

How to Taste Chocolate

Eataly Magazine (October 31, 2019)



When the weather turns cold — or hot — or really just moderate — we find ourselves in the mood for chocolate.

Choose an assortment of chocolates, find a peaceful place, and embark on our multi-sensory adventure. Better yet, gather a few friends and host a tasting!

At Eataly, we are lucky enough to have the best brands of *il cioccolato italiano* at our fingertips. So that you too can fully experience the rich treat, we have carefully crafted a chocolate tasting guide. (Yes, we love our job.)

1. TEST THE TEMP.

Avoid cold chocolate; the flavor is masked. Let your chocolate to reach room temperature before tasting. But don't let it get too warm (for obvious melting reasons)!

2. CLEANSE YOUR PALATE.



Drink a glass of sparkling water to ensure that your taste buds are fresh.

3. LOOK.

The chocolate should have a radiant sheen; if it looks dull, it was not molded well (though this won't affect the taste). Observe the color, a range of brown from the lightest pink to a nearly black hue, informing the flavor.

4. TOUCH.

Run your fingers across the surface, and consider the texture, from smooth or grainy to creamy or dry.

5. SMELL.

Aroma is an important component of flavor; noting the chocolate's profile will add another dimension to the tasting experience.

6. SNAP.

Break the piece in half. If you hear a clean "snap," the chocolate is ready to eat. If you hear a dull "thud," the chocolate is likely too warm or was poorly tempered.

7. TASTE.

Finally (finally!), place the chocolate on your tongue. Let it melt slowly, allowing the cocoa butter to slowly coat the taste buds. After this, try chewing once or twice to further release the flavors. (Why? If you chew immediately, any astringencies or bitterness might overwhelm your palate.)

8. EVALUATE (AND ENJOY).

Study how the aroma and flavor of the chocolate came together: bitter? sweet? light? heavy? Consider how these factors, along with the texture, evolve as the chocolate melts. And after the chocolate is gone, think of how the flavor has lingered or if it has a quick finish.

And don't forget to savor and enjoy — after all, isn't that the point?

9. REPEAT!

Taste a variety of chocolate to discover the difference and find your favorites. We know. Tough task, but someone has to do it.

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