

CHOCOLATE: Food of the Gods

Presented by Howard Peters



Abstract

Chocolate has been a part of our New World culture for thousands of years. This fun presentation includes:

Some high points of the ancient history of chocolate and its production from the Mayan, Olmec and Aztec cultures up to the present. Aspects of the growing, processing, fermenting, drying, conching, tempering, blending and finishing of the cocoa pod, bean and pulp roasting. Some chemistry, biochemistry and biology of chocolate and its active ingredients including theobroma cacao (literally from the Greek: Food of the Gods). Some health aspects (flavonoids, polyphenols and other antioxidants) showing that this exotic processed food is good for you. For those who stay to the "bitter" end, there will be a free drawing for a ten-pound bar of Guittard dark "bittersweet" chocolate.

Biographies

Howard Peters earned a B.S. in chemistry in 1962 at Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania and a Ph.D. in organic chemistry at Stanford University in 1967. He next did chemical research at Dow Chemical and at SRI International. He is the author or co-author of many technical and legal publications and presentations and holds seven patents, mostly in high explosives on Department of Defense or Atomic Energy Commission concerns. In 1978 Howard received a Juris Doctor degree from Santa Clara University. He practiced patent law in the Silicon Valley for 30 years, and his clients included many high-tech companies, SRI Int., NASA-Ames, as well as most campuses of University of California, Stanford, and Brigham Young University. During this time he wrote and obtained over 300 patents.

He is a 52-year member of the nat. ACS and has served as an elected member of the ACS Council for 35 years; he has served on all national ACS elected committees and was an elected member of the ACS

Board of Directors. Howard is the author of "Understanding Chemical Patents," published in 1991 by the national ACS. He has received ACS awards for his diversity and inclusion efforts and for his public outreach explaining science issues to general audiences.

He received the ACS Henry Hill Award in 2007 for advancing chemistry as a profession. In 2006 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry (London). For the past 14 years he has been an invited judge for chemistry at the INTEL International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF - the world's largest high school science fair). He is an elected Fellow of ACS and the Royal Society of Chemistry (London).

Sally Peters is also a chemistry graduate of Geneva College (1964). She performed virus research at Stanford under Dr. Hubert Loring, the chemist who earlier first crystallized the polio virus as later used by Dr. Jonas Salk. She then worked briefly in the Swain Chemistry Library at Stanford.

In 1983 she earned a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science at San Jose State University. She was an information specialist at Xerox PARC in Palo Alto for over 28 years. Sally served as the Chair of the Santa Clara Valley Local Section of the ACS in 2001 and has served as an elected Councilor for the Section for over 20 years. Sally received the Geneva College Outstanding Alumni Service Award in 1997 and the SCV Section's Ottenberg Service Award in 2001. Sally and Howard received the Harry and Carol Mosher Award of the SCV in 2009 for public outreach. She has organized the high school-level ACS-International Chemistry Olympiad competition in the Santa Clara Valley since 2001.

Howard and Sally have been talking and writing about "Chocolate, Food of the Gods" as public outreach for chemistry in various venues around the US for over 10 years. They have been invited scientist-author lecturers on Cunard's Queen Mary 2 and other cruise lines. Their business card reads "Have Chocolate - Will Travel." They do not make or sell chocolate, but do eat a great deal of it!