



THE CROSS ATLANTIC CHOCOLATE COLLECTIVE





The Cross Atlantic Chocolate Collective

% The Alliance for Rural Communities | 8 Riverside Road
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www.chocolaterebellion.com

"The best Ingredient in Chocolate is Social Justice"

~ Gillian Goddard



Background:

For as long as Cocoa has been grown as a commercial crop, there has been a divide between those who grow the cocoa and those who make the chocolate. Cocoa is labour, chocolate is luxury.

What becomes of a cocoa farmer's dreams when they are separated from the dreamer, extracted, and shipped off to be a commodity beyond our reach? Do they ever materialize? Can equity and justice to a cocoa farmer look and feel like us growing, harvesting, processing, tempering, flavouring, and molding our own beans? For us at the Cross Atlantic Chocolate Collective, we believe the answer to this question is a resounding yes!

By sharing our information, insight, skills, support, and encouragement, The Cross Atlantic Chocolate Collective is rewriting that narrative, and decolonizing the market bean by bean. Our innovative model enables members to cultivate the fruit, process the beans, temper the couverture, and sell their own chocolate.

In the last five months, we have worked together with 12 farmers/chocolate makers across 12 African and Caribbean countries, creating our first unified product: "The Cross Atlantic Chocolate Collective Sampler", a luxurious collection of 12 mini bars made by the same hands that planted the seeds and harvested the beans. By working together we provided each other with the skills, chocolate-making equipment, and financial resources needed to farm, make and ship the world's first specialty chocolate box made by African and Caribbean Farmers.



Vision

Simply stated, the vision of The Cross Atlantic Chocolate Collective is to establish a vertically integrated model where cacao farmers not only plant, harvest, and ferment the beans, but where they also make and sell their own chocolate.

The Cross Atlantic Chocolate Collective is on its way to changing the current reality by putting chocolate-making machinery into the hands of cocoa farmers and cocoa farming collectives and transferring technical expertise and business skills in an efficient and collaborative fashion.

Immediate Goals

- To legally form a global cooperative;
- To continue making and improving our chocolate;
- To develop a wholesale and retail network of our own;
- To create a pro-active system of skills transfer and community empowerment within our members.



Current Membership

The Cross Atlantic Chocolate Collective is comprised of cocoa farmers, cocoa farmer collectives, and chocolate makers (individuals and collectives) who are transferring the skills and benefits of cocoa sector value addition into the hands of smallholding farmers. The cooperative will focus on African and African-Caribbean cocoa farmers and chocolate makers.



**THE
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COLLECTIVE**



The Steering Committee

Gillian Goddard (Trinidad and Tobago)

Convenor of the Cross Atlantic Chocolate collective, founder and director of the Alliance of Rural Communities, and farmer/owner of Sun Eaters Organics, an 11-acre farm, featuring an attached processing facility, including a bean to bar chocolate company. See Gillians's full bio [here](#).

Aaron Sylvester (Grenada)

Cocoa farmer and owner of the tree-to-bar chocolate company Tri-Island Chocolate, general manager of Grenada Chocolate Company (with an attached cocoa cooperative). See Aaron's full bio [here](#).

Dawn Cumberbatch (Trinidad and Tobago)

Founding team member of the Cross Atlantic Chocolate Collective, founder of Doux Doux Darling Productions, a full-service film production, and event management company, and co-founder of the Caribbean Memory Project, an online, open-access digital archive. See Dawn's full bio [here](#).

Wezi Mzumara (Malawi)

By profession, Wezi is a publicist and event manager. She founded Malawi's first fashion week, Mzuzu Fashion Week in 2015. In addition to innovating new flavours with her tree-to-bar brand, Kwanza Cocoa, she also runs her own fashion accessories label, Kwanza Designs. See Wezi's full bio [here](#).

Celvastine Tendi (Cameroon)

Agribusiness Market Research And Investment Consultant. Currently working with a group of 700 farmers cultivating over 4,000 hectares of farmland in Cameroon. See Celvastine's full bio [here](#).

Solomon Nsereko

A Market and Social Research Consultant by profession and a Farmer by heritage, Solomon co-owns a small East African Consultancy called Research Moguls Ltd or REMO in Uganda (as a brand of Explode 360°, an experiential marketing agency) and in Rwanda. See Solomon's full bio [here](#).

Once our operations have been firmly established we will gradually add other members of our collective as they become more involved in the building of the network.



The Chocolate Makers & Their Processes

Each bar in the Cross Atlantic Chocolate Collective Sampler is completely unique. The six bars from Cameroon, Dominica, Malawi, and Uganda are by brand new chocolate makers. All of them have been growing cocoa for many years and have tried repeatedly and unsuccessfully to learn how to make chocolate—until now. Read on to learn more about them and the processes they used to create their couverture..

Celvastine Tendi ~ Cameroon ~ 70% Volcanic Dark

The cocoa was grown on a four-hectare polyculture farm in Buea Region in Southwest Cameroon. The cocoa trees are bounded by oranges, limes, and lemon trees. Celvastine also grows vegetables and yams on cocoa husk composts. After harvesting his cacao pods, the beans are fermented on banana leaves in the field, then placed on tarpaulins put out in the sun to dry after the fifth day of fermentation. The beans were then roasted in an open-lid pot, hand peeled and winnowed, and then conched in a wet grinder until smooth.

Athalie George ~ Dominica ~ 70% Dark Chocolate with Ginger

Athalie's beans come from a small cocoa farm in Castle Bruce, Dominica. The beans are wrapped in banana leaves and placed in wooden boxes to ferment. After fermentation, they are then placed on wooden trays to dry in the sun. Athalie (or Affy, as he is affectionately known) is the owner-operator of Twin Islet Productions. He is an experienced maker of cocoa sticks, a popular form of drinking chocolate in the Caribbean; however, this is his first foray into tree-to-bar chocolate-making. He roasts in a pot on the fire, winnows and tempers by hand and then conches with dried ginger and cane sugar.

Wezi Mzumara ~ Malawi ~ 70% Dark

Wezi's chocolate is a mix of beans from Kwanza Cocoa, a four-acre farm in the Northern highlands of Nkhata Bay, and cocoa beans from farmers in Malawi's Northern district of Karonga. Her beans are bucket fermented, sun-dried, hand-cracked, and winnowed 'kupeta-style', which is a traditional way of removing husks from rice in a flat basket. After being oven-roasted, the beans are conched for approximately 30 hours and then molded with a variety of traditional and experimental flavours.

Emily and Antony Drani ~ Wakiso, Uganda ~ 60% Dark Chocolate

The beans used to create this bar were from the Drani Family Farm in Wakiso District, Uganda. It's a 15-acre farm where the cocoa is grown organically and intercropped with plantains. Their cocoa beans are harvested, drained of the cocoa pulp juice, and then moved to a series of four fermentation boxes. During the fermenting process, the cocoa beans are turned regularly and moved from one box to the next every two to three days. Thus, the fermentation process is a total of 8 to 10 days total, depending on the degree of fermentation. The fermented and dried cocoa beans are then roasted in a gas oven, cracked, and winnowed manually. Once the cocoa beans are cracked, winnowed, and cleaned, the beans, cocoa butter, and sugar are weighed and ground using a Victoria Mill, two to three times. The relatively fine couverture is then put in the melanger for a minimum of 14 hours.

Solomon Nsereko ~ Kampala, Uganda ~ 60% Mocha

The beans used were grown on Solomon's family-owned, Winky Farms. They were oven roasted and air winnowed using a basket and a hairdryer. A third generation cocoa farmer, Solomon pre-ground his beans in a blender, heated them in the oven, and then added them to a Cocotown melanger, along with pre-melted cocoa butter. Next, came Arabica coffee and cane sugar, which were added two hours later. Grinding and conching took 24 hours before the couverture was poured onto baking trays and covered with wax paper to solidify. The solid blocks were cut into smaller pieces and packed in ziplock bags ready for shipping.



The experienced makers may not be new to you but they offered up quite a variety of bean treatments and flavours.

Jeanne Donkoh ~ Ghana ~ 70% Dark Chocolate with Vanilla

Jeanne is the owner of Bioko Treats in Accra. She makes her 70% dark chocolate using cocoa beans from a small cocoa cooperative in the Eastern Region of Ghana, which grows, ferments and dries certified organic cocoa beans. Additional drying is done in-house before hand-sorting, which ensures that the best quality beans are used at all times. The hand-sorted beans are then roasted and ground to perfection using only white cane sugar purchased from local market women. No preservatives are used, but less than a percent each of fresh vanilla and soy lecithin are added. Everything is done by hand. Jeanne's ingredients include Cocoa Nibs -- 60%; Cane Sugar -- 26%; Soy Lecithin -- <1%; Vanilla -- <1%; and Cocoa Butter -- 13%, which is sourced from a woman-owned cocoa processor in Ghana.

Aaron Sylvester ~ Grenada ~ 75% Dark Chocolate with Bee Pollen

The beans harvested to produce Aaron's 75% dark chocolate bars originate from the Felix Park Farm in Crochu, St Andrews, a two-acre cocoa farm in eastern Grenada, where Aaron's Tri-Island Chocolate Company is based. Upon harvesting the beans, they are fermented in several wooden fermentation boxes for seven days. The beans are turned every two days to ensure they reach the optimal fermentation level before drying commences. The beans are then sun-dried for a further seven days. Once the beans are dried, they are roasted in a Behmor Oven and cooled before using a Champion Juicer and a Cocotown Winnower to crack and separate the nibs from the husks. The nibs are then milled further using a Nutribullet before being added to a Premier Chocolate grinder along with cane sugar. The nibs are ground for 1.5 days before loosening the tension on the grinder to allow it to conch for a further half a day. Once completed the chocolate is tempered and during this phase, we carefully incorporate our locally sourced bee pollen into the machine before molding and wrapping the chocolate bars.

Nick Davis ~ Jamaica ~ 70% Dark Chocolate

Owner of One One Cacao, Nick's cocoa farm is located in Bachelor's Hall in St Thomas, a parish in Eastern Jamaica. The property has about 200 acres of cacao and interestingly was a former demonstration farm for the government of Jamaica. The beans are fermented in tiered boxes made of *guango*, a local hardwood, for five days and then fermented for the same period of time, depending on weather conditions. The beans in this batch were roasted on a Behmor Coffee Roaster, winnowed with a classic Aether Winnower, and refined in a micro-batch on a small Cocotown refiner for 2.5 days.

Uzoamaka Igweike ~ Nigeria ~ 55% Coconut Milk Chocolate

Although Uzo's company, Loom Chocolate operates out of the Nigerian capital, Abuja, her cocoa beans come from a small farm in a town called Osu, Atakunmosa West in Osun State, Nigeria. Fermentation lasts between four to six days, then she roasts her beans in a regular oven on flat trays. Once roasted, the beans are cracked open using a loose setting on a Victoria mill, and then winnowed by hand-tossing in a tray. She pre-grinds her winnowed beans in a kitchen blender and refines them for 40 hours in a melanger.

Avellina Augustin-Martyr and Inez Celestin - St. Lucia - 65% Dark Chocolate with Assorted Spices

Founder-members of the Micoud Chocolate Company in St Lucia, Avellina and Inez began making chocolate after the St. Lucian banana industry was decimated by a series of hurricanes coupled with increasingly unfair trading practices. Their beans were fermented in tubs, then dried in the sun on mesh tables. A traditional gas oven was used to roast the beans, after which they were winnowed with a

blow dryer and pre-ground in a Champion Juicer. The chocolate, sugar, and assorted St. Lucian spices were placed in a concher for processing for a period of 24-48 hours.

Gillian Goddard ~ Trinidad and Tobago ~ 72% Dark Chocolate with Traditional Spices

Owner of Sun Eaters Organics, Gillian's beans are grown on a medium-sized plot that's run by academic cocoa experts. They're fermented in 300 kg-sized wooden bins and moved into new bins every two days for between seven and eight days. Afterward, the beans are sun-dried in large, roll-out trays. The chocolate is then made in micro-batches of 2 ½ kg after being roasted in an oven, cracked and winnowed in a small handmade device. Conching takes place in small grinders. The spices are gathered wild in the forest, sun-dried, and ground before adding to the micro-batch during conching.

Karla McNeil Rueda ~ United States of America ~Melting Pot Bar

All couverture for this project was tempered by Karla, a native Honduran and owner of California's Cru Chocolate, a company whose specialty is drinking chocolate. To create this exclusive melting pot bar all the other country's bars were conched together until the texture was perfect.

Lynn Musonda-Phiri and Chiinga Musonda ~ Zambia ~ 70% Dark with Baobab

Savanna Premium Chocolate is co-founded and operated by two award winning chocolate makers: Lynn Musonda-Phiri and Chiinga Musonda from Lusaka, Zambia. The beans used in this bar are single-origin beans from a Tanzanian women's cooperative to ensure the freshest quality. The Savanna premium couverture contributed to the Cross Atlantic Sampler has no preservatives, no additives and no artificial flavours or colours, but it is flavoured with Baobab, the African superfood high in vitamin C, antioxidants and several key minerals like potassium, magnesium, iron and zinc.



Contact Us

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