

Chocolate: add value, add profit

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The use of real chocolate in the baking industry has been increasing dramatically over the past three years, especially in the celebration cake and gateau sector, in Swiss rolls and bar products. Chocolate in croissants, chocolate chips and chunks in madeira type cakes, real chocolate used to flavour creams etc. - the list is getting longer, and I foresee that this trend will continue.

The marriage between chocolate and chocolate related products in or on baked products is normally a good one. There are not many baked products that will not be improved by the addition of chocolate or chocolate related products.

To use chocolate in a product is relatively simple. To use real chocolate on a product needs appropriate equipment and working environment. Storage temperatures and humidity are also important. On the continent nearly every bakery has a chocolate section where high quality torten, gateaux and even chocolate, truffles and fudges are made.

As soon as you add chocolate or chocolate related products to your goods, the value will increase much more than the cost of the ingredients. The equipment to melt, temper and cool chocolate must be 'fit for the purpose'. The 'work area temperature must be between 18-25°C. If these items are correct, time, labour and rejects will be minimised.

Always make sure that the chocolate product is in harmony with the baked product. Do not put a 'cheap' chocolate on a high quality cake or an expensive, high quality chocolate on a 'cheap' cake.

There are many types and grades of chocolate especially for the baking industry. This is normally a chocolate which should contain at least 6-8% of butterfat and 34-37% of total fat to stop the chocolate from cracking and flaking when being cut or eaten.

Beside the many types of milk, white and dark chocolate made for your industry, which can be used for enrobing, dipping and spraying, there are also some novel chocolates and related products which are available now, or will be soon.

Cryo chocolate

A new range of products combining the properties of real chocolate with the advantages of a powder ingredient in white, milk or dark form. It is important to know that these powders are real chocolate! With Cryo chocolate you will have exactly the same taste and rheology as chocolate in liquid or solid form.

USAGE:

Inclusion 'Spotty' effect, layer effect, double texture/colour effect

Decoration Powdery effect with real chocolate taste

Incorporation Because of its powdery form, the chocolate can easily be incorporated at any stage of the process

Flavouring The whole range of tastes

A wide range of chocolates can be cryo processed - saving time and energy if you choose to melt the powder

Instant real chocolate powder

This dark chocolate powder is made from real fully conched chocolate. It is 'free flowing' but should not be confused with cocoa powder.

USAGE:

Decoration 'Powdery' effect on semi-set chocolate, fondant and fat creams

Inclusion Excellent for 'real chocolate' hot drinks and sauces

Crema dell'artigiano

These 'magic creams' are made by the standard chocolate system, refined and conched just like chocolate, with a very fine and homogeneous texture. There are five ready made creams suited to all kinds of hot and cold bakery preparations.

One is a nut based product with a milk chocolate colour. Another, also nut based, has a strong cocoa and nut flavour and is dark in colour.

Both were developed as a filling for products to be baked in the oven, provided they are contained inside the final product and do not come into direct contact with the baking tray - for example tartlets, pastry products, croissants, brioches, cookies and biscuits. They can be used cold to flavour creams and fillings or, after warming to 40-45°C, for icing pastries and cakes.

The other three fillings are designed for cold fill and have a creamy texture which means they are ready to scoop, pipe and spread.

The pastes retain their creaminess between temperatures of 10-35°C and remain creamy on the finished product. Also suitable for icing, enrobing and dipping after warming.

Truffle fillings

Tintoretto is a medium firm and homogeneous textured filling, based on non-lauric fats, available in 'natural' form or flavoured with orange, coffee, amaretto or coconut. Softened at a temperature of about 25°C, the filling can be aerated at up to 25% by whipping or kneading.

USAGE:

Centres for chocolates, bars, cakes and biscuits. The addition of up to 25% of chocolate will firm the product so that 'cut and enrobed' products can be made. Warmed to 33-40°C, it can be used for dipping and enrobing baked products.

Both the above fillings have virtually no water activity in the product

I hope these examples have stimulated your imagination for products of the future. Chocolate and chocolate flavoured products are increasing in popularity with the cake buying public worldwide, so there is great scope for adding value to your products in this way.

There are many recipes available plus your own knowledge for making high quality chocolate containing products-What is needed are good quality ingredients made with love and care, and the correct equipment and environment for using chocolate.

If you have these you will make good products that will satisfy your customers, which will command a good price and give you the profit you deserve!

Q: It was most interesting seeing how the chocolate industry is diversifying from pure chocolate into a whole range of ingredients based on chocolate. But there's been a lot of coverage in the media about British chocolate not being *real* chocolate. Can you clarify the situation please?

A: In the UK, Denmark and Ireland for the last 30 years we have been allowed to use what is known as vegetable fat. But this fat is a very high quality fat from beans that grow in the Upper Volta - in very similar areas to where cocoa grows. To start off with, when it was less expensive than cocoa butter, it was used to cheapen chocolate - but as the price of cocoa butter has come down, nowadays the differential is virtually zero.

It's overplayed a little bit because for a lot of companies who export from the UK, only a small percentage of their product contains vegetable fat.

It is in there for a reason, which is that it makes the product better to eat. It changes the melting profile Interestingly, a few weeks ago I saw on television that they were trialling a well known brand of chocolate bar, some made in the Europe and some in the UK. The ones made in the UK contained vegetable fat and people were asked which one they would prefer - with the wrapper on. Five people picked bars made on the continent. They then did the same thing with unwrapped bars and the five people who had picked the European one now picked the UK one.

The reason was that the melting profile of the chocolate was much more in harmony with the rest of the bar. But this is political. There is no problem in taking it out, and the cost involved now is virtually zero. It is something that we in the UK like. We like our chocolate to have a certain melting profile which you cannot achieve all the time with cocoa butter only, because you are relying a little bit on the season. Is it going to be a harder butter or a softer butter? Where are you getting your beans from?

With that 5% of vegetable fat we can tune it. But because it's giving us such a bad name, I wish we could all go in or stay out.

The latest issue is milk. We in the UK are now said to have too much milk in our milk chocolate! They want us to call it high milk solids cooking chocolate. Our government and industry have got to do some fighting, because we are being disadvantaged. Few companies produce more than Cadbury's. If their chocolate is so terrible, how come they sell so much?