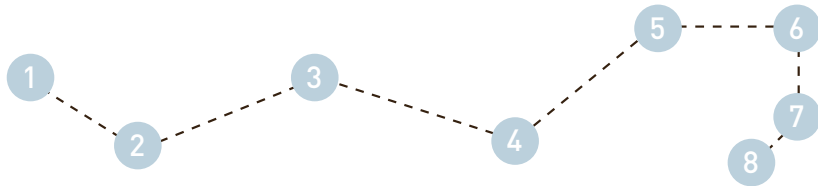


GET A LITTLE WISER ON CHOCOLATE



Oialla

ORGANIC CHOCOLATE
exquisite TASTE

IT'S A LONG ROAD FROM BEAN TO BAR
Experience the journey with Oialla



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WELCOME TO THE JUNGLE

Deep in the Amazon rainforest, wild Beniano cocoa trees grow, and have done so for centuries. Once a year the cocoa pickers of Baures, Bolivia travel into the dense jungle to gather the ripe yellow cocoa pods.

He sits on the forest floor in his rubber boots. His head is covered by a turquoise scarf and he's wearing a heavy jacket – in the rainforest it's better to be too hot than exposed to mosquitoes. His cheek is bulging from a generous wad of coca leaves. A couple of precise chops from the machete cracks open a cocoa pod. A pair of burly hands dig out the beans and throw away the empty pod. The coca-chewing man is just one of the roughly 200 cocoa pickers that inhabit the jungle in Beni, Bolivia during the harvest season. They spend two months finding and picking the wild cocoa.

Organic, wild, Oialla

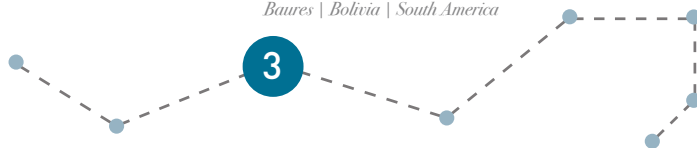
Before Oialla began harvesting the beans; the cocoa grew, ripened and rotted in the jungle. No one really paid it any attention and only wildlife got to enjoy the sweet, white cocoa flesh. That all changed when the chocolatier Rasmus Bo Bojesen discovered the beans during a trip to Bolivia. He and his wife, Pernille Lützhøft, immediately recognised the enormous quality and potential. And through a partnership with a local cocoa company and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Denmark, they started making organic Beniano chocolate. This they named Oialla.

Dark jungle, dark chocolate

Beniano cocoa is an endemic species which only grows in the borderlands between Bolivia and Brazil. These humble beans embark on a long journey, travelling thousands of miles from the untamed rainforest to the most exclusive restaurants around the globe. It might be hard to believe, but the only ingredient added along the way is organic cane sugar. Two simple ingredients become one of the purest and most luxurious dark chocolates in the world.

Read on and learn how Oialla is made – from bean to bar.

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Baures | Bolivia | South America



THE NAKED BEAN

Fermentation keeps cocoa from spoiling, and preserves the fruity flavour. The sweet, white flesh melts away and leaves behind a naked bean.

In a humid and warm jungle everything rots exceptionally fast. That goes for cocoa too. In order to preserve the beans and enhance their flavour, they are fermented immediately after harvest. 20 to 30 kilos are placed in a suspended basket and covered by banana or palm leaves. During the fermentation, the white flesh covering the cocoa slowly melts away, exposing the naked bean.

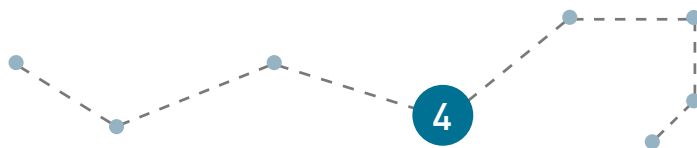
Beniano beans are small and fatty and the fermentation is therefore shorter – only 3 days compared to 4-5 days for larger beans.

Clash of cultures

There is no room for improvisation and every bean needs to be treated the same. This caused a few cultural clashes, when Nordic precision met the Bolivian *mañana* for the first time.

“When I first arrived in Bolivia, the fermentation was completely random. The local pickers mixed yesterday’s harvest with freshly picked beans. There was no control and we had to professionalise the process, so every bean got exactly the same fermentation. If the cocoa ferments for too long, you lose the fruitiness” says Rasmus Bo Bojesen, the creator of Oialla.

After three days the naked beans are ready to dry.



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Baures | Bolivia | South America

HANGING IT OUT TO DRY

Drying cocoa lowers the moisture content and makes it virtually imperishable. But beware of the heat.

The female workers spread out the freshly fermented beans on a black nylon tarp suspended on wooden pillars. Traditionally the beans dry on a cow hide in direct sunlight, but the suspension ensures that water evaporates from both sides. Another tarp hangs above the beans to protect them from direct sunlight and overheating.

The workers turn the beans and monitor the temperature. If the beans get too hot, they start to roast and develop off-flavours. If they dry too fast or roast, the beans become very acidic.

Hard to stay dry in a rainforest

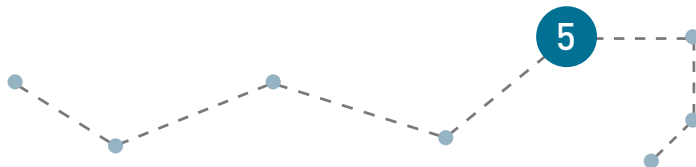
Fermented beans contain roughly 60% water and are still very susceptible to mould. The moisture content needs to be lowered to around 7%. If they dry too much, they become brittle and break, if they dry too little, they rot.

In the final stages, the beans are transferred to straw mats in direct sunlight. The workers rake cocoa frequently so they dry evenly. It takes 3-4 days to dry the beans depending on the weather. It's called a rainforest for a reason and keeping the beans dry isn't an easy task. The rain comes hard and fast. The workers cover the beans and wait it out.

The dried beans are ready for the long journey through the jungle and across the Atlantic.

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Malmö | Sweden | Europe



IN THE HANDS OF THE MASTER ROASTER

Roasting cocoa takes skill and a great deal of patience.

There isn't a right or a wrong way to roast cocoa – It all depends on the beans and the chocolatier. This is where the chocolate maker shows his artistic abilities and sense of flavour. There are many variables – temperature, roasting time, the bean's fat content and the type of roaster. It's basically trial and error when learning to roast a new bean, or making a new type of chocolate.

"I spent 8 months roasting and tasting beans when we developed Oialla 78%. And the roast is very different from Oialla 72%," says Rasmus Bo Bojesen. Oialla 72% has a rounded curve - slowly heated and slowly cooled, while Oialla 78% has a more dramatic roasting profile with several quick heating and cooling cycles.



While coffee is roasted at high temperatures, around 200°C, cocoa is much more sensitive. The temperatures for Oialla span from 100°C to 160°C.

Oialla is roasted in a ball roaster - a rotating metal cylinder that tumbles the beans while roasting them with hot air. Although there are many different types of roasters, the ball roaster is the best choice for quality cocoa.

Preserving all the flavours in high quality beans such as Criollo and Beniano requires constant attention. They are tasted continuously during the roasting process – especially during the final stages. Because of the high fat content, the beans continue to roast even after the machine stops. Most cocoa beans contain 48-52% fat, while Beniano beans hold 63-65%. Therefore the oils cook much longer and the roast has to be stopped long before peak flavour is reached. It requires great skill and a lot of samples to determine whether the beans are ready or not.

After roasting, the beans are unloaded and cooled by large fans.

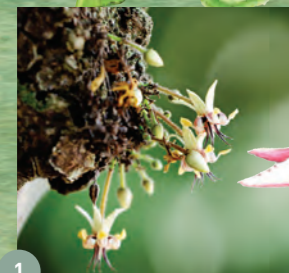
46% + 72% + 78%
MILK+DARK CHOCOLATE

78%
DARK CHOCOLATE

72%
DARK CHOCOLATE

46%
MILK CHOCOLATE

ORGANIC
DARK CHOCOLATE
78%



1 THE COCOA
It all begins with a delicate flower. It blossoms, and soon a small green pod starts to grow. Slowly the oval pods turn yellow and the cocoa is ripe and ready.



2 THE HARVEST
Once a year the cocoa pickers set up a camp in the rainforest and spend two or three months harvesting the ripe cocoa pods. It's not easy having jaguars, piranhas and snakes and millions of mosquitoes all around.



3 THE FERMENTATION
The pickers dig out the beans and let them ferment in baskets covered by banana leaves for three days. Cocoa usually ferments for 4-5 days but a shorter fermentation preserves the distinctive flavour of the Beniario beans.



4 DRYING THE BEANS
The freshly fermented cocoa dries under the warm Bolivian sun. The workers rake the beans to ensure they dry evenly. The moisture content falls from around 60% to 7%, and the beans are ready for the long journey across the Atlantic.



5 THE ROASTING
Traditionally cocoa beans are roasted over an open fire in an iron skillet. Even though it's authentic, fire is just too unpredictable and uncontrollable to achieve the perfect roast. Oialla is roasted in a modern cocoa roaster.



6 THE CONCHING
Without conching, chocolate would be gritty and dull. A conching machine grinds and kneads the chocolate in order to achieve the right texture and flavour profile. Oialla is conched for 28 hours.



7 THE CHOCOLATE
It's quite a journey from humble bean to luxurious chocolate. What begins in the deep, humid jungle ends up on plates and palates in some of the world's finest restaurants.

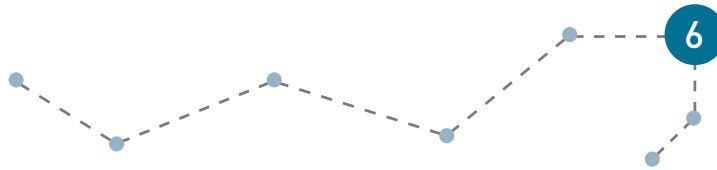


8 THE RESTAURANTS
Oialla's pure and complex flavour hasn't gone unnoticed in the world of gastronomy. Michelin restaurants such as Relæ, Noma and Akrame are loyal supporters of our Bolivian chocolate.





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THE CRUCIAL CONCHING

The conch transforms roasted cocoa and sugar into shiny, fragrant chocolate. A process that usually takes more than 24 hours.

Renowned Swiss chocolatier Rodolphe Lindt invented conching in 1879. According to legend he left his chocolate mixer running for an entire weekend by mistake. Monday morning he realised his blunder. But 48 hours of mixing hadn't burned or ruined the chocolate. It was shiny, fragrant and tasted like no other chocolate. He had unintentionally invented conching.

Whether the story is true or not, is inconsequential. Today conching is a crucial step in chocolate making. The name refers to the first conching machines that resembled conches in shape.

Enter the conch

The roasted beans are crushed and then mixed with sugar in the conch. It grinds and kneads the nibs and sugar until the mass becomes liquid. The friction heats the chocolate mass to around 45°C. It is a fairly time consuming process – Oialla is conched for 28-32 hours straight. So why spend all that time kneading chocolate?

Conching removes bitterness, enhances flavours and improves texture. Cocoa butter melts at body temperature, but conching binds the fat crystals with the cocoa solids. Well-conched chocolate won't melt in your hand and delivers a crispy snap when you bite into it.

No soy Oialla

Most chocolates is made with soy lecithin [E322] – one of the most commonly used ingredients in processed foods. It is an emulsifier that makes chocolate more cohesive. It is usually added to chocolate during conching.

Oialla doesn't contain lecithin. The high fat content of the Bolivian beans makes the chocolate naturally cohesive. Oialla is made from organic cocoa and sugar and nothing else. And it can safely be eaten by people with soy allergy.

HOW TO TASTE CHOCOLATE

The taste of chocolate is extremely complex. It contains more than 600 flavour compounds – red wine has just 200. There are four main factors when it comes to tasting chocolate.

Smell

Smell is caused by airborne molecules that are absorbed through the nasal membranes upon inhalation. When you smell chocolate, you will find that some types of chocolate have scents reminiscent of berries and fruits, while others have notes of almonds, coffee or burnt wood. So go ahead and have a sniff before you bite – it tells a lot about the chocolate.

Look

Have a look at the chocolate. Good chocolate is crispy, glossy and smooth to the touch. The colour is deep brown and without any white spots. A whitish coating is called chocolate bloom - cocoa butter separating from sugar and cocoa solids. It is a telltale sign of old or poorly made chocolate. Pro tip: Check the label - quality chocolate does not contain a lot of additives.

Taste

Take your time and let the chocolate melt slowly in your mouth for at least a minute without eating it. The small flavour receptors of the tongue are focused around the tip, the side and the back of the tongue. So don't be afraid to take a big bite and let the chocolate fill your mouth. Humans can taste sour, sweet, bitter, salt and umami. Researchers are also discussing whether we have the ability to detect a sixth flavour; 'fat flavour'. Fat binds flavours in food, and is especially useful in chocolate, where cocoa butter can add notes of fruit, nuts and flowers.

Aroma

Inhale the aroma to catch the first flavours released by the chocolate. Aroma is created by airborne molecules that are released when we chew. High quality chocolate is rich in both taste and aroma. Try to detect whether the aromas are fruity, floral or spicy and notice the character and length of the aftertaste.



OIALLA'S GUIDE TO TEMPERING CHOCOLATE

Tempering is the process of heating chocolate to a series of precisely defined temperatures in order to get perfectly crisp chocolate with a glossy finish. It is a must when making pralines or coating cakes. Poorly tempered chocolate is grainy, pale and not very appetizing.

How to temper Oialla

Heat two thirds of the chocolate in a bain-marie to 45°C (T1) – use a digital thermometer. Finely grate the rest of the chocolate, then add the grated chocolate to the heated chocolate while stirring continuously. Cool the chocolate to 27-29°C (T2) – stir it every 3-5 minutes. Then reheat the chocolate to 29,5-31°C (T3). Now the chocolate is perfectly tempered and ready to coat your cakes and pralines.

Tempering temperatures

Oialla 30% and 46%: 45°C (T1) – 27°C (T2) - 29,5°C (T3)

Oialla 72%, 78% and 92%: 45°C (T1) – 29°C (T2) - 31°C (T3)

DRIVING THE COCOA COMMUNITY FORWARD

It is usually a bit of a cliché when a company claims to give something back to the community. It might be in our case as well. The truth is that the small cocoa community of Baures, Bolivia gives us so much. They introduced us to the jungle, to the piranhas, alligators, jaguars – and to the cocoa.

Oialla depends on the local cocoa company Sumar and the hundreds of indigenous workers who toil in under the green canopy to harvest those precious Beniano beans.

There is no doubt that Oialla would not be if it were not for the people of Baures. Therefore, we humbly try to return the favor in the best way we can. Oialla works closely together with Danida – an aid program founded and run by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Denmark.



What we have achieved

During our five years of cooperation we have succeeded in:

- Educating the workers in sustainable harvesting and fermentation.
- Buying new equipment – such as harvesting tools, rubber boots, and thermometers.
- Broadcasting sustainability through the radio in Baures.
- Offering education in forest management to our employees.
- Employing 34 women – with social security and paid absence on children's first sick day.
- Installing new roasting and conching machinery.
- Developing value added products such as cocoa vinegar.
- Constructing a small factory in Baures for roasting and packaging and developing value added products. The factory has an office for administration, sleeping facilities for visitors and bathrooms and changing facilities for both sexes.



OIALLA CONDEMNS FORCED CHILD LABOUR

There is no forced child labour in Baures, Bolivia.

The local children are offered free and compulsory primary school and are busy with their studies most of the year. The summer holidays coincide with harvest season and naturally the children help their families during this busy time. Oialla encourages that children participate in their families' activities – giving a helping hand is important, in order for the families to earn a little extra cash. It is of course imperative, that children do not carry out dangerous or heavy work. The older children help around the house or take care of their younger siblings while the parents work.

The jungle is no place for children

The harvest takes place far from the village of Baures on small islets several hours away by boat and miles of hiking. The jungle is a dangerous place and not suitable for children. It is easy to get lost, and the jungle is home to dangerous animals. The locals do not even consider sending their children into the jungle.

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