

3. Chocolate ingredients: always try to use less sugar, the fewer ingredients - the better, no sneaky short-cuts

3.1 We always try to reduce the sugar content in our chocolate. Sugar is the 'nicotine of the 21st century', the less, the better.

The first ingredient in a chocolate bar should never be sugar. Such bars should not be called 'chocolate' but rather 'candy'. We strive to reduce sugar in our products as much as possible. Furthermore, the finer the cacao the less sugar is needed to make the chocolate "accessible". The current mass sugar addiction is a real problem. It's a legal drug and makes our brain, our body, to want more. It evokes a mini addiction which is hard to beat. It's nearly impossible to stop eating a high-sugar, low-cacao industrial chocolate bar and put it back in the cupboard. Normally it gets eaten all at once. This is not healthy, nor sustainable. And, yes, the industry is to blame. We are here to show an alternative way.

3.2 We don't add **lecithin** to our chocolate.

Lecithin is an emulsifier that makes chocolate paste more fluid. Industrial machines need to have a constant flow of chocolate mass, artisan chocolate-makers can handle it. Lecithin can be made from various sources, like soy, sunflower or rapeseed. Most of lecithin used in industrial production is soy which is usually genetically modified. Not an ingredient we need.

3.3 We state the percentage of **cacao butter** as part of the cacao percentage

Cacao beans contain cacao butter. Roughly between 40-50%. It can be extracted and then used during chocolate-making, either in its raw form or deodorised. The cacao mass plus the added cacao butter sum up to the final cacao percentage of the chocolate. This is why we think it's necessary to talk about the percentage of added cacao butter.

The origin of the additional cacao butter could have a different origin than the cacao mass. We recognise this but won't request it to be stated.

3.4 We don't use **vanillin** in our chocolate.

Vanillin is an artificial 'masking agent' covering off-notes or poor cacao flavour. There is no other logical, nor cultural or biological reason for mixing vanilla or vanillin into chocolate.

Natural vanilla can of course be used but then it should be declared as a 'flavoured' bar: Vanilla Chocolate.

3.5 We don't use **palm oil** in our chocolate.

Palm oil is a cheap replacement of cacao butter in chocolate production. Industrial palm oil production is responsible for massive deforestation and reduction of biodiversity, mainly in Indonesia. Furthermore, the health implications of palm oil are vividly discussed. Palm oil should be banned. For sure it's not to be found in our chocolate.

Belgian Bean-to-Bar Charter

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