

The Chocolate Trail

A GEOGRAPHIC JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

Where Cacao Began. How Chocolate Changed the World.

Welcome!

Students will follow cacao from its earliest roots in the Amazon rainforest to the ancient civilizations of Mesoamerica and beyond—across oceans to Europe and into the chocolate we know today.

This guide gives you the background, geography connections, and activities to bring the Chocolate Trail to life.



Where Cacao Began



Why Geography Matters

Mountains, rainforests, rivers, and climates shaped where cacao could grow—and how people moved, traded, and transformed it.



What Students Will Discover



How and why cacao was grown, used, and traded in ancient cultures



The geographic features and climates that made cacao possible



How cacao was prepared and what it tasted like in different cultures



The major moments that changed chocolate's journey forever



How chocolate became the treat we enjoy today

A Quick Look at the Chocolate Trail



BEFORE 1500s

Cacao grows in the Amazon. People use the fruit and make foods and drinks.



1500s & BEFORE

Cacao becomes special in Mesoamerica—used in ceremonies, traded, and even as money.



1500s

Cacao crosses the Atlantic with Europeans and arrives in Spain.



1500s–1700s

Europeans transform the cacao drink—sweetening it and making it their own.



1800s & BEYOND

New inventions turn chocolate into solid bars and make it available to all!



Each country section in this guide includes the chocolate story AND the answer key for the geography so you can confidently lead your learners on this delicious adventure.



2. CACAO: BEFORE YOU BEGIN

GET TO KNOW CACAO—THE INCREDIBLE PLANT
AT THE HEART OF THE CHOCOLATE TRAIL.



1 WHAT IS CACAO?

Cacao (*Theobroma cacao*) is a tropical tree. Its pods grow directly from the trunk and branches.



FLOWERS

Tiny flowers grow on the trunk and branches.



POD

The pod holds pulp-covered seeds (beans).



PULP

Sweet, white pulp surrounds the seeds inside.

SEEDS (BEANS)

The seeds are cacao beans.



2 WHERE CACAO ORIGINATED

Cacao is native to the tropical rainforests of the Amazon Basin in South America.



The Amazon rainforest is cacao's ancestral home.

From here, cacao traveled north through Central America, where ancient cultures grew, traded, and treasured it.

3 WHAT CACAO NEEDS TO GROW

Cacao is delicate and thrives only in the right tropical conditions.



LOCATION

Grows within about 20° north and 20° south of the equator.



HEAT

Warm temperatures year-round (60–90°F / 16–32°C).



RAINFALL

High rainfall: 40–80 inches (1,000–2,000 mm) per year.



HUMIDITY

High humidity keeps the plants healthy and productive.



SHADE

Cacao grows best under the canopy of taller trees, not in full sun.

The perfect combination of heat, rain, humidity, and shade makes cacao possible.

4 FROM POD TO CHOCOLATE

Turning a cacao pod into chocolate takes many careful steps.



1 HARVEST

Ripe pods are cut from the tree by hand.



2 FERMENT

Beans (with pulp) are fermented for several days to develop flavor.



3 DRY

Beans are dried in the sun for about a week until their moisture is low.



4 ROAST

Beans are roasted to bring out rich chocolate aromas and flavors.



5 GRIND

Roasted beans are cracked and ground into cocoa liquor (chocolate).

THEN?

Cocoa liquor can be made into cocoa powder, added to sugar and other ingredients, and conched to create smooth, delicious chocolate!



5 INDIGENOUS CACAO TRADITIONS vs. MODERN CHOCOLATE

INDIGENOUS CACAO PREPARATIONS



- Cacao beans were fermented, dried, and roasted.
- Ground into a paste and mixed with water.
- Flavored with spices like chili, vanilla, achiote, or maize.
- Often served cold and frothed to make it smooth.
- Bitter and earthy—sacred, everyday, and ceremonial.

VS.

MODERN CHOCOLATE

- Cacao is processed into cocoa liquor, butter, and powder.
- Mixed with sugar, milk, and other ingredients.
- Conched for a smoother texture and milder flavor.
- Sweet, creamy, and often eaten as a treat.



Indigenous peoples honored cacao as a gift from nature and used it for connection, celebration, and strength. Today, we enjoy it as one of the world's favorite treats.

6 CACAO, COCOA, OR CHOCOLATE?



CACAO

The raw seeds (beans) inside the pod of the cacao tree.



COCOA

The processed form of cacao—cocoa powder or cocoa butter.



CHOCOLATE

Made from cocoa (with cocoa butter), usually mixed with sugar and other ingredients.

All chocolate starts with cacao!

7 WHERE CACAO GROWS TODAY

Cacao grows in a band around the equator in tropical regions. Many countries cultivate it, but the largest production comes from West Africa today.

- MAJOR CACAO GROWING REGIONS
- OTHER CACAO GROWING REGIONS



Cacao connects people, places, and cultures across the world—and this is just the beginning of our journey!

The Chocolate Trail

WHERE CACAO BEGAN

Five countries. Thousands of years. One amazing journey.

This first part of the Chocolate Trail follows cacao from its ancient homeland in the Amazon to the great civilizations of Mesoamerica.

The First Steps on Our Journey

1

c. 3300 BCE ECUADOR – The Earliest Chocolate Story

In southeastern Ecuador, people of the Mayo-Chinchi culture were using cacao over 5,300 years ago—the oldest known evidence in the world! They ate the sweet pulp around the seeds and fermented it or made drinks from the seeds. Some cacao vessels were used in ceremonies, showing cacao was already special.

Today: Ecuador is famous for its fine-flavor (Nacional) cacao loved by chocolate makers around the world.

EXPLORE THE GEOGRAPHY

Cacao grows in Ecuador's Upper Amazon—hot, wet, and lush east of the Andes. The high Andes are too cool and the Pacific coast is dry. People carried cacao across these different environments to new places!



2

by c. 3000 BCE PERU – Cacao Crosses the Andes

In Peru's Amazon forests, people used cacao as food and drink. They moved it along rivers and across the Andes to communities on the Pacific coast—thousands of years ago! Peru's Amazon is home to many different kinds of cacao, including rare varieties with pale or white beans.

Today: Peru grows incredible native cacao and is known for distinctive flavors.

EXPLORE THE GEOGRAPHY

Find the Amazon lowlands east of the Andes (warm and rainy) and the dry Pacific coast to the west. The Andes are a huge mountain barrier—but people still found ways to move cacao!



3

c. 1800–1600 BCE MEXICO – Cacao Reaches Mesoamerica

At an Olmec center in present-day Mexico (San Lorenzo), people were drinking cacao over 3,500 years ago. In later centuries, cacao drinks were ground, mixed with maize and spices, and frothed until bubbly.

Today: Mexico is still an important cacao producer, especially in tropical regions like Tabasco and Chiapas.

EXPLORE THE GEOGRAPHY

Cacao grows in the hot, humid lowlands of southern Mexico (like Tabasco and Chiapas). It can't grow well in the higher, cooler interior. This made cacao a valuable trade good.



4

by c. 600 BCE GUATEMALA – Chocolate in the Maya World

The Maya made cacao drinks for feasts, ceremonies, and daily life. They mixed cacao with ingredients like maize, chili, or vanilla. Cacao was so important that it appears in Maya writing and on painted vessels labeled for cacao!

Today: Guatemala's warm lowlands are still home to farms that grow high-quality cacao.

EXPLORE THE GEOGRAPHY

Cacao grows in Guatemala's hot, humid lowlands—along the Pacific coast and in the northern jungles. The highlands are cooler, so cacao moved there through trade.



5

Ancient Amazonia → 1700s BRAZIL – From Wild to Global Crop

Cacao is native to the Amazon rainforest, including northern Brazil, where Indigenous peoples used cacao and its sweet fruit pulp for thousands of years. Centuries later, cacao cultivation expanded to Bahia on Brazil's Atlantic coast and became a major crop.

Today: Brazil is one of the world's top cacao producers, with cacao grown in the Amazon and on the Atlantic coast.

EXPLORE THE GEOGRAPHY

Compare the Amazon Basin (cacao's ancient home) with Bahia on Brazil's Atlantic coast. Both are warm and wet—perfect for cacao to grow!



MAJOR SHIFTS IN THE CHOCOLATE STORY

BEFORE 1500s



Indigenous peoples in the Americas grow, use, and trade cacao. It's eaten, fermented, and made into drinks.

1500s



Cacao crosses the Atlantic with Europeans from Mexico and other parts of the Americas.

1500s–1700s



Europeans change the recipe—adding sugar, cinnamon, and other spices. Chocolate is still mostly a drink.

1800s



New inventions separate cocoa butter and cocoa powder, making chocolate easier to produce.

1847



The first modern chocolate bar is made in Britain. Chocolate becomes something you eat!

1900s & BEYOND



Milk chocolate, mass production, and new creations make chocolate a treat enjoyed worldwide!

Each country section in this guide includes the chocolate story AND the answer key for the geography so you can confidently lead your students on this delicious adventure.

Chocolate Crosses the Atlantic

FROM AN INDIGENOUS TRADITION TO A WORLDWIDE FAVORITE

In the 1500s, Spanish explorers brought cacao from the Americas to Europe. Chocolate changed as it traveled—new ingredients, new recipes, and new ways of enjoying it.

The journey continues!

Now chocolate travels across the Atlantic and begins a new chapter.

THE BIG PICTURE



Spanish explorers encountered cacao traditions in Mexico and Central America and carried cacao beans back to Spain.



Cacao crossed the Atlantic Ocean on Spanish ships along with many other New World goods.



Sugar from Asia, the Middle East, and later the Caribbean sweetened the bitter cacao drink.



Europeans created chocolate houses, where rich drinking chocolate became fashionable.



Chocolate spread across Europe, becoming a sign of wealth, status, and connection.



Europe relied on the Americas for cacao—and on many places for sugar.

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC



THE AMERICAS

EUROPE

Cacao beans, along with many other goods, sailed from the Americas to Europe.

WHAT CHANGED IN EUROPE?



Sugar was added to sweeten the drink.



Milk and spices made it richer and creamier.



Chocolate houses became the happening place.



Chocolate became a luxury enjoyed by the rich.

HOW CHOCOLATE SPREAD THROUGH EUROPE

Each country added its own style, and chocolate became more popular across the continent.

1 SPAIN

1500s



THE START OF A NEW TRADITION

Spanish explorers returning from the Americas brought cacao beans with them. At first, chocolate was enjoyed as a thick, bitter drink—often spiced and sweetened with a little sugar. It was prized by the royal court and the wealthy.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Cacao traveled from Mexico and Central America to Spanish ports like Seville.



2 ITALY

1600s



CHOCOLATE COMES TO ITALY

Merchants and travelers introduced chocolate to Italian city-states, especially Venice. Italians loved experimenting with flavors and made chocolate drinks smoother and more delicate.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Venice's trade connections made it a crossroads for goods—and ideas—from around the world.



3 FRANCE

1600s–1700s



CHOCOLATE BECOMES FASHIONABLE

Chocolate houses opened in Paris, and chocolate became a symbol of elegance and refinement. Recipes improved, and it was enjoyed by the nobility and upper class.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Cacao from the Americas and sugar—now coming from Caribbean colonies—made this luxury possible.



4 ENGLAND

1650s–1700s



CHOCOLATE CROSSES THE CHANNEL

Chocolate reached England and became popular in coffeehouses and chocolate houses. It was expensive, but demand kept growing, and chocolate culture spread.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

England relied on trade with Spain and its colonies for cacao and sugar.



WHERE EUROPE GOT CACAO



Almost all the cacao in Europe came from the Americas—carried across the Atlantic by Spanish ships.

- Mexico
- Central America
- Later: South America



WHERE EUROPE GOT SUGAR



Sugar changed chocolate forever.

It came from many places:

- Originally from Asia
- Through the Middle East
- Later grown in the Caribbean and parts of South America

WHY IT MATTERS

Chocolate's journey shows how people, places, and trade connect the world.

- Ideas travel
- Ingredients travel
- Traditions change
- New cultures are created



Next, follow the trail into each country to see how chocolate took root, changed, and spread—one delicious stop at a time!





Sugar Joins the Story



SWEETENING CHOCOLATE—AND CHANGING THE WORLD

When Europeans learned how to make chocolate, it was often bitter and spiced. Sugar transformed it into a sweeter drink that more people wanted. But sugar's story is one of geography, exploration, hard work, and deep injustice.

Sugar didn't just change the taste of chocolate—it changed the world.



THE JOURNEY OF SUGAR



THE BIG IMPACT



Sugar made chocolate sweeter and smoother. It turned a drink for the wealthy into something many more people wanted.



Demand for sugar grew quickly, creating huge profits and powerful empires.



Sugar was produced on plantations using enslaved labor.



Without sugar, chocolate would have remained a bitter, spiced drink enjoyed by only a few.



Every chocolate bar carries a story of ingredients—and the places and people behind them.

WHERE SUGAR CAME FROM AND HOW IT SPREAD



ORIGIN

Sugarcane was first domesticated in Southeast Asia thousands of years ago, especially in India.



WHERE IT CAN GROW

Sugarcane grows best in tropical and subtropical places—warm, wet climates with long growing seasons.



HOW IT SPREAD

Traders carried sugarcane and knowledge across Asia, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean. It reached Europe through Arab traders.



NEW WORLDS, NEW PLANTATIONS

Europeans took sugarcane to the Americas in the 1500s. Perfect climates made places like Brazil and the Caribbean ideal for growing massive amounts of sugar.

A GEOGRAPHIC CHAIN: FROM CANE TO CHOCOLATE



SUGARCANE GROWS

Planted and harvested in tropical fields.



HARVESTED & PRESSED

Stalks are cut and pressed to extract sweet juice.



SUGAR IS MADE

Juice is boiled, evaporated, and crystallized into sugar.



SHIPPED ACROSS THE OCEAN

Sugar is packed and sailed to markets around the world.



INTO CHOCOLATE

Sugar sweetens chocolate, making it smoother, richer, and more enjoyable.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Climate, soil, oceans, trade routes, and human choices all worked together to make sugar one of the most important ingredients in history.



FOLLOW THE SUGAR: KEY PLACES IN THE STORY

1 INDIA

(ORIGIN)



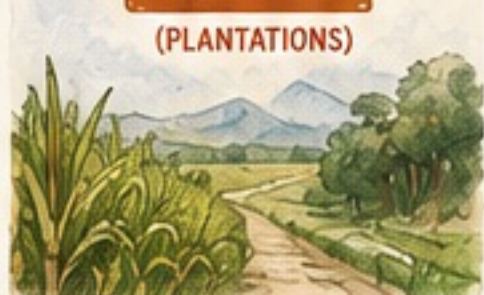
Sugarcane was first cultivated in India around 8000 BCE. It spread from here to other parts of Asia.

GEOGRAPHY FOCUS

Warm climate, monsoon rains, fertile river valleys.

2 BRAZIL

(PLANTATIONS)



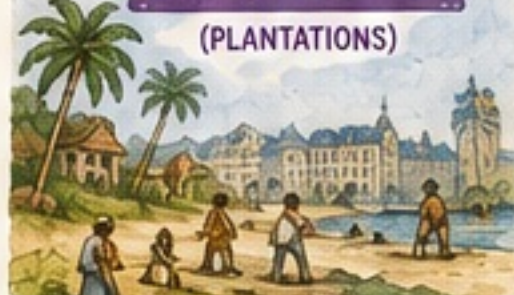
Portuguese settlers brought sugarcane to Brazil in the 1500s. Brazil became one of the world's largest sugar producers.

GEOGRAPHY FOCUS

Hot, humid coastline, rich soils, lots of rain.

3 CARIBBEAN

(PLANTATIONS)



Europeans developed large sugar plantations on islands like Hispaniola, Barbados, and Jamaica. Enslaved Africans were forced to work in brutal conditions.

GEOGRAPHY FOCUS

Tropical islands, ideal climate for sugarcane.

4 EUROPEAN MARKETS

(DEMAND)



Sugar was shipped to Europe, where demand was soaring. It became essential for tea, coffee, and—of course—chocolate!

GEOGRAPHY FOCUS

Ports, trade routes, wealth, and consumer demand.

A SWEETER DRINK, A BIGGER WORLD

Sugar connected continents, built empires, created enormous wealth, and caused deep suffering.

As you follow the Chocolate Trail, remember that ingredients have stories, too.

Sugar made chocolate sweeter—but its journey is about more than taste. It's a story of geography, choices, invention, and the people behind every ingredient.



The Chocolate Bar Is Born

THE 1800s: INVENTIONS, IDEAS, AND INDUSTRY CHANGE CHOCOLATE FOREVER

For thousands of years, chocolate was only a drink. In the 1800s, a series of brilliant inventions and bold ideas turned cocoa into the smooth chocolate bars we enjoy today.



THE GAME-CHANGING INVENTIONS & DISCOVERIES

COCOA PRESS
1828, Netherlands



Presses cocoa butter out of roasted cacao beans, leaving cocoa powder behind.

COCOA POWDER
1828



Cocoa powder makes chocolate drinks easier to prepare—and opens the door to solid chocolate.

FIRST MODERN EATING CHOCOLATE
1847, England



J.S. Fry & Sons create the first chocolate bar—rich, smooth, and made to be eaten.

MILK CHOCOLATE
1875, Switzerland



Daniel Peter adds condensed milk to chocolate. Softer, creamier, and sweeter—instant favorite!

CONCHING
1879, Switzerland



Rudolf Lindt invents conching—chocolate is mixed for hours to create a smoother texture and better flavor.

Factories & Mass Production
Late 1800s



Machines, molds, and factories bring chocolate to the world—making it more available than ever.

A JOURNEY OF INNOVATION: HOW CHOCOLATE TRAVELED AND IMPROVED

NETHERLANDS

1828



Dutch chemist Coenraad van Houten creates the cocoa press, separating cocoa butter from cocoa solids. Europe gains easy access to cocoa powder—and new possibilities begin!



GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Dutch ports like Amsterdam are hubs of global trade, bringing cacao from across the world.

UNITED KINGDOM

1847



J.S. Fry & Sons develop the first modern chocolate bar. Chocolate becomes easier to transport, store, and enjoy—no cup required!



GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Britain's vast empire and trade network bring cacao (and sugar) from the tropics to British factories.

SWITZERLAND

1875–1879



Swiss innovators perfect milk chocolate and then conching, creating the smooth, melt-in-your-mouth texture we know today.



GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Switzerland sits at the crossroads of Europe, connected by trade routes and known for precise craftsmanship.

GERMANY & BELGIUM

Late 1800s



Germany and Belgium build large chocolate factories and invent new molds, fillings, and machines. Chocolate becomes a product for everyone!



GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Industrial power, engineering, and access to cacao and sugar supplies fuel rapid chocolate production.



From one invention to the next, chocolate crossed borders, ideas traveled, and the world changed—until the chocolate bar became possible for people everywhere.



FROM BITTER SEED TO SMOOTH CHOCOLATE BAR

Look how cacao transforms through people, ideas, and invention.

CACAO BEAN



Bitter and tough, cacao beans hold amazing flavor and potential.

ROASTED BEANS



Roasting brings out rich aroma and deep chocolate flavor.

COCOA LIQUOR



Ground beans become thick cocoa liquor—the heart of chocolate.

COCOA BUTTER REMOVED (PRESS)



The press separates cocoa butter from cocoa solids.

COCOA POWDER



Cocoa solids are ground into powder—perfect for drinks and recipes.

SUGAR, MILK & MORE



New ingredients create sweeter, richer, creamier chocolate.

CONCHED & TEMPERED



Hours of mixing and tempering create smooth texture and perfect snap.

CHOCOLATE BAR!



A delicious bar that people can enjoy anytime, anywhere!

WHY THIS MATTERS

In just a few decades, brilliant inventions and bold ideas turned chocolate from a rare drink into a beloved treat for the entire world.



The chocolate bar is more than ingredients. It's science, creativity, geography, and people working together to make something wonderful.



THINK GEOGRAPHICALLY

Every invention needed cacao from faraway places, trade routes, ingredients, skilled workers, and curious minds.



What other inventions have a story like this?



CACAO TRAVELS TO AFRICA

A PLANT FROM THE AMERICAS BECOMES AFRICA'S TREASURE

Cacao was born in the rainforests of the Americas, but its journey didn't end there.

Over hundreds of years, it traveled across oceans and took root in Africa.

Today, West Africa grows most of the world's cacao.

The story of chocolate is also the story of the people who grow it.

BIG REVERSAL!

The plant began in the Americas, but the heart of the world's cacao now beats in Africa.

THE JOURNEY ACROSS THE OCEAN

Portuguese traders carried cacao seeds from the Americas to islands off the coast of Africa in the 1500s. From there, cacao spread across West and Central Africa.



- 1 São Tomé & Príncipe
- 2 Ghana
- 3 Côte d'Ivoire
- 4 Nigeria
- 5 Cameroon

1 SÃO TOMÉ & PRÍNCIPE c. 1500s



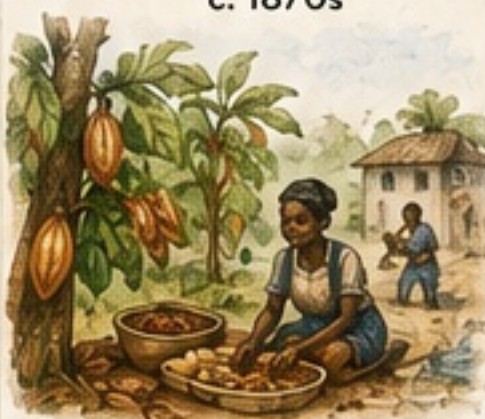
The Portuguese planted cacao on São Tomé island in the early 1500s. It was one of the first places in Africa where cacao took root.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Warm temperatures, rich volcanic soil, and plenty of rain made these islands ideal for cacao.



2 GHANA c. 1870s



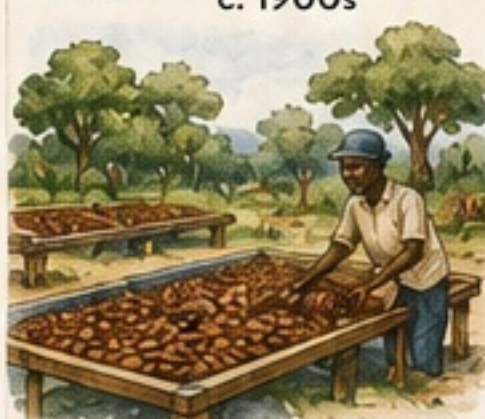
Cacao spread to the Gold Coast (Ghana) in the late 1800s. Farmers quickly saw its potential and began growing it widely.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

The forest zone, steady rains, and good soils created perfect growing conditions.



3 CÔTE D'IVOIRE c. 1900s



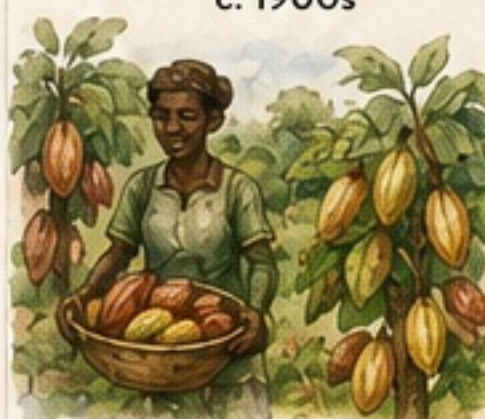
In the early 1900s, cacao boomed here. Today, Côte d'Ivoire is one of the world's largest cacao producers.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Long rainy seasons and humid air all year round help cacao trees grow strong and produce well.



4 NIGERIA c. 1900s



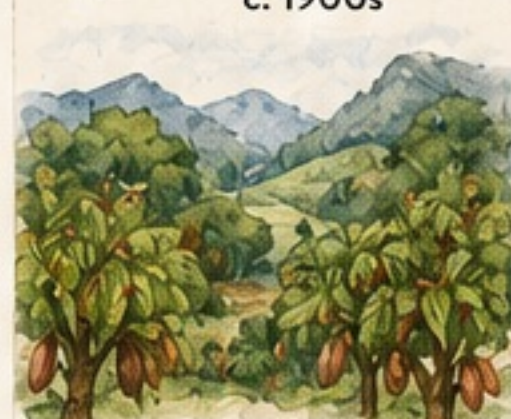
Cacao spread from neighboring countries into Nigeria. Smallholder farmers grew cacao on family farms throughout the south.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

High rainfall, shaded rainforests, and fertile soils support healthy cacao trees.



5 CAMEROON c. 1900s



Cacao reached Cameroon during the colonial period. It continues to be an important crop for many farming communities.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Volcanic soils, abundant rainfall, and varied landscapes are perfect for cacao.



WHY WEST AFRICA BECAME THE CENTER OF WORLD CACAO PRODUCTION



PERFECT CLIMATE

Warm, humid, and rainy conditions allow cacao trees to grow all year.



FERTILE LAND

Rich soils and natural shade from tall trees create ideal growing environments.



SMALL FARMERS, BIG IMPACT

Millions of smallholder farmers grow cacao on family farms passed down through generations.



CLOSE TO MARKETS

Coastal locations made it easier to export cacao beans to Europe and other parts of the world.



HIGH QUALITY CACAO

West African beans are known for their rich flavor—perfect for fine chocolate.

A HARD HISTORY

During colonial times, European powers controlled land and trade. Cacao farms relied on forced labor and unfair systems that caused great suffering. Many people were enslaved or treated unjustly.

Remembering this history helps us appreciate the strength, resilience, and contributions of African people.



AFRICA FEEDS THE WORLD WITH CACAO

Today, about 70% of the world's cacao comes from West Africa.

Cacao grown on small farms is the start of the chocolate we enjoy all over the world.



GROWN ON
AFRICAN FARMS



SOLD & SHIPPED
AROUND THE WORLD



MADE INTO
CHOCOLATE



ENJOYED BY
FAMILIES EVERYWHERE!



From a small seed carried across the ocean to a crop that sustains millions—cacao's journey is amazing!



WHAT WILL YOU DISCOVER NEXT?

Follow the trail into each country to learn more about the people, places, and choices that shaped the world of chocolate.





A Chocolate Bar Goes Global

MANY INGREDIENTS. MANY PLACES. ONE DELICIOUS RESULT.

A chocolate bar is a global team effort! Ingredients come from many corners of the world, and factories turn them into the treats we love. Let's follow a few of the key ingredients and see where they come from.

From fields and farms to factories and shops, chocolate connects people and places all around the world. Let's explore!



INGREDIENT TRAILS: WHERE SOME KEY INGREDIENTS COME FROM

VANILLA TRAIL

Mexico → Madagascar



Vanilla beans start as orchids. The plant was first grown by Indigenous peoples in Mexico. Later, it was brought to Madagascar, where the warm, humid climate is perfect for growing it today.



GROWS BEST IN:

Warm, humid places near the equator with rich soil and steady rain.

SUGAR TRAIL

Asia → Caribbean → World



Sugarcane began in Southeast Asia. It spread through the Middle East and was taken to the Caribbean by explorers. Plantations grew sugar for Europe and beyond.



GROWS BEST IN:

Hot, sunny climates with lots of rain and fertile land.

MILK TRAIL

Europe → New Zealand & Beyond



Cows were first domesticated in Europe. Dairy farming spread around the world, including to New Zealand, where lush pastures and clean air make some of the best milk.



GROWS BEST IN:

Cool to mild climates with green pastures and clean water.

NUTS TRAIL

Many Places, Many Varieties



Nuts like hazelnuts, almonds, and pistachios grow in many regions. Farmers cultivate them in places with the right climate and soil, then ship them around the world.



GROWS BEST IN:

Warm, dry to mild climates with well-drained soil.



Many other ingredients—like cocoa butter, soy lecithin, and spices—also come from different places. Every ingredient in chocolate has a story and a home.

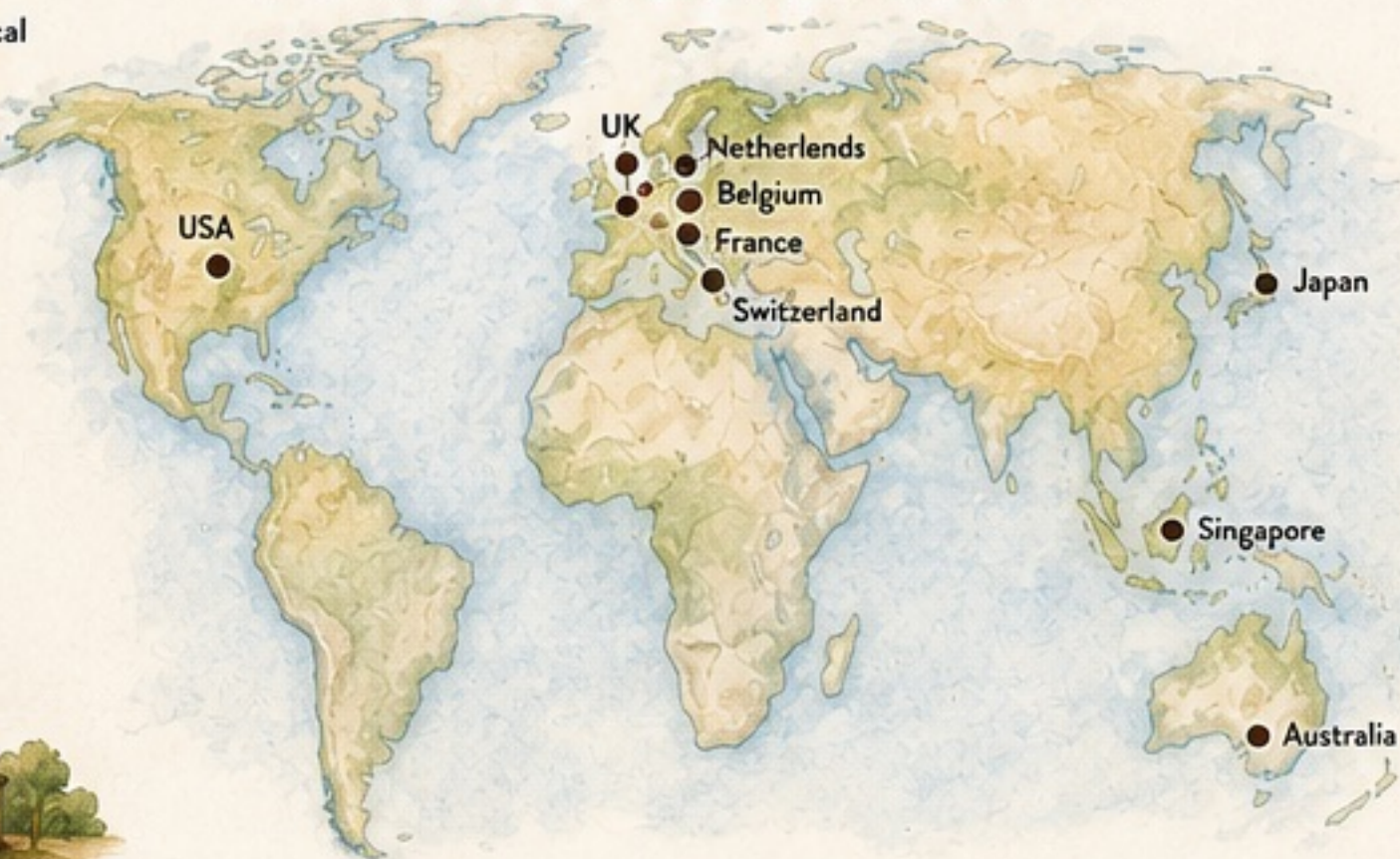


WHERE CHOCOLATE IS MADE

Cacao beans are often grown in tropical countries, but much of the chocolate you eat is made in factories in other parts of the world.

MAJOR CHOCOLATE MANUFACTURING HUBS

- Europe (Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, France, Netherlands, UK)
- North America (USA, Canada)
- Asia (Japan, Singapore)
- Australia



WHAT HAPPENS IN A CHOCOLATE FACTORY?



Beans are cleaned and roasted.



Roasted beans are cracked and ground into chocolate liquor.



Ingredients are mixed.



Chocolate is refined (conched) for smoothness.



It is molded, cooled, and wrapped. Then it's ready for the world!



HOW MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD ARE INSIDE ONE CHOCOLATE BAR?



Look at just a few of the places that might be part of your favorite bar!



CACAO

Ghana



SUGAR

Brazil



VANILLA

Madagascar



MILK

New Zealand



HAZELNUTS

Turkey



MADE INTO CHOCOLATE

Switzerland



COCOA BUTTER

Malaysia

Every bite tells a story of nature, people, hard work, and connection across the globe.



Where will your chocolate bar take you next? Keep exploring!



Chocolate brings the world together—one ingredient, one invention, and one delicious bite at a time.



The Complete Chocolate Trail

A GLOBAL JOURNEY
FROM CACAO TO CHOCOLATE



Every bite tells
a story of nature,
people, hard work,
and connection
across the globe.



Follow the trail in order—or
choose the stops that work for your year! ❤️

- CORE STOP**
Essential stops in
the chocolate story
- OPTIONAL STOP**
Great additions—choose
based on your time
and interests
- MAJOR MILESTONE**
A big moment in the
chocolate story

1 ANCIENT CACAO

Where cacao began—
and the first chocolatiers.



Ecuador



Peru



Mexico



Guatemala



Brazil



Cacao was
domesticated
and treasured
across the
Americas.

2 ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

Cacao crosses the ocean
and becomes a European delight.



Spain



Italy



France



England



Netherlands



Chocolate
becomes a
luxury drink
in Europe.

3 SUGAR & EMPIRE

Sugar sweetens chocolate—
and connects continents.



India



Brazil



Caribbean
(Barbados)



Other Caribbean
Countries



European
Markets



Sugar changes
the recipe
and the world.

4 INVENTING MODERN CHOCOLATE

Brilliant inventions turn chocolate
into the treats we know today.



Netherlands



United Kingdom



Switzerland



Belgium



Germany



From cocoa press
to chocolate bar—
innovation makes
it possible.

GLOBAL
BOOK
PASSPORT

One plant. Many people. Countless places.
Your chocolate adventure connects the world!





CONTINUE THE TRAIL! ♥

Check off each country as you visit it with books, activities, recipes, and your Global Book Passport.



5 CACAO MOVES TO AFRICA

A crop from the Americas takes root and thrives in Africa.



São Tomé & Príncipe



Ghana



Côte d'Ivoire



Nigeria



Cameroon



Cacao thrives in Africa's climate and soil, shaping the chocolate we enjoy today.



6 CHOCOLATE TODAY

Cacao and chocolate are truly global.



Madagascar (Vanilla)



Indonesia



Malaysia



Other Cacao Growing Regions (Ecuador, Peru, etc.)



Global Chocolate Factories



Chocolate is made, enjoyed, and loved all around the world!



MAJOR MILESTONES ALONG THE TRAIL



Cacao becomes a treasured drink.



Inventions create modern chocolate.



Cacao thrives in Africa.



Chocolate brings the world together!

Every bite tells a story of nature, people, hard work, and connection across the globe.



EVERY STOP COUNTS!



Each country has its own story, books, activities, recipes, and geography to discover in your Global Book Passport.



THE BIG QUESTION



How many parts of the world can be inside one chocolate bar?



One plant. Many people. Countless places.
Your chocolate adventure connects the world!

