The History of Chocolate

One of the most popular foods of all time is chocolate. People nowadays eat chocolate in many different forms. We eat chocolate candy, and we drink hot and cold chocolate drinks. The chocolate we eat today is made from a lot of different ingredients, but the most impotant ingredient is cacao bean.

The story of cacao bean and its long journey to stores and supermarkets all over the world started hundreds of years ago in Mexico. Cacao trees need hot and humid weather, and they originally grew in the Yucatan Pinunsula.

The Maya were the fist people to eat cacao beans. They picked cacao beans from wild trees and cleared land to cultivate their own trees. They made a drink from cacao beans and exchanged the beans for other goods. They also used cacao beans for religious ceremonies.

Mayan merchants traveled north and introduced cacao beans to the Aztec people. Soon the cacao bean was part of the Aztecs´ lives. They used it as a drink, as part of religious ceremonies and even as money. With 10 beans, you could buy a rabbit. With 100 beans, you could buy a slave. One of the Aztec god.

The Aztecs could not grow cacao trees because of the dry climate. When the Aztecs conquered the Maya, they asked for cacao beans as a tribute.

I. Read and circle the mistakes in the sentences.

1. The chocolate isn´t popular nowadays.
2. The cacao trees grow in Europe.
3. The Maya made bread from cacao beans

II. Read the story and answer the questions.

1. Where does chocolate come from?

_____

2. What is the most important ingredient in chocolate?

_____

3. Where did cacao beans originally grow?

_____

4. Who were the first people to eat cacao beans?

_____

5. Who introduced the cacao beans to the Aztecs?

_____

6. What did the Aztecs use the cacao beans for?

_____

7. What did the Maya give the Aztecs as a tribute?

_____

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The Aztecs made a special drink from cacao beans. They mixed cacao with vanilla, black pepper and honey. Then they poured the drink from height so it had foam. The drink wasn´t very sweet, and the Aztecs called it Cacahuatl or "bitter water". Only the king and the nobles drank Cacahuatl. Some people say that the Aztec king Moctezuma II drank 50 cups of Cacahuatl a day.

When Hernán Cortés came to Mexico, Moctezuma gave him a Golden cup full of this precious drink. Hernán Cortés took three chests of cacao beans back to Spain with him in 1528. At first, nobody liked the strange drink. Someone added hot water and sugar to the cacao beans and this drink bacame popular. The Spaniards tried to keep the recipe secret, but slowly it spread across Europe.

By the 1700s, there were chocolate shops in many European cities. Chocolate was very expensive. Only rich people could buy it. In the early 1800s, a doctor in England invented a new chocolate recipe. He added milk instead of water to the mixture of sugar and cacao. Children started drinking hot chocolate, and it became even more popular.

The next step in the transformation of the cacao bean happened in Holland. In 1828, Conrad van Houten made cocoa butter and cocoa powder from the beans. This was the start of solid chocolate. With this new method, a company called Fry´s of England made the first chocolate bar in 1847. Then in 1876, the Swiss company Nestlé added milk to the recipe and made the first milk chocolate bar.

At first, chocolate bars were very expensive, but then, in 1894, Hershey´s made the first cheap chocolate bar. Other chocolate companies did the same, and soon ordinay people were buying chocolate in stores all over the world.

I. Read the story and answer the questions.

1. What did the Aztecs mix with cacao?

_____

2. What was the drink called?

_____

3. Was the drink sweet?

_____

4. Who did Moctezuma II meet?

_____

5. How many chests did Hernán Cortés take to Spain?

_____

6. What did the Spaniards add to the recipe?

_____

7. What did an England doctor add to the recipe?

_____

8. when was the first milk chocolate bar made?

_____

9. Were the first chocolate bars expensive?

_____

10. Who made the first cheap chocolate bar?

_____

You can do it..!

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