



# chocolate love

The scene is set... Low seating, orange cushions, candles, purple velvet and red roses. A mere glance into the room and your heart beats a little faster. You cannot help but smile. By Beryn Daniel

What is the best loved food on our planet? What is the food that has been revered by ancient Central American cultures for centuries? What is the food that symbolises love and is the most common gift on Valentine's Day? What is the food that many women agree is better than sex?

Ok, I know the last one gave it away...

It's chocolate, of course! This intro describes the first ever Chocolate Love course presented in South Africa. But what I'm talking about here is not just ordinary chocolate. This is the celebration of the greatest SUPER-food on our planet. I can hear the cogs in your brain turning... tick, tick, tick...and saying...

"Back up a second here: What do you mean superfood? I'm always trying to resist the chocolate aisles, lest that row of Cadbury slabs leap into my trolley again! The word 'super' indicates there might be something good about this food, but obviously the person writing this article is a crackpot smoking some crazy blend of who knows what..."

Let me put your minds at ease. I can assure you I'm not smoking anything and the only thing that I am "high" on is chocolate. But as I said earlier this is not ordinary chocolate. No, not ordinary chocolate in any sense of the word. This is RAW chocolate, otherwise known as Raw Cacao or Theobroma Cacao, which translates to "The Food of the Gods", which is what the Native Americans used to call it. Did you know that over 80% of the world eats chocolate except virtually no one actually knows from whence chocolate comes, what it looks like or what it tastes like? Practically no-one eats the real thing! How about this one?

We're all familiar with this cliché, "money doesn't grow on trees you know!" It just goes to prove that our parents and teachers don't know everything, because clearly they didn't know about raw cacao.

All chocolate comes from Cacao beans. Cacao beans are the seeds of the cacao fruit - which is truly a nut that grows on a jungle tree. Cacao beans are 100% pure dark chocolate. This is the real McCoy. But as I said money grows on trees and indeed it does - the cacao beans used to be traded as money. Cacao continued to be used as standard currency right up until 1887 in Mexico. Imagine that - edible money. The most sustainable currency in the world - it can't be hoarded - it must go round. Back then a newly picked avocado was worth 3 cacao beans, one large tomato was equivalent to 1 bean and the daily wage of a porter was 100 beans!

