

A taste-driven chocolate market

---

## A taste-driven chocolate market

craft producers, direct sourcing &  
the economics of flavour

A taste-driven chocolate market

---



## What is fine cacao for?

### Fine cacao is used:

- For commercial recipes, eg in blends for enrobing
- Large scale origin and blended chocolate production
- Small factory produced origin chocolate
- NEW: Micro-batch chocolate

A taste-driven chocolate market

---

What is fine cacao for?

To make good tasting chocolate!

## How do we know what fine cacao is?

- Technical definitions
- Research
- The market
- ICCO Panel

A taste-driven chocolate market

---

How do we know what fine cacao is?

Can it make good tasting chocolate?

## How do we know what fine cacao is?

- Fine cacao is capable of being transformed into fine chocolate that:
  - Has complexity and richness
  - Has varied or distinctive flavour notes that are in harmony and balance
  - Has a lingering and clean aftertaste
  - Is free of defects that hijack the sensory experience
    - (mould, bad fermentation/contamination/undesirable notes)
- *Fine chocolate can only be made from fine cacao!*

A taste-driven chocolate market

---

How do we know what fine cacao is?

By tasting!



A taste-driven chocolate market

---

... but taste is subjective!

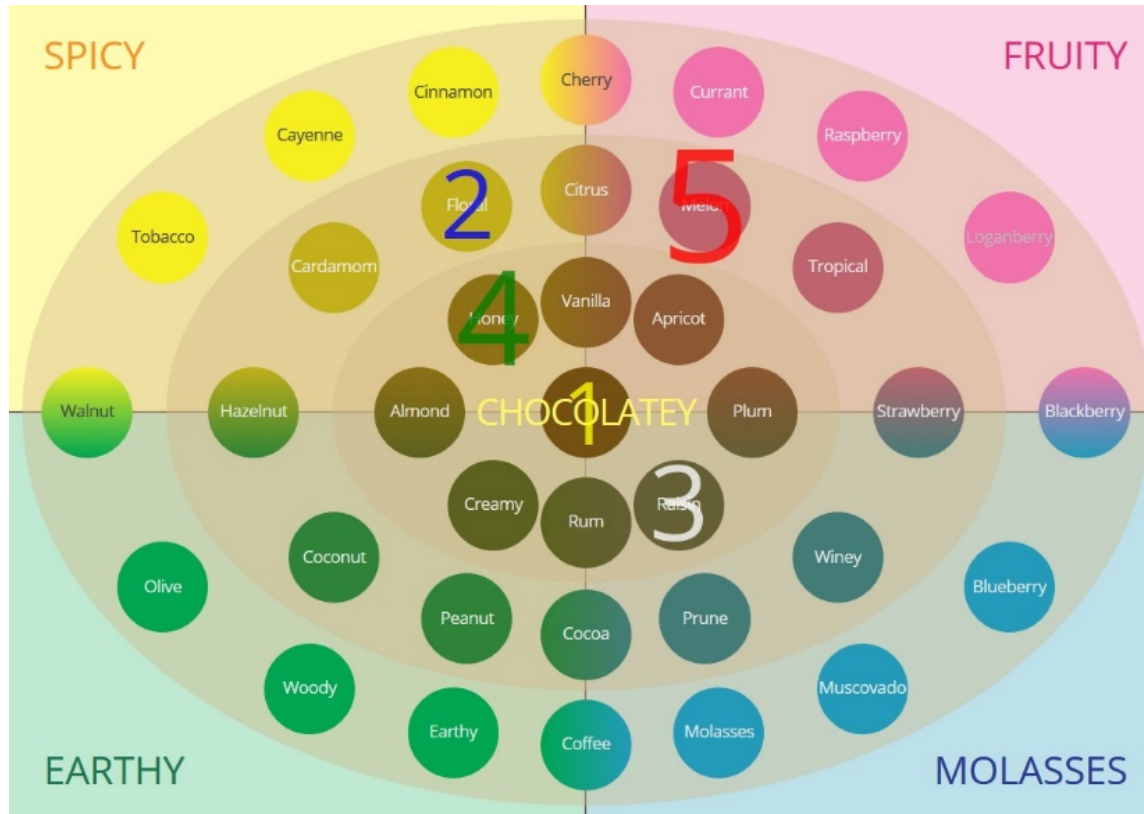
Yes & No



## Tasting protocols

- Fundamental to sensory analysis
- Human taste (not yet) replaceable
- No evaluation and flavour assessment without taste
- Managed subjectivity
- Competitions, prizes, designations, agreements

## Mapping flavour



## Creating value with flavour

- VALUE comes from appreciation of nuanced flavour
- Fine chocolate must be taken seriously
  - Not eaten like candy (**MELT** don't **MUNCH!**)
- Sommeliers/experts/geeks/authors/bloggers
- Sophisticated language/tools/understanding
- Tastings/events/courses
- Change mental price points
- Flavour key in ALL parts of supply chain



## Flavour-driven price model

- The only possible model for high end cacao
- ‘Charity’ not an option
- Ethical/sustainable labels don’t work for fine cacao & add limited value
- Direct sourcing/contact – a shorter supply chain

## Challenges

- Developing the market
  - cacao producers need to reach small = tiny customers
  - cacao producers need to reach consumers
  - cacao producers need empowering to “market flavour”
- New trade and logistical models
  - Make small quantity trading viable

## Challenges - Price

- Price of 'fine cacao' too low
- Low differentials bulk to fine
- Oversupply of high quality fine cacao
- Developing realistic-minded consumer market
- Teaching (some) consumers to understand flavour
  - Fine will never be the whole market
  - Idealistic but not unrealistic
    - has worked for coffee, traditional in wine

## The fine/craft chocolate market

- Proportion of market – 100s not 1,000,000s of tonnes
- Is craft chocolate relevant?
  - Consumer awareness and communication
  - Punches above its weight
  - Market leading
- Fine cacao not viable without fine & craft chocolate



## Direct Cacao

- Trade Association
  - small, fine cacao and chocolate producers
- Common message to consumers
  - from chocolate AND cacao producers
- Labelling NOT certification
- Trade network and models
- One piece of the puzzle



## Direct Cacao

- Strength: is from within fine/craft industry
- Challenge: is from within fine/craft industry
  - needs resourcing while staying independent
- Create real outcomes for small producers on both end of the chain
  - chocolate bars in consumers' hands



## Direct Cacao – needs help!

- Resourcing
- Support
- Collaboration



A taste-driven chocolate market

---

## Conclusion

**Fine cacao – use it or lose it!**

A taste-driven chocolate market

---

## Conclusion

**FLAVOUR > VALUE**

A taste-driven chocolate market

---

## A taste-driven chocolate market

craft producers, direct sourcing &  
the economics of flavour