

Gabby Thorburn

Tech Lit

Period 2

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History of Chocolate

Did you know that for most of its 4,000-year history, chocolate was consumed as a bitter beverage? Anthropologists have discovered that chocolate was produced by pre-Olmec cultures living in present day Mexico as early as 1900 B.C. Ancient Mesoamericans fermented, roasted and ground cacao beans into a paste that they mixed with water, vanilla, honey, chili peppers and other spices to brew a frothy chocolate drink. Chocolate evolved into powdered chocolate and eventually the chocolate that we have today.

Chocolate started out as a frothy chocolate drink called 'Xocoatl'. A similar chocolate drink was introduced at a royal wedding in France in 1615. England welcomed chocolate in 1662. In 1828, a Dutch chemist found a way to make powdered chocolate by removing half of the natural fat from the liquid chocolate mixture, grounding up the remains and mixing it with alkaline salts to get rid of the bitter taste. His product was called 'Dutch Cocoa'.

The discovery of powdered chocolate soon led to the first creation of solid chocolate. Joseph Fry figured out how to make a moldable chocolate paste by adding melted cocoa butter into 'Dutch Cocoa'. By 1868 a small company called Cadbury

was selling boxes of chocolates in England. In 1874, a man named Daniel Peter experimented with different ingredients to balance out the bitter taste of chocolate. He eventually found the perfect product; milk.

Over the years chocolate has evolved a lot. It started out as a bitter drink and now we have a range of different kinds of chocolate. Today, big companies like Hershey's have milk chocolate, dark chocolate, white chocolate, and other variations of chocolate. We also have hot chocolate, chocolate fondue, and chocolate fountains. Today it is a very sweet and enjoyable treat!