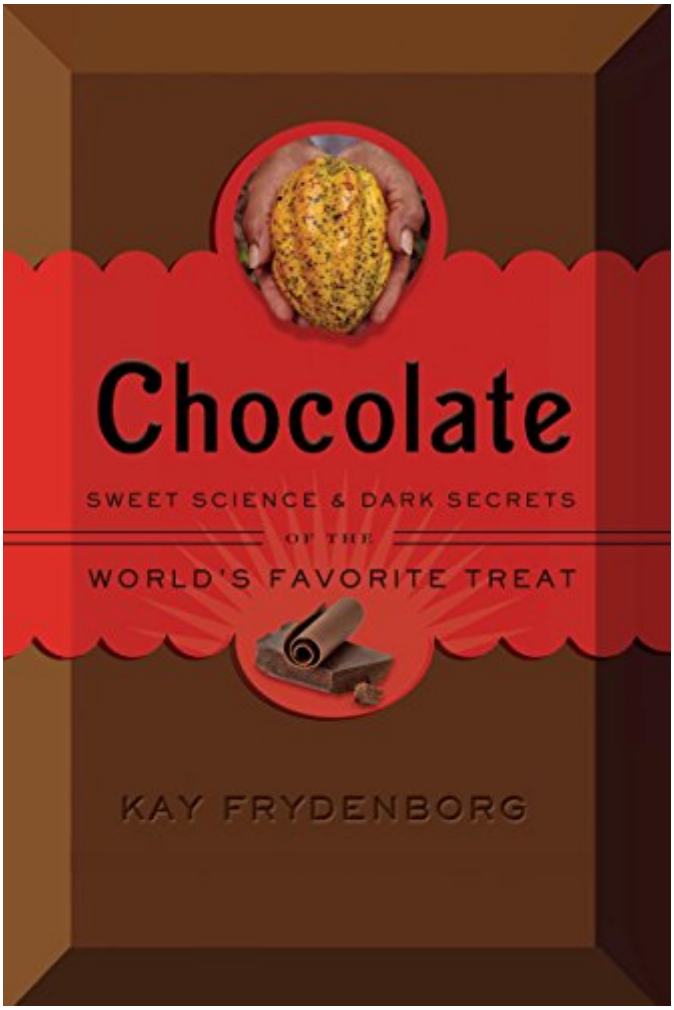
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Chocolate: Sweet Science & Dark Secrets Of The World's Favorite Treat



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Synopsis

Chocolate hits all the right sweet--and bitter--notes: cutting-edge genetic science whisked in with a strong social conscience, history, and culture yield one thought-provoking look into one of the world’s most popular foods. Readers who savored Chew on This and Food, Inc. and lovers of chocolate will relish this fascinating read.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Always some repetitions in these type of books. But also very good research and easy to read. Good for anyone with deep interest in chocolate.

comprehensive presentation of the history and uses of Chocolate. This is great. Well written, easy and interesting read.

Great book about the history of chocolate. Enjoyed reading.

Good book.

Personally, I found this book to be an easy and engaging nonfiction work on the natural history of chocolate. The book is aimed at the young adult (12- to 18-year-old) age group and is a great resource for middle and high school students as well as their teachers. I suspect it will best serve as an excellent companion or extra-credit assignment book for any number of classes focused on history, biology, social studies, economics, health, or geography. At 228 pages, it a bit long for a work aimed at young adults; yet the print is large and it is full of interesting black-and-white images; also the flow of the text is broken up with recipes, curious historical stories, and the like. The question is: will young-adult readers be captivated enough to read this book cover-to-cover without being pushed to do so as part of a class assignment? My guess is no. Most children will not want to read this title on their own for the pure pleasure of reading nonfiction. But this should not be a reason not to purchase this book for a public or school library collection, nor for a teacher not to add the work as a companion text or extra credit book in any number of different academic subjects.The story of chocolate crosses many different disciplines. Not all students are interested in all subjects. In this book, the focus of the subject matter frequently shifts among history, sociology, anthropology, biology, and nutrition. Some readers will find all these subjects fascinating, but others may lose interest at the crossroads between two very different academic treatments of the same story and put the book down because theyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve lost interest. ThatÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s always the challenge when an author attempts to interpret the world through the study of one particularly fascinating, but narrow, aspectÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â|in this case chocolate.However, if a childÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s love for chocolate can serve as the impetus behind him or her choosing to read this book, then I think it serves a very good purpose. The book nicely demonstrates how one particular thing (in this case a newly discovered seed pod of a new fruit from the tropics) can have a profound impact on the history of the world, an impact far beyond any that anyone could ever have dreamed from the beginning. Young adults need to understand this lesson. This phenomenon is happening at an accelerated rate all around them in todayÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s modern world through the exponential growth of technology and science.I enjoyed this book quite a lot, but did find myself skimming parts. At times, the book read like a textbook. At other times, there were charming stories. Some sections seemed to get bogged down in too much detail. But I stuck with the book and finished itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â|and IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢m glad I did.Chocolate is a sizable and complex

topic. ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s obvious the author fell in love with her topic and wanted to cover as much as she could. In my estimation, she did a very good job of narrowing down the material to what might best appeal to young adults. In addition, she was able to write about this topic in prose that, while aimed at young adults, still respected their ability to deal with challenging ideas and complex sentence structure.ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s too bad the illustrations were done on matte paper rather than glossy paper, but doing otherwise would have made this book unnecessarily expensive.Public and school libraries should definitely purchase this book. And teachers across many disciplines should not hesitate to add this to a list of suggested additional reading tiles for their class.

Sharing this incredibly comprehensive book with my children has gifted them with the historical context that I lacked as a child...Here, chocolate is a thread that links ancient civilizations (Olmec, Maya, Aztecs, Incas...) and historic figures (Columbus, Cortes, Montecuhzoma, Atawallpa, Pizarro...) with events that changed the world.It leads you through the industrialization of chocolate, the creation of "Dutch chocolate," enterprising Quakers and their link to the production of the first chocolate bar, the life and legacy of Milton S. Hershey, the lives of present-day growers/harvesters of cacao...These stories foster an appreciation for the many sacrifices that have enabled us to experience and enjoy this amazing food. For quick-reference, there’s even a "Chocolate Timeline" highlighting the major events detailed in this book.More fascinating chocolate information can be found in the books and websites listed in the back. Recipes appear throughout the book: Aztec Chocolate, Mexican and Ecuadorian versions of hot chocolate, hand roasted/ground cacao seeds, Toll House Chocolate Crunch Cookie, Grandma Crowell’s Fudge Pie, Chocolate Custards and Vegetarian Chili with Chocolate.Some of the information contained in this title:-The difference between cacao and cocoa with thorough descriptions and pronunciations for both.-Ancient origins/symbolism/catagorization of cacao.-How and why cocoa became a secret buried for nearly a century.-Historic details behind the exploitation of native peoples and their resources, including the many deaths that facilitated importation of enslaved Africans.-Chocolate’s relationship with the military--from an elite priviledge to standard ration.-How the delicate and diverse cacao tree continues to be under threat to this day.-The science behind why we love chocolate and why our pets should not.-Key scientists/companies that have studied cacao and the eventual race to map its genome.-Fair Trade certification of Cacao.-The identity and description of the celebrated "Mother Tree."

Love that this book starts out with a bunch of kids picketing stores for raising a chocolate bar from 5 cents to a whopping 8 cents overnight. Those kids weren't having it. The book even shows a photo, taken in 1947, of the kids picketing the store with their signs with slogans such as, Don't be a sucker, Let the sucker pay 8 cents, we won't. Candy is dandy, but 8 cents isn't handy. Ha!This is a nice easy read for anyone who is interested in the history of chocolate. And really, who wouldn't be? It even describes Christopher Columbus's first encounter with the cacoa bean, which he believed were almonds at first and was curious as to why the Native Indians placed such a high value on an almond. Columbus was unimpressed.This book is very interesting and takes you from the very beginnings of chocolate. How it grows, where it grows, how it's harvested, and it's importance throughout history, both good and bad. Everything you ever wanted to know about chocolate and how it came to be. The books includes several black and white photos and illustrations as well.

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