

Delectable Chocolates

Cacao (aka Cocoa) is a mineral and nutrient-rich food and medicine. It is an ancient ceremonial food and medicine which was and is used by Mayan and Aztec people. Cacao ceremonies are becoming a popular way to consume cacao in a more traditional and Sacred way. Cacao/Cocoa is a healing food for the emotional heart and heart chakra. Chocolate makes us feel good! It releases endorphins and is an aphrodisiac.

Working with Cacao at home

Commercial chocolate is made from cacao beans. Today we will explore making chocolate treats from cacao/cocoa powder, cacao butter, butter, coconut oil, cane sugar and honey.

Infusing Cocoa Butter/Coconut Oil

By weight:

~10 parts oil (cacao and/or coconut) to 1 part dried herb (powdered or garbled)

1. Weigh Cocoa powder, Coconut oil and Herbs.
2. Put them all into a crock pot or the top pot of the double boiler.
3. Turn on the heat, let the oils melt, turn off heat, and let cool. Temperature should stay below 120; 95-105 is ideal.
4. Repeat this on/off cycle 3 or 4 times. Sometimes this takes me a couple days.
5. Press out the herbs using a "ricer". You can also use a muslin/linen/cloth bag and squeeze it using your hands. Try to get as much of that oil as possible!

Sample ratio:

100 gm Cacao

100 gm coconut oil

20 gm Herbs

Simple Hard Chocolates

Equal Parts by Weight

Sweetener (Maple Sugar, Honey, Cane Sugar)*, Cocoa Butter**, Cacao powder

1. Gently warm Oil, add Sugar and stir, letting the sugar heat up.
2. Turn off heat, remove vessel from water bath and add Cacao, 1 heaping T at a time. Stir w/ whisk.
3. When mixture is thick and fully incorporated, pour Chocolate into mold, cupcake papers or onto wax/parchment paper.
4. If adding **fruit/nuts**, and using a **mold**, pour a thin layer of chocolate, let cool slightly, add fruit/nuts, and then cover with chocolate.
5. If using **cupcake** papers, put **fruit/nuts** on top of slightly cooled chocolate.
6. Let cool. Enjoy!

*If you use crystalized sugar, the Chocolate will have a “gritty” texture. Using sugar that has been powdered in a blender will make a smoother chocolate. (1 C powdered cane sugar-not “powdered sugar”- weighs 5 ¼ oz. Honey makes softer chocolates and may precipitate out of the chocolates after a couple weeks of storage.

**You can use Coconut Oil in place of, or along with Cacao Butter, but it will melt when warm. You can store the chocolates in the freezer or fridge. Coconut oil works best in the winter.

Chocolate Spread

Ingredients:

1 ¼ Stick butter* (10 oz), ½ cup honey (6 oz), 1 cup cacao powder (3oz)
You can change the ratios to suit your taste!

1. Gently warm Butter and Honey in a double boiler until both are smooth and stir easily. (I do this in a glass heat-tempered container in a pan with water).
2. Turn off heat and remove from water bath.
3. Add Cacao 1 heaping Tablespoon at a time. Stir with a whisk until smooth.
4. When integrated, pour into a container.

***substitute with Coconut Oil**

5/8 cup coconut oil (5 oz) , ¼ C honey (6oz), 1.5 oz cacao

The coconut oil is difficult to combine with the honey when it is a liquid. This makes this recipe more tedious because of temperature control. The ideal temp for the coconut oil would be about ~70-75 degrees, the oil should be a thick, creamy liquid. (Clear liquid is too warm). If room temp is below 70, you can gently heat the coconut oil, by placing the jar in a jar of warm water. As melts, stir it, till it is easily stir-able. If it melts, let it cool again. When it is thick and creamy, stirring easily, it can be combined with honey which is in liquid form and the cacao powder. Combine as in directions above.

Spread with Cocoa and other herbs

Use 2 parts Cacao, 1 part non-Cacao herbs

Adaptogen/root blend:

- 1 part turmeric
- 2 parts dandelion root
- 2 parts eleuthero
- 1 part ashwaganda
- 1 part burdock
- 2 parts chicory

Chocolate spread w/ coconut milk

Email me for this recipe!

Truffles

The spread can be spooned out and rolled into balls to make truffles.
Email me for more instruction.

Herb/Fruit/Nut Blends:

Orange Peel, Lavender
Lemon Balm, Basil, Rosemary
Anise Hyssop, Raspberry
Orange and Ginger
Rose and Anise Hyssop
Lemon and Ginger

Lemon and Hot Pepper
Coconut and Lemon Balm
Hickory, Chicory and Cherry
Almond and Chaga
Lavender and Vanilla

Other Herbs:

Medicinal Mushrooms, Kava Kava, Goji Berry

Using Extracts- Vanilla, Lemon, Mint, etc. These will cause the hard chocolates to “seize”. Use these only when using honey, butter, cream/coconut milk. Use by first combining the alcohol with the liquid.

Sourcing Herbs & Local Medicine

Best quality herbs are available from Driftless Herbal Exchange Network (WI), Zack Woods Herb Farm (VT), Healing Spirits Herb Farm (NY).

My projects:

Dancing Monarda

My work focuses around integrating those of us facing the greatest barriers to healing, recovery and wellness. My retreats welcome families, especially single mothers, people with neuro-, social-, emotional-, spiritual-diversities. Whenever possible I work in the gift economy to honor the diversity of our economic resources and the injustice of Capitalism.

Gift Economy Offerings: family medicine retreats, classes, plant walks, herbal medicines, tea parties, holistic & sacred childbirth, folk herbalism & social & spiritual wellness consultations, medicine-making parties, fermentation, medicine growing, community song circles, apprenticeships, folk medicine gatherings, inspirational writing and more!

Email list dancingmonarda@gmail.com Community Facebook Page: Dancing Monarda
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Wild Farmacy

A community of wellness-minded people, seeking to realize a new future of individual and community wholeness, wellness, resilience and justice. We share resources, information, and guidance; we gather for intensive practice periods including celebration, wellness exploration, grief work, and tending one another and the land we steward. Our Social Enterprise (Driftless Herbal Exchange Network) is growing and wildcrafting Highest Quality herbs and craft and custom tea blends and medicines. We are currently fundraising to buy land to home a Sanctuary for people, plants and animals seeking to do social, ecological, spiritual permaculture and healing work in a village. <http://wildfarmacy.teaforthepeople.net/>