

cuckoo for COCOA



Established in 2006, Chocophilia has revolutionized the Edmonton chocolate scene – thanks to founder Kerstin Roos, whose taste for gourmet flavours was cultivated by an early childhood in Germany and stints in Japan and New York. Translation: Roos cuts no cocoa corners. The self-professed “preacher of pure chocolate” sources only top-quality ingredients and dedicates a significant amount of time to educating consumers on the difference between mass-produced chocolates and those *really* worth the calories. We spoke with the chocolate aficionado from her downtown Edmonton kitchen about Chocophilia and her chocolate muse.

WW What does “pure chocolate” mean to you?

KR: Pure chocolate contains only cocoa solids, sugar, vanilla, cocoa butter and lecithin, which is an emulsifier. Beyond that, good chocolate depends on

that, aside from making chocolate, my favourite thing about the business has been talking to people and educating them on the differences between good chocolate and bad. Which is why I now offer chocolate tastings

WW We're listening!

KR: I've done tastings for coffee shops, wine stores and restaurants, and for corporate events such as Christmas parties and employee appreciation nights. The minimum number of people required to book one is 15; if anyone is interested, they can call or send me an email.

WW What flavours do Chocophilia chocolates come in?

KR: We offer various dark and milk flavours, made with beans from Ecuador, Venezuela and Madagascar. And we unrolled five new flavours just a few months ago: Hot Chocolate (dark chocolate with chile pepper), Fleur de Sel (milk chocolate with a hint of sea salt), Mocha Bean (dark chocolate with freshly ground coffee beans), Mad Almond (dark chocolate with roasted almonds) and Mad Pistachio Orange (dark chocolate with candied Sicilian orange and pistachio). We also have sugar-free chocolates. Plus Kerstin's Chocolates – my umbrella company – imports top European varieties not previously available locally.

i Kerstin's Chocolates are available at several locations across Alberta, and in Winnipeg and West Vancouver (with new locations frequently announced). They're also available online – including gift packs – at www.kerstinschocolates.com

the quality of the cocoa beans used. We buy criollo beans, which are rare and expensive (only five per cent of all cocoa beans grown are criollo) but particularly aromatic and flavourful. As well, Chocophilia beans are carefully processed from start to finish, from harvesting and fermenting to drying and roasting.

WW So what is the competition doing, bean-wise?

KR: Most chocolate is made from forastero beans, the most commonly grown bean, which is quite bland. Also, this kind of chocolate usually includes vegetable oils and artificial vanilla, which, again, are cheaper, and often used to mask poorly fermented and roasted beans. Basically, mass production of cocoa produces bad-quality chocolate.

WW What has been the biggest surprise for you since going into the chocolate business?

KR: I love food, so I wanted to work in a kitchen. I knew I'd enjoy that. But what surprised me was

