

Seasonal cook



Photo: Steven Stewart

Choc and awe

Bitter-sweet confections make a wickedly indulgent treat, writes STEVE MANFREDI.

The chocolate we know and love is usually made using a complicated process that begins with fermented cocoa beans, which are dried and roasted. Their shells are removed and the ribs essentially chocolate in its roughest form.

The paste is usually separated into cocoa butter and solids. While chocolate is made from cocoa butter with sugar and other flavourings, Duff's chocolate is made from cocoa butter solids with varying amounts of cocoa butter. The higher the percentage of cocoa solids (usually marked on the packet), the more bitter the chocolate. The fat of the cocoa butter can be

substituted with vegetable oil, hydrogenated fats (trans fats) or palm oil.

The highest-grade chocolate is called couverture. It uses a higher combination of chocolate's natural ingredients. It's the purest chocolate.

The chocolate we use most often in our restaurant desserts is 70 per cent couverture (this refers to the combined amount of cocoa butter and solids). It is the best chocolate for the bitter and solids, but it can be substituted with 70 per cent cocoa solids can be substituted.

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CHOCOLATE AND WALNUT SOUFFLE

This dish is adapted from a recipe by Andreas Zangerl of the Metropole Hotel in Taormina, Sicily.

- 70g unsalted butter, plus a little more for greasing moulds
- 130g castor sugar, plus a little more for lining moulds
- 3 eggs, separated
- 70g dark chocolate, chopped
- 140g one-day-old white bread, crusts removed

Milk
10g unrefined meal
10g sugar

Beat butter, 100g of castor sugar and egg yolks together until pale and creamy. Chop up the bread into small bits and boil. Place chocolate in a small bowl that fits over the pot but does not touch the boiling water. Once water is boiling, place bowl with chocolate over it and melt chocolate in a matter of minutes.

Meanwhile, soak half the bread in enough milk to saturate for a minute or so. Squeeze as much milk out as possible and squeeze bread into butter crumbs.

Chop remaining bread into large crumbs and mix in along with the refined meal. Beat egg whites with remaining 30g sugar until stiff peaks form. Fold into the mixture. Grease 4 soufflé moulds with butter and dust with castor sugar. Add mixture until each mould is three-quarters full, then place moulds in an oven preheated to 120C. The soufflés form a bain-marie (water level should come to three-quarters of the moulds' height). Place in a preheated 120C oven for 35 minutes. Can be served hot, warm or cold. Serve with a dusting of icing sugar. Place on plates and serve with chocolate and cinnamon cream (recipe below). Alternatively, let the soufflés cool a little before unmoulding, then serve, warmed in a microwave and served unmoulded with chocolate and cinnamon cream.

Serves 4 as dessert (pictured)
Photo: Steve Stewart
Photo: Antiferella or
Ruthreplen bakery

CHOCOLATE AND CINNAMON CREAM

- 120ml milk
- 100g couverture chocolate
- 2 sticks cinnamon

Chop chocolate into shards. Place milk and cinnamon sticks in a small pot and bring to the boil at a low to medium heat. Add the cream and cinnamon sticks. Simmer for 2-3 minutes. Turn off heat and add chocolate, stirring. Let sit for 10 minutes, then pass through a sieve. **Makes about 200ml, enough for 4 soufflés**

Full bottle

QUAFFING
FRASER GALLOP ESTATE
CABERNET MERLOT
2011, \$23

Clive Otto crafts wonderful wines and this cabernet blend is a ripper. Along with the dominant cabernet sauvignon, there's a splash of merlot. The rest is merlot, resulting in a seamless wine. With lovely bright fruit and pretty aromas of blackberries and pomegranates and has plenty of savoury nuances.

It is curranly, lealy and has plenty of savoury nuances. It is medium-bodied with a little bit of acidity. It is now refined and restrained, with fresh fruit and loads of fragrance, from a touch of citrus to a hint of cedarary nuances. While it's the sum of many parts, the earthy maturo and supple, grainy tannins of the Cabernet Sauvignon. Fine acidity and tangy stemmy notes add to its beguiling nature. One of my favourite wines of the year.



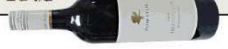
TRYING
RUGGABELLUS TIMEAUS
2010, \$45

This exquisite, medium-bodied Barossa Valley red is mostly braccata red but has decent glugs of maturo, syrah and cinsault. It is medium-bodied with a little bit of acidity. It is now refined and restrained, with fresh fruit and loads of fragrance, from a touch of citrus to a hint of cedarary nuances. While it's the sum of many parts, the earthy maturo and supple, grainy tannins of the Cabernet Sauvignon. Fine acidity and tangy stemmy notes add to its beguiling nature. One of my favourite wines of the year.



CELLARING
VASSÉ FELIX HEYBERRY
CABERNET SAUVIGNON
2009, \$90

Heyberrys Vasse Felix's flagship wine. The 2009 is a succulent wine with a lovely, rich and complex, yet also classy and refined. Bursting with blackberries and fresh almost floral, with a hint of dried orange peel. It builds on the palate with spicy, cedary also a bit of supple oak, super-long finish. It will age well for the next two decades.



Jane Faulkner