

# 20 FLAVOR INSIGHT 15 REPORT

## DARK CHOCOLATE BY THE NUMBERS



Dark chocolate is chocolate that is made primarily with sugar, cocoa and cocoa butter, and does not contain milk or milk solids. The amount of sugar, cocoa and cocoa butter can vary dramatically from brand to brand, but it is the lack of milk that really distinguishes dark chocolate from milk chocolate. Dark chocolates sometimes contains vanilla and an emulsifier, to keep the chocolate as smooth as possible. In the US, there is not a specific minimum cacao percentage for dark chocolate. Cacao percentage refers to the amount of cocoa solids in a product. Cocoa solids are all of the ingredients from a cocoa bean, including cocoa powder, cocoa butter, chocolate liquor. In Europe, the definition of dark chocolate is containing 35% cocoa solids. Premium dark chocolates have a higher cacao percentage and a higher price tag than less expensive dark chocolates.

### Dark Chocolate in the Media

A search for “dark chocolate” on Pinterest returns results for not only pins but boards dedicated to dark chocolate. Most of the pins relate to baked goods, but people have found recipes beyond cakes. Creative recipes pop out like jello-filled dark chocolate, dark chocolate vegan granola bars, peanut butter and banana bites frozen in dark chocolate, and lavender-honey dark chocolate tart.

Searching dark chocolate on Twitter yields results of recipes and pictures of dark chocolate desserts. Recipes for homemade salted caramel dark chocolate brown butter shortbread bars and a salted dark chocolate truffle pretzel cake are the top results. Some of the results are pictures from bakeries using dark chocolate, like English bakery Tarte and Berry’s dark chocolate and butterscotch flapjacks.

On Food.com more than 3,500 recipes appear if you search for dark chocolate. Recipes primarily include desserts and candy, but other recipes include beverages, snacks, frozen desserts, and even a salad with dark chocolate-balsamic dressing. Desserts account for 84% of the total dark chocolate recipes available on Food.com.

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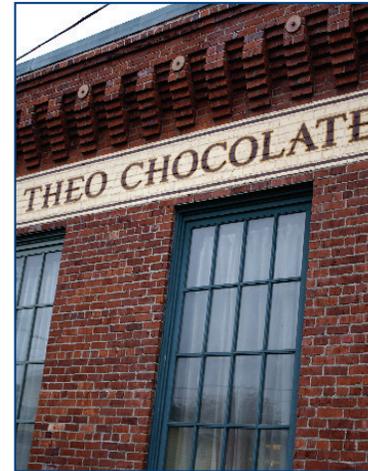
## Come Over to the Dark Side...of Chocolate That Is!

There are several mentions of dark chocolate in print media. Here are some of the highlights.

- In October 2014, the New York Times' included an article focused on dark chocolate's improvement on memory. Dark chocolate was found to improve memory skills normally lost due to age.
- An article in the November 2014 issue of Women's Health lists benefits to dark chocolate. Some of these benefits include: energy boosts, lower blood pressure, decrease in risk of stroke, and increase blood flow to brain—improving memory.
- Eating Well featured an article in the February 2015 issue about advances toward providing cacao farmers fair prices for the beans. In return, these better wages are providing sourcers like Joe Whinney at Theo Chocolate in Seattle to serve better tasting chocolate.

Dark chocolate is found across blogs from recipes to insight into health benefits. Dark chocolate is not only covered as an ingredient but highlights the benefits of consumption.

- Dark Chocolate Ritz Bars, *Buns in My Oven*
- The Ultimate Dark, Vegan Chocolate Truffles Recipe, *Feed Your Awesome Machine*
- Six Health Benefits of Dark Chocolate, *Fit Day*
- Heart of Dark Chocolate, *Outside*
- Why is Dark Chocolate Good for You, *Scientific American*



*Theo Chocolate Factory*



*Feed Your Awesome Machine*



*Buns in My Oven*

## DARK CHOCOLATE ON THE MENU Q4 2009-Q4 2014

- Dark Chocolate Raspberry Harvest Pie, *CoCo's Bakery*
- Dark Chocolate Mocha Cremeux, *Primo Restaurant*
- Alpine Chocolate Cheesecake, *Dark and milk chocolate layered cheesecake with dark chocolate ganache and milk chocolate drizzle*  
*Bugaboo Creek Steakhouse*

In the past decade, Americans have gotten serious about dark chocolate. Rich, complex, and even bitter, its flavor transcends the mild, sugar-laden milk chocolate that many of us grew up with. As a result, ever-climbing cacao percentages are now posted prominently on packaging, and chocophiles have come to describe bars with the same level of detail that they'd use for a fine Cabernet. "Bean to bar" is hot, as artisanal chocolatiers take control of every aspect of chocolate making, from sourcing to production. Single-origin bars are trendy, too, showcasing distinct regional characteristics such as the intensely floral flavor of beans from the mountains of Peru or the dried mint overtones of bars made from the beans from Trinidad.

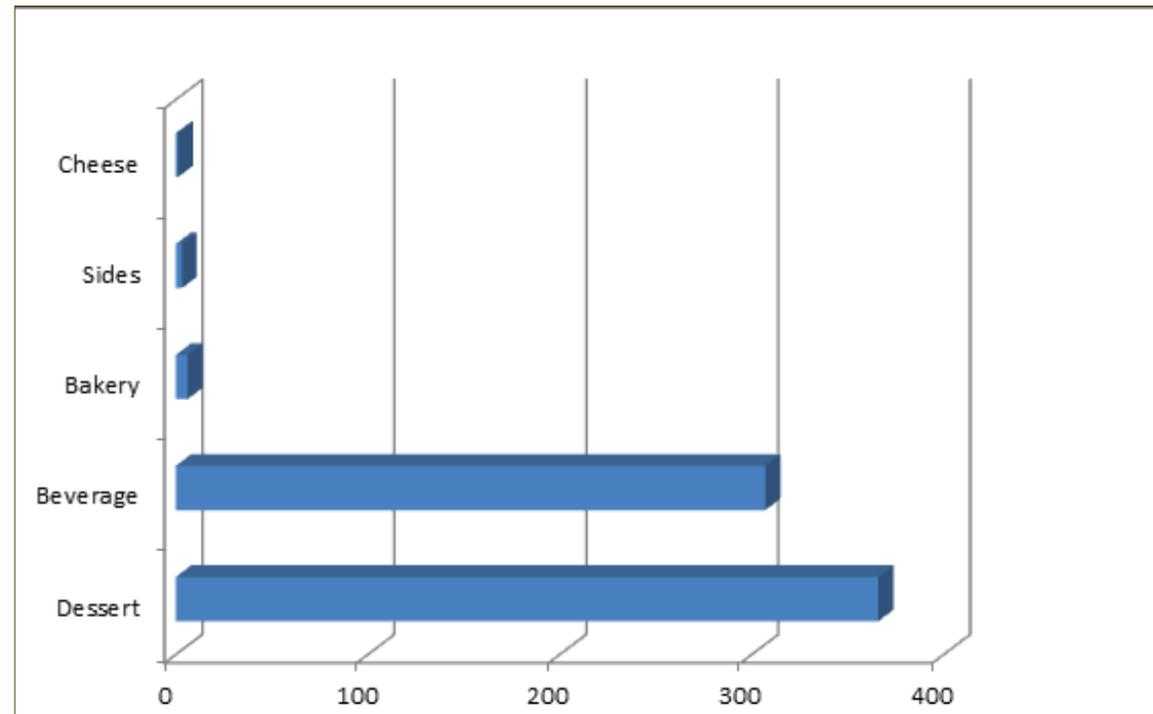
But almost all these pricey chocolates are meant to be eaten plain, savored by the sliver, rather than used for cooking. It seems wasteful to cook with them, as many of their more delicate notes won't survive a hot oven.

Source: *Cook's Illustrated*

**683**  
MENTIONS

**18%**  
INCREASE IN  
DARK CHOCOLATE  
FLAVORED MENU  
ITEMS

### DARK CHOCOLATE ON THE MENU: TOP MENU SECTIONS



## DARK CHOCOLATE NEW PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS, GLOBAL PRODUCTS OF NOTE

**4,891**  
NEW PRODUCTS



Pear & Dark Chocolate Ice Cream Logs: France



Spelt Cookies with Dark Chocolate and Orange Oil: Germany

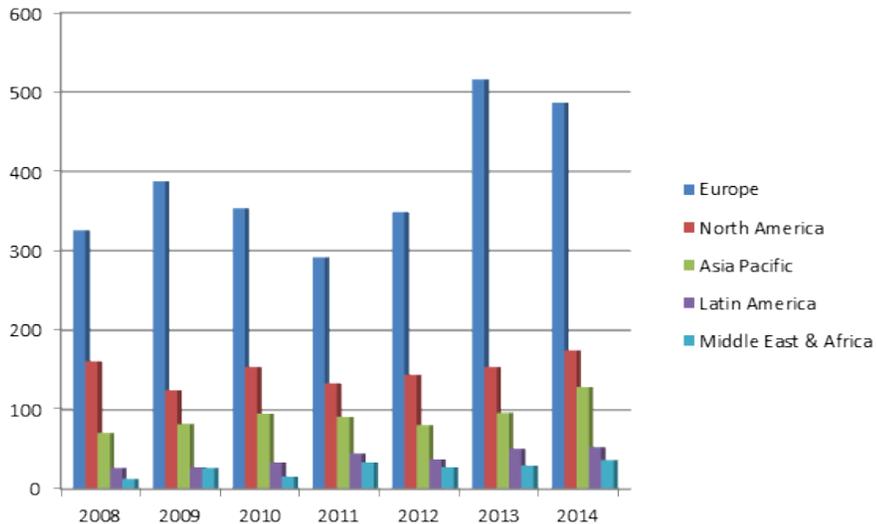


Dark Chocolate Coated Crispy Crepes: Chile

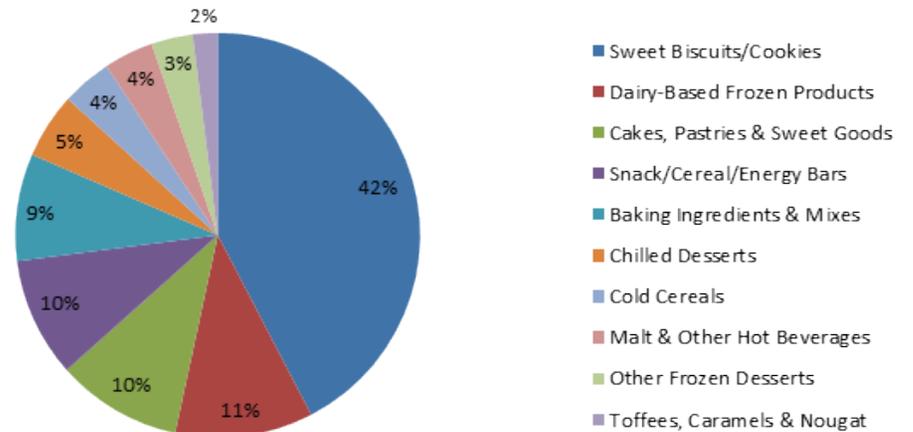


Dark Chocolate Lace Decorations: Norway

## DARK CHOCOLATE NEW PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS, GLOBAL 2008-2014



## DARK CHOCOLATE NEW PRODUCT INTRODUCTION, GLOBAL 2008-2014 BY TOP SUB-CATEGORY



Coconut is the top flavor paired with dark chocolate.

## DARK CHOCOLATE NEW PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS, NORTH AMERICA PRODUCTS OF NOTE

**1,060**  
NEW PRODUCTS



Chapman's Slice Cream layers of dark, white, and milk chocolate ice cream with brownie pieces



Nestlé Toll House Delightfulls Dark Chocolate Morsels with Mint Filling

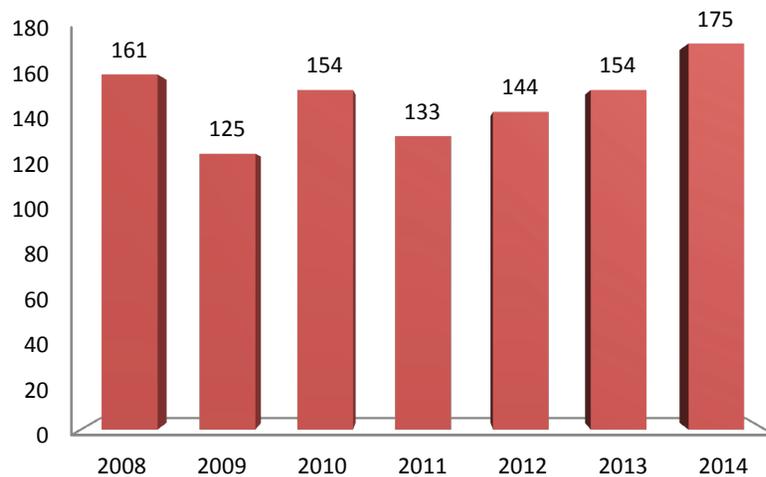


Trader Joe's More Than a Mouthful Trek Mix

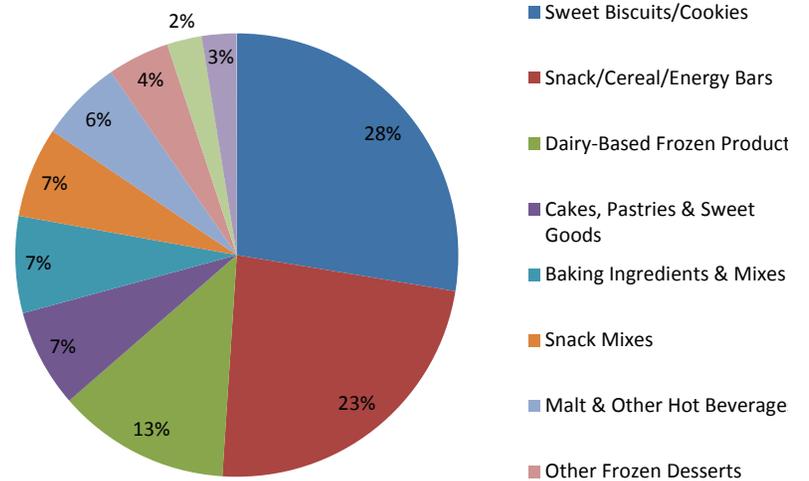


Archer Farms Holiday Edition Dark Chocolate Sea Salt Caramel Corn Clusters

## DARK CHOCOLATE NEW PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS, NORTH AMERICA, 2008-2014



## DARK CHOCOLATE NEW PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS 2008-2014 BY TOP SUB-CATEGORY



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**SOURCES:**

*Mintel GNPD*

*Mintel Menu Insights*

*Google Blog*

*Pinterest*

*Twitter*

*Food.com*

*Food Lover's Companion*

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**FONA CAN HELP!**

Let FONA's market insight and research experts translate these trends into product category ideas for your brand. They can help you with concept and flavor pipeline development, ideation, consumer studies and white space analysis to pinpoint opportunities in the market.

Our flavor and product development experts are also at your service to help meet the labeling and flavor profile needs for your products to capitalize on this consumer trend. We understand how to mesh the complexities of flavor with your brand development, technical requirements and regulatory needs to deliver a complete taste solution. From concept to manufacturing, we're here every step of the way. Contact our Sales Service Department at 630.578.8600 to request a flavor sample or visit [www.fona.com](http://www.fona.com).