show. Nonetheless, I was able to find the one or other interesting manufacturer. The biggest discovery, without doubt, was William Dean Chocolates. The confectionery is colorful and elegant. The nice gentleman at the booth was extremely forthcoming with information, there was a concrete answer to every question.

William Dean Chocolates was founded in 2007 by William Dean Brown, officially, however, product sales didn't start until 2008. The company is named after the father (William) and grandfather (Dean) of the founder who originally comes from the IT sector. The founding of a confectionery comes from his hobby. During his IT work, he already produced handmade truffles for his employees as a motivation aid. Before his independence as confectioner, he learnt for two years with masters of confectionery such as, e.g. Jean-Pierre Wybauw, Stephane Glacier, Andrew Shotts, Vincent Pilon and Ewald Notter. For his products, William Dean processes mainly chocolate from the French manufacturer Valrhona, who produces a chocolate with 64 % cocoa solids especially for him.

### Product ratings

Confectionery Box House Selection

Points: 90.18

Individual ratings:

- Earl Grey, Points: 91.40

Dark tea ganache with a lemon-vanilla jelly on top in milk chocolate. Very good tea flavor, soft-creamy ganache, which is not too sweet. The semi-liquid jelly is very aromatic and delicate.

- Port with Fig and Plum, Points: 91.20

Light ganache with port wine figs, plums, brown sugar, honey and cinnamon in milk chocolate. Quite a potpourri, which, however, works very well. Very aromatic, soft-creamy, not too alcoholic.

- Peanut Butter Krunch, Points: 91.00

Nougat of peanut butter in milk chocolate. Aromatic nougat with crunchy caramelized peanuts and slightly salted.



- Salted Caramel, Points: 88.70

Salted, semi-liquid caramel in dark chocolate. Pleasant consistency, not too sweet and with well-dosed Fleur de Sel.

- Passion Fruit, Points: 88.50

Fruity-acidic yellow ganache of passion fruit in white chocolate. Soft-creamy, aromatic and not too sweet.

- **Pistachio, Points: 88.40**  
Soft and aromatic pistachio marzipan encased by dark chocolate. Juicy marzipan, not too sweet and harmonious.
- **Dulce de Leche, Points: 87.10**  
Ganache of caramelized white chocolate and vanilla in dark chocolate. Tastes very similar to the original dessert. Soft-creamy with the Dulce-de-Leche taste and due to the dark chocolate also not too sweet.
- **Mexican Mango, Points: 86.00**  
Two-layer filling, dark lime ganache and mango jelly with chili salt, encased by dark chocolate. Tastes distinctly of mango, has a slight heat and is subtly salty. Soft-creamy ganache.
- **Coffee Caramel, Points: 83.00**  
Semi-liquid coffee caramel in dark chocolate. Good caramel flavor and also not too sweet but somewhat too subtle coffee flavor.
- **Hazelnut, Points: 82.50**  
Hazelnut ganache with pastry pieces encased by milk chocolate. Good hazelnut flavor, soft-creamy and not too sweet. Unfortunately, the pastry pieces have softened due to the moisture in the ganache.
- **Flavored: Fruit & Filberts, Points: 95.10**  
Dark chocolate flavored with caramelized hazelnuts, very tasty raisins (Golden Raisins) and fruity cherries. Extremely tasty combination with fine dark Valrhona chocolate.
- **Flavored: Berries & Pistachio, Points: 85.30**  
Dark chocolate flavored with pistachios, cherries and cranberries. Tastes nutty-fruity and harmonious.

#### Summary:

Airbrushing is one of William Dean's hobbies and so it's a good thing that he can integrate this into his work as a confectioner. Visually, the confectionery is on par with the flavor class. The confectionery deserves nothing less than the distinction "World class," even if two varieties could not quite convince this time. Actually, I don't like confectionery so much which is produced in molds. However, William Dean masters his craft so well that this doesn't bother me with his products.

## WILLIE'S DELECTABLE CACAO

### England (Uffculme, Devon)

www.williescacao.com

Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€€€

William Harcourt-Cooze compiled a small chocolate museum in Uffculme, Devon, located in the South-West of England. With the machines which stem from the time around 1920 he produced chocolates straight from the bean here. Willie Harcourt-Cooze consciously decided in favor of these



old, small and slow-working machines, which are supposed to guarantee a gentle processing of the cocoa beans. It wasn't until 2008 that he started with the production of 100 % chocolates, in 2009 followed the varieties with a lower cocoa solids. He obtains his cocoa beans directly from the plantations. Willie Harcourt-Cooze himself owns the plantation El Tesoro in Venezuela. Twelve years ago, he already cultivated new cocoa plants there, so that he can now harvest and process the fruits.

#### Product ratings

- **Dark: Madagascan 71 %**  
**Points: 86.50**  
Tart-acidic and also very slightly astringent. With a somewhat bumpy and rough melt. With flavors of red berries and tropical citrus fruits.
- **Dark: Colombian Gold 88 %**  
**Points: 81.70**  
Strong-tart, without turning bitter and with a slight, pleasant astringency. With fine flavors of fruits and slight spice. The melt is full-bodied and clear. With flavors of cherries, plums and spices.
- **Dark: Peruvian San Martin 70 %**  
**Points: 80.10**  
Powerfully tart and slightly astringent. With pleasant fruit taste and subtle spiciness. The melt is not quite as nice as it is somewhat sandy. With flavors of tropical fruits and spices.
- **Dark: Venezuelan 72 %, Hacienda Las Trincheras, Points: 75.50**  
Mild-tart, dry and with strong roasting. The melt is rough-sandy and somewhat bumpy. With flavors of nuts (almonds, macadamia, pistachios), dried apricots and bananas.
- **Dark: Indonesian 69 %**  
**Points: 60.00**  
Tart and slightly bitter, but at the same time



also mellow. Astringent, acidic and with an intensive taste of smoked cocoa beans. Has too much of everything, which I don't like in chocolate. A flavor profile is not possible due to the strong smoked flavor.

- **Flavored: Ginger Lime**  
**Points: 83.30**  
Slightly acidic chocolate with 70% cocoa solids, which, however harmonizes well with the candied ginger and lime oil. Not too bitter and with pleasant melt.

#### Summary:

The quality of the chocolate has improved and I like the products, bar a few exceptions. It is definitely worth trying further varieties. A further improvement is quite realistic and likely, due to the existing potential.



## SHORT PORTRAIT

## WITTAMER

## Belgium (Brussels)

www.wittamer.com

Processing stage: **Couverture**

Price category: €€€€€

"La Maison Wittamer" was founded by Henri Wittamer back in 1910. Wittamer is a Pâtissier-Confectioner, who, apart from confectionery, also makes other specialties such as macarons, cakes and pastries. In addition, Wittamer also produces savory items and manages a successful catering business. Today, the business is managed by the siblings Paul and Myriam Wittamer. Paul Wittamer is responsible for the sweet side of the business, Myriam is responsible for the delicatessen section. Wittamer is "Fournisseur Officiel de la Cour de Belgique" and Member of the "Association Relais Desserts." Outside of Belgium, Wittamer is very successful in particular in Japan.

## The following products were tested in the first issue:

- Confectionery: House Selection, Points: 59.78  
Varieties: Pavé de Bruxelles Lait, Mandarin, Coeur Framboise, Coffee, Cinnamon-Nougat, unknown, Coffee-Caramel, Exquis Noir, unknown.

## Summary:

Even if the confectionery has more of a typically French character, it is overall too banal and some of the varieties cannot be distinguished when tasted. The confectionery lacks flavor and finesse. Wittamer does not use a particularly good chocolate and the nougat is also more of an average standard quality. One can taste that quite clearly. It was once again very annoying that there was no ingredients list, no weight specification and no best-before date to be found on the box.

## WONDER CHOCOLATE (BIG TREE FARMS)

## Indonesia (Bali)

www.bigtreefarms.com

Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar & Raw Chocolate**

Price category: €€€€€

The enterprise was already founded in July 2003 by Ben and Blair Ripple. Today, the company is managed by the dynamic duo Ben Ripple and Frederick Schilling, who is partner of the company in the meantime. Ben Ripple is an expert in sustainability and ethics, Frederick Schilling, founder of Dagoba and Amma Chocolate, the chocolate expert.

Big Tree Farms has developed from an exporter of cocoa, coconut blossom nectar and pulverized coconut water from Bali to a supplier of a broad range of cocoa products and coconut blossom nectar. Not quite as old is the production of Raw Chocolate straight from the bean. According to the company, Big Tree Farms is one of the first enterprises which is actually in a position to cold-press cocoa butter and cocoa powder. The company's headquarters and production is housed in the probably biggest commercial bamboo house, the "Bamboo Cathedral."

## Product ratings

- Dark: 73 %, Points: 76.70  
Despite high cocoa solids relatively mild, but with some astringency. With a pretty slow but good melt. With flavors of tropical fruits, nuts and coconut, slightly smoky.
- Dark: 61 %, Points: 76.50  
Mild, slightly tart and slightly fruity-acidic as well as somewhat astringent. Fine and full-bodied melt. With flavors of tropical fruits, grass, peat and spices.
- Flavored: Sea Salt & Sweet Nibs 73 %, Points: 78.25  
Dark chocolate flavored with sea salt and cocoa nibs. Very well dosed salt and crunchy-aromatic cocoa-nibs. A harmonious chocolate.



## Summary:

All chocolates were produced with cold processed cocoa beans and cold pressed cocoa butter as well as coconut blossom nectar. The chocolates have turned out well and for Raw Chocolate absolutely edible. Yet I don't see much more potential in such products for any manufacturer, not even with Big Tree Farms.

## WOODBLOCK CHOCOLATE

## USA (Portland)

www.woodblockchocolate.com

Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€€€€

In June 2010, the couple Jessica and Charley Wheelock started in their kitchen with the production of their first own chocolates straight from the bean. For almost two years they produced in their home kitchen and it wasn't until March 2012 that they set up a small external production. In October 2014 an own salesroom was added.



Charley and Jessica got to know each other in New York while restoring antiques. While Jessica worked for Marina Stewart, Charley did his Master's Degree in industrial design at the Pratt Institute and then started the enterprise Kapow Design. He designed and produced furniture and other products. Before the actual pouring as finished chocolate, Charley, who is also the Chef Chocolatier at Woodblock, allows the chocolate to age.



Product ratings

- **Dark: Madagascar 70 %**  
Points: 92.80  
Mildly tart with slightly fruity acidity. Slow but good melt, which is a little rough, however. With flavors of citrus fruits, red berries and slightly spicy.
- **Dark: Peru Cajamarca 70 %**  
Points: 84.70  
Strong in taste, slightly bitter, with controlled acidity and distinct astringency. Slow and pleasant melt. With flavors of fresh fermentation, tropical citrus fruits, vanilla and Tonka beans.
- **Dark: Trinidad Gran Couva 70 %**  
Points: 78.30  
Mildly tart with subtle acidity and even less
- **Dark: Venezuela Ocumare 70 %**  
Points: 75.70  
One can taste a strong astringency right at the beginning. A somewhat aggressive, slightly fruity-acidic chocolate with good melt. With flavors of licorice, peat and herbs.
- **Flavored: Salt & Nibs 70 %**  
Points: 78.90  
For Ecuador a very astringent and tart chocolate. Besides cocoa and sugar only Fleur de Sel and cocoa nibs in the ingredients list. Somewhat rough melt, with floral flavors and pleasantly salted. Contains many crunchy and aromatic cocoa nibs.

**Summary:**  
The products are of an above average quality, even if there are the occasional small dropouts as with the Ocumare. The fineness could be somewhat better but overall I like what Woodblock produces. I am quite sure that there will be further quality improvements with this company as well.

XOCOLAT MANUFAKTUR

Austria (Vienna)  
www.xocolat.at



Processing stage: **Couverture**  
  
Price category: **€€€€**

Vienna is known as the city of sweet delights, where, of course one can discuss how good a traditional Sachertorte or a Mozartkugel really is. Since 2001, however, Vienna has a very special attraction: one of the best chocolate specialty shops in the world. In the arcade of the Palais Ferstel in Vienna's inner city an extensive range of chocolate products is on offer on by now 150 square meters floor space. The owner, Mrs. Ramona Mahr is a pioneer in matters of chocolate. She identified the potential long before the boom of fine chocolate products. By now there are several branches, including one each in Baden and in Linz. In February 2011 her husband Werner Meisinger opened the transparent/glass Manufaktur Xocolat/Xocolat Manufaktur in Vienna in the Servitengasse. Together with the Austrian chef Christian Petz he started producing confectionery. In the meantime, Christian Petz is no longer on board, the Manufaktur, however, continues to diligently produce confectionery and many other specialties under new management.

Product ratings

- **Flavored: Marca Privada Robusto Rum**  
Points: 82.70  
Aromatic dark rum ganache in the shape of a cigar. Very pleasant consistency, even if the "cigar" is very fragile.
- **Flavored: Maracuja in dunkler Schokolade**  
Points: 75.90  
Very fruity-acidic passion fruit crisp in a somewhat smoky and peaty dark chocolate. The passion fruit pieces are very aromatic, the dark chocolate with an unconventional and very intensive flavor. This matches only to a limited extent with regard to the taste and results in a pretty inharmonious product.
- **Flavored: Feinste Haselnüsse mit Criollo Ocumare, Points: 74.60**  
Whole hazelnuts in dark Ocumare chocolate. The nuts are subtly aromatic. The smoky dark chocolate is far too intense for the subtle hazelnut flavor and both together are not particularly harmonious and also not very tasty.
- **Flavored: Marca Privada Robusto Whisky**  
Points: 75.80  
Dark ganache of peaty whisky (Lagavulin Single Malt 16 yo was used) in the shape of a cigar. For me hopelessly over-flavored. Apart from the whisky one can taste ... nothing. To produce such a product doesn't need much artistry, because the whisky has a very pungent taste and can always be tasted in a Ganache. Very nice soft-creamy consistency of the ganache.
- **Flavored: Marca Privada Robusto Nuss**  
Points: 74.50  
Very sweet nougat, too subtle in flavor, in the shape of a cigar. Also contains tobacco oil which, however, cannot be tasted.
- **Confectionery: Ocumare**  
Points: 81.50  
Dark ganache of Ocumare chocolate. Subtly tart, somewhat too sweet, yet still good in taste. Soft-creamy and full-bodied consistency.

- **Confectionery: Waldhonig**  
**Points: 74.90**  
Light ganache in milk chocolate with some honey taste. Relatively sweet, which, however, can hardly be avoided with a honey ganache. The flavor of honey is there but could be more intense. Pleasant soft-creamy consistency.
- **Confectionery: Orange**  
**Points: 74.30**  
Ganache with orange oil in dark chocolate. Tastes somewhat of orange, but has no fruit character. The chocolate casing is much too thick, so that the dark chocolate forms the taste focus. Soft-creamy consistency.
- **Confectionery: Minze**  
**Points: 67.50**  
White ganache in dark chocolate. Much too sweet as it is decorated with sugar crystals all around the outside. The mint taste is too subtle and the white filling makes the whole thing unnecessarily sweet.



- **Confectionery: Kürbiskern**  
**Points: 64.50**  
Yellow filling in white chocolate. The filling has no character, flavor or taste of pumpkin seeds. I would have expected an olive green filling, instead it is yellow and fairly flavor-flat, sweet and with a too firm consistency.

**Summary:**  
The products can awaken my interest only to a limited extent as these do not correspond to my notion of harmony. Again and again one can discover professional faults and one of the focal points when developing the products seems to be gimmickry (Extremely peaty whisky or also tobacco oil in the products).

XOCOLATL DE DAVID

USA (Portland, OR)  
www.xocolatldedavid.com

Processing stage: **Couverture**

Price category: €€€€€€

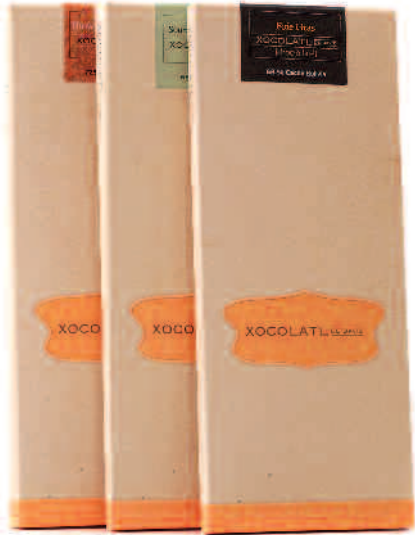
Owner and Chef Chocolatier of Xocolatl de David is David Briggs. Grown up in San Francisco Bay, he spent a part of his childhood in California, Australia and Singapore. His childhood and its culinary influences were shaped by this.



At the University of Oregon in Eugene he graduated in 1999 with a degree in Exercise and Human Movement Science. In 2002 he enrolled at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park in New York. After his graduation, he worked with Scott Dolich in the Park Kitchen in Portland, where he was Sous Chef from 2007 to May 2009. Xocolatl de David started informally and unintentionally in 2005. It was only in 2009 that David Briggs decided to make his former side project his regular occupation. In addition to filled chocolates his range also includes confectionery.

Product ratings

- **Flavored: Brown Butter Crunch 72 %**  
**Points: 81.00**  
Dark chocolate of Ecuador cocoa flavored with crunchy Crêpe Dentelle and brown butter. Very strong cocoa note, tart and also slightly bitter. There is plenty crunchy pastry and the butter can also be tasted distinctly
- **Flavored: Piment d' Espelette 74 % Dominican Republic, Points: 80.60**  
Dark chocolate flavored with Piment d' Espelette and Fleur de Sel. Slightly hot, with good pimento flavor and pleasantly salted.
- **Flavored: Foie Gras 68 %**  
**Points: 73.00**  
Dark chocolate of Bolivia cocoa flavored with foie gras and Fleur de Sel. Strongly chocolaty, mild and pleasantly tart. The foie gras has been mixed into the chocolate and can only be tasted subtly. Which suffices completely.
- **Flavored: Almond & Pimentòn 68 % Bolivia**  
**Points: 72.80**  
Dark chocolate flavored with Marcona almonds roasted in olive oil and salted. Somewhat weak in flavor, slightly smoked and quite tart. Interesting but overall there is some lack of harmony.
- **Bar: Sourdough & Olive Oil 68 %**  
**Points: 83.10**  
Dark chocolate of Bolivia cocoa flavored with sour dough bread, olive oil and Fleur de Sel. Strongly chocolaty and richly flavored with bread. One can distinctly taste the bread and salt, yet the olive oil is quite subtle.



- **Bar: Raleigh Bar**  
**Points: 79.00**  
Bar with pecan, nougat, bacon and caramel. The whole thing in two layers and encased by milk chocolate. Tastes intensively of bacon, not much of nougat and pecan, somewhat of caramel. Is too intensively porky for me, but it does taste of what is written on it.
- **Bar: Salted Caramel 72 % Ecuador**  
**Points: 67.00**  
Chocolate filled with salted caramel. Strange consistency of the caramel, which is salted too subtly. The chocolate doesn't have enough filling and overall the whole thing is too inharmonious.

**Summary:**

Overall, the products have turned out well. The creations are unconventional and partly very exotic. Who needs a chocolate with foie gras? Apart from the subject of animal abuse (which is definitely out of place here), I find the taste of this chocolate very borderline.

## YOROIZUKA (TOSHI YOROIZUKA - CACAO FARM)

**Japan (Tokyo)**

www.grand-patisserie.info

Processing stage: **Couverture & Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€€€€

For eight years Toshihiko Yoroizuka had worked in Europe and learnt much about chocolate and patisserie products. Then he returned to Japan to open his own shop in Ebisu, Tokyo.

In 2010 he bought a small cocoa farm in Ecuador and in 2011 a patisserie and a restaurant were opened on the peak of Mt. Ishigaki in Odawara. In the Kanagawa Prefecture he also operates a farm where he cultivates fruit and vegetables. In 2014 he exported the first cocoa beans from his own island to produce chocolate straight from the bean with these.

**Product ratings**

The tested box is an experimental product. Toshi Yoroizuka produce three different dark chocolates with the same parameters and only varied the roasting times.

- **Dark: 5 min**  
Points: 75.50  
Aggressive chocolate with lots of acidity, a pronounced bitterness and a very intensive astringency. Extremely fine and slow melt, which is almost perfect. With flavors of fresh and subtly roasted cocoa beans. Slightly fruity-nutty and also floral.

- **Dark: 10 min**  
Points: 82.10  
Similar to the 5 min, but a little less of everything. The sweetness comes more to the fore and the nutty-floral flavors are fine and somewhat more pronounced.
- **Dark: 15 min**  
Points: 83.50  
The 15 min is still an aggressive chocolate with plenty of acidity and astringency, but more modestly. Aromatically it continues to remind of fresh roasted cocoa beans and fermentation. Apart from that, the nutty-spicy flavors are well pronounced.

**Summary:**

A very interesting experiment, which will surely help the consumer to understand how great the influence of roasting is on the end result of the chocolate. I would definitely like to taste further chocolates from Toshi Yoroizuka.

## YOUNG (PAUL A. YOUNG)

**England (London)**

www.paulayoung.co.uk

Processing stage: **Couverture**

Price category: €€€€€

Paul A. Young is one of the stars in England and darling of the British press. The confectioner and Pâtissier born in Yorkshire, who actually completed training in Hotel Catering and Management, worked in diverse restaurants of the renowned chef Marco Pierre White and was Chef Pâtissier in the restaurant Quo Vadis in London's Soho. He worked as product developer for Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury's, two major department store chains. Together with his business partner James Cronin he opened his first shop in London in 2006, in the meantime there are four branches. Young is often present on TV and also writes books. One of his books received the "World's Best Chocolate Book Award."

**Product ratings**

- **Confectionery: Kalamansi**  
Points: 83.20  
Light, subtle yellow cream ganache with kalamansi in dark chocolate. Fruity and subtly acidic, aromatic and not too sweet. Soft-creamy consistency.
- **Confectionery: Sea Salt Caramel**  
Points: 82.30  
Semi-liquid sea salt caramel encased by dark chocolate. Well dosed salt, somewhat too subtle flavor of caramel, but overall harmonious.
- **Confectionery: Passion Fruit**  
Points: 79.00  
White-yellow passion fruit ganache. Refreshing, fruity, aromatic. Somewhat rough mouthfeel yet by all means soft and creamy.



- **Confectionery: Raspberry**  
**Points: 76.80**  
Dark and slightly reddish raspberry ganache in dark chocolate. Slightly fruity and also aromatic, with subtle acidity. Raspberry can be tasted nicely. Soft-creamy consistency.
- **Confectionery: Chipotle Molasses Caramel**  
**Points: 75.70**  
Chili caramel from molasses in dark chocolate. Soft consistency, subtly hot and little aromatic.
- **Confectionery: Pumpkin Pie**  
**Points: 74.00**  
Light pumpkin ganache in milk chocolate. One can taste the pumpkin and there are also crunchy pieces in it. Soft but also rough consistency, which is somewhat creamy.
- **Confectionery: Lemon Cheesecake**  
**Points: 71.00**  
White lemon cheese ganache with a biscuit, encased by dark chocolate. The ganache is somewhat mighty and little aromatic. Neither

the lemon nor the cheese can be tasted distinctly. The consistency is quite firm and little creamy. The biscuit is very dry and crumbly.

- **Confectionery: Slow Roasted Garlic**  
**Points: 70.00**  
Dark ganache with roasted garlic encased by dark chocolate. Subtle taste of the garlic, but especially with this confectionery one can taste the unpleasant flavor of the chocolate on the outside. Soft-creamy consistency.
- **Confectionery: Cigar Leaf**  
**Points: 46.00**  
Light ganache, which was produced with an infusion of cigar leaves, encased by dark chocolate. Extremely burning and stinging taste, where the only thing one can do is to swallow quickly and spit out the whole lot. Extravagant, curious and... of very bad taste.

**Summary:**

That Paul A. Young is so highly praised and celebrated is very amazing. Entering his shop is already disturbing. The unfriendly and bored looking shop assistant already turns one off before one has even had a look around. That the confectionery is displayed openly and without any protection right in the middle of the shop almost disgusts one. It's no wonder then that all varieties had the same perfume-like taste. At Paul A. Young there is definitely the one or other good confectionery, but the middling to average outweighs. The whole peaks in an inedible and really bad cigar truffle. As I am used to at least good confectionery from him, I rate this tasting, at least in a certain scope, as a gaffe. That's why it stays with the rating of four cocoa fruits (on probation). For the open presentation of the confectionery, however, where anyone can spit or sneeze on it, there is no excuse and it should be changed expressly. Both for reasons of hygiene and quality.

SHORT PORTRAIT

ZAABÄR

**Belgium (Brussels)**

www.zaabar.be



Processing stage: **Couverture**

Price category: €€€€

Zaabär was founded in 2007 by François-Jean Decarpentrie (see also Café-Tasse) in Brussels. The name "Zaabär" is inspired by the Istanbul Bazaar and is intended to represent the company's concept of combining Belgian chocolate with spices from all over the world.

**The following products were tested in the first issue:**

- White: Klassic Blanc Pistaches, Points: 77.75
- White: Curry de Madras, Points: 75.75
- Flavored: Chili Pepper du Texas, Points: 64.00
- Flavored: Gingembre de Goa, Points: 64.00
- Flavored: Klassic Lait Nougatine, Points: 63.50
- Flavored: Citronelle du Sri Lanka, Points: 62.00
- Flavored: Klassic Lait Noisettes, Points: 61.50
- Flavored: Klassic Noir Amandes, Points: 55.00
- Confectionery: Box Reglette 5 Truffles, Points: 21.00  
Varieties: Menthe Brisures de Violette, Cannelle Speculoos, Banane Brisures de Mimosa, Orange Sésame, Classique Cacao

**Summary:**

Zaabär is creative, no question about that and the design has definitely turned out well. Unfortunately, the products all the less so. There are two good products, but in general, all products suffer from the banal chocolate and are rarely harmonious. The confectionery is absolutely unworthy of discussion. Firm fillings, flat in flavor and taste, encased by cheap chocolate. It should also not go unmentioned that the confectionery was sold with a content of 100 g but the package only contained 78 g. During my visit to the Zaabär store, I unfortunately also noticed a lack of hygiene.

ZOKOKO

**Australia (Emu Heights)**

www.zokoko.com



Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€€€€

Michelle Morgan, mother of three young daughters, dreamt of an own Bean-to-Bar chocolate manufacture since 2004. Together with her husband Dean she travelled through Central America, visited coffee farms and cooperatives and fell in love with the cocoa growing wild along the Caribbean





Coast of Costa Rica. After they saw a cocoa tree with its fruits for the first time, their decision was made. Since then, they looked for small, used, artisanal chocolate machines all over the world to be able to set up their own small production. While her husband Dean dedicated himself to the coffee, she concentrated totally on the sweet bean. Michelle Morgan studied the chocolate technology with Richardson Researches at the University California in Davis, California. She started production in the summer of 2009 in Emu Heights, at the foot of the Australian Blue Mountains. Dean travelled to Bolivia in 2010 for his coffee and several times to Papua New-Guinea. That coffee and cocoa grow in similar conditions and in many tropical countries both coffee and cocoa are cultivated, is a welcome synergy effect for the couple. Michelle is a trained landscape architect, and before her self-employment as chocolate producer visited chocolate manufacturers in San Francisco, New York, Zurich, Paris and Tokyo.

Product ratings

- **Dark: Tranquilidad 72 %**  
Points: 90.20  
Cocoa from Bolivia from the Chocolatales (forest island) of the German Volker Lehmann, who also discovered the wild cocoa beans of Alto Beni. Very mild and pleasantly tart. With a very fine and slow melt. With flavors of dried fruits, honey and herbs.
- **Dark: New Queensland 68 %**  
Points: 84.50  
I received samples from the product development of the first single origin chocolate produced with Australian cocoa from North Queensland in January 2011. Pleasant flavor, subtle and pleasantly bitter, very good melt. With flavors of ripe fruits and peat.
- **Dark: Alto Beni 68 %**  
Points: 81.50  
Bolivian cocoa from the Alto Beni region. Mild-tart and slightly bitter-acidic. With a very fine

and slow melt, favored by the addition of soya-lecithin. With flavors of citrus fruits and honey.

- **Dark: Tokiala 66 %**  
Points: 79.10  
Mild-tart, slightly acidic and with a fine melt. Even if the chocolate tastes slightly smoked towards the end, this is not very bothersome, yet a typical deficiency of the cocoas from Papua New Guinea. With slightly smoked, berry-fruity flavors and notes of moist forest floor.
- **Milk: Goddess Milk 45 %**  
Points: 88.20  
Medium-dark milk chocolate with good cocoa character, milky-creamy and very fine as well as full-bodied melt. With flavors of (added vanilla), butterscotch toffee, figs and malt.

Summary:

Zokoko has made very good progress since my first test in 2011. All of the chocolates must be described as really well turned out. Only the use of soya-lecithin and also somewhat too much cocoa butter is a small shortcoming for me.

ZOTTER

Austria (Riegersburg)  
www.zotter.at



Processing stage: **Bean-to-Bar**

Price category: €€€€

Josef Zotter is a trained chef and pâtissier. Until 1987 he worked both at home and overseas. From 1987 to 1999 he managed a pâtisserie with four outlets, he had to file for insolvency in 1996 for these. From this insolvency, Josef Zotter built up a new existence in an impressive fashion. Although the first hand-made chocolates were already produced in 1992, he only dedicated himself totally to the production of chocolate products from 1999. All his products were already Fair Trade certified at that time.

With the construction of his new chocolate production in 2007 he switched completely to organic. To top it all off, Zotter produces all his chocolates straight from the bean himself since then.

The year 2011 was once again a special Zotter year. On 1st May, Josef Zotter opened his 27 hectare large "Essbarer Tiergarten" (Edible Zoo) with attractions such as chocolate milking machines, farmer's golf or a petting zoo. One can enjoy species-correct food from the animal inhabitants and also have a picnic.

Zotter presses the oil for the food himself. The used oil is subsequently used for his tractor, flour is home-produced, the same with bread and pasta.

Since 2014 Zotter has a branch in China, which is managed by his daughter Julia.

No matter when one meets Josef Zotter, he shows new creations and talks about ideas he has in the back of his mind. Amazing is, that these ideas are then also implemented within a reasonable time scale. At some stage one invariable asks oneself what goes on his mind to have such creativity and willpower for the implementation.

Product ratings

- **Dark: Labooko Peru 100 %**  
Points: 91.90  
Tart and moderately bitter, subtly acidic and with distinct astringency. One can taste roasting flavors distinctly. With flavors of fermentation, coconut, spices (vanilla, nutmeg) and coffee.
- **Dark: Labooko Kolumbien 75 %**  
Points: 89.10  
Surprisingly mild, yet still tart. Fine, full-bodied and clear melt. With fruity flavors of citrus fruits, avocado, raw walnuts and spices as well as floral notes.

- **Milk: Labooko Nicaragua 50 %**  
Points: 95.40

Very intensive cocoa character, little sweetness, strongly tart and milky-creamy as well as full-bodied. With pronounced flavor of the cocoa. With flavors of dried fruits (raisins, plums), floral spices, cream, dark caramel as well as slightly smoky.

- **Milk: Labooko Buchweizen 45 %**  
Points: 83.50

Lactose-free, as it is produced exclusively with buckwheat powder. Aromatically not bad but somewhat too sweet and with a too subtle cocoa character. Milky-creamy and fast melt. With flavors of toffee and cream toffee.

- **White: Weiße Schokolade**  
Points: 94.60

Very delicate flavor and good taste despite ingredients, which one probably doesn't find in a white chocolate (fructose-glucose-syrup or also cinnamon). Very little sweetness, full-bodied and with a nice melt.

- **White: Soja weiss**  
Points: 90.30

White chocolate not produced with milk powder but with soya powder. Tastes surprisingly good and has a pronounced flavor of soya. Perhaps somewhat too sweet, but with a pleasant melt and also full-bodied.

- **White: Labooko Maracuja**  
Points: 95.90

Extremely aromatic, fruity-acidic, milky-creamy. Without the addition of flavorings, exclusively produced with dried passion fruit.

- **White: Labooko Erdbeere**  
Points: 93.40

Very aromatic and fruity-acidic red chocolate. Produced without flavorings, instead exclusively with dried strawberries.



- **Bar: Grammerl Nussen**  
Points: 83.40

Dark milk chocolate filled with nougat and pork greaves. The caramelized greaves make the chocolate relatively sweet but are also aromatic. Exotic, yet with culinary value.

- **Bar: Echtes Speck-Takel**  
Points: 81.00

Bacon, black bread schnapps, caramel nougat encased by dark chocolate. The most distinguishable taste is the bacon and everything is of good quality and craftsmanship. Yet, I still don't like it.

- **Nougat: Nugsus Paranuss**  
Points: 92.20

Nougat of Brazil nuts; what a rare pleasure. An extremely tender and fine, and in its fashion intensive flavor. With a nice melt and a pleasant consistency. I would welcome a little less sweetness very much. I suppose one calls this whingeing at a very high level...

- **Nougat: Nugsus Walnuss**  
Points: 76.40

Walnut nougat with small pieces. Also contains soya powder, which one can also taste. The 21 % walnuts could be a bit stronger in flavor. Fine, soft and creamy melt, perhaps somewhat too sweet.

- **Confectionery: Blätterkrokant**  
Points: 96.60

Extremely aromatic nougat with perfect flaky



Spontaneous shooting from Alex Stark and Johanna Hupfer

caramel in dark chocolate. Soft and somewhat rough consistency, the whole thing in perfect harmony.

Juicy and aromatic marzipan with good pistachio taste. Very harmonious with the tart chocolate.

- **Confectionery: Sauerkirsch Endorphin**  
Points: 94.30

Fantastic fruit filling. Acidic-fruity, soft-creamy, not sweet. Very natural flavor.

- **Confectionery: Paranuss Knacksy**  
Points: 88.10

Brazil nut nougat in dark chocolate. Very delicate and subtle flavor of Brazil nut. With pleasant sweetness, soft-creamy.

- **Confectionery: Pistazien**  
Points: 93.70

Pistachio marzipan encased by dark chocolate.

### Summary:

Over the last years, Zotter has developed from a mono-articler (hand-made chocolates) to an all-rounder at a very high level, all important product groups are covered. On principle, all products are of a very high quality. The selection of the employed raw materials is exemplary and the employees master their craft in all departments. Nevertheless, there are one or two points of criticism. For me, the products are too often too sweet. I noticed this in particular with the nougat. The second weak point are the hand-made chocolates, as one cannot always taste the eponymous ingredients. Despite this, Zotter is and will remain at the top of the world-best chocolate manufacturers and by far the most innovative chocolatier of all.