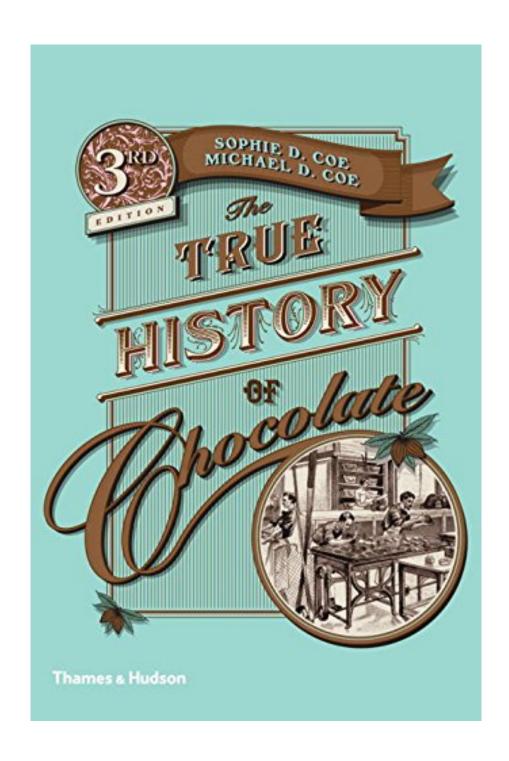


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About the Author

Sophie D. Coe was an anthropologist and food historian. Her book America's First Cuisines was published in 1994 to universal acclaim.

Michael D. Coe is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology at Yale University. His books include The Maya, Mexico, Breaking the Maya Code, Angkor and the Khmer Civilization, and Reading the Maya Glyphs. He lives in New Haven, Connecticut.

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"A beautifully written . . . and illustrated history of the Food of the Gods, from the Olmecs to present-day developments." ?Chocolatier

This delightful tale of one of the world's favorite foods draws on botany, archaeology, and culinary history to present a complete and accurate history of chocolate.

It begins some 4,000 years ago in the jungles of Mexico and Central America with the chocolate tree, Theobroma Cacao, and the complex processes necessary to transform its bitter seeds into what is now known as chocolate. This was centuries before chocolate was consumed in generally unsweetened liquid form and used as currency by the Maya and the Aztecs after them. The Spanish conquest of Central America introduced chocolate to Europe, where it first became the drink of kings and aristocrats and then was popularized in coffeehouses. Industrialization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries made chocolate available to all, and now, in our own time, it has become once again a luxury item.

The third edition includes new photographs and revisions throughout that reflect the latest scholarship. A new final chapter on a Guatemalan chocolate producer, located within the Pacific coastal area where chocolate was first invented, brings the volume up-to-date.

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Delightful account of cacoa history

By Brenda Jo Mengeling

Sophie and Michael Coe have written a emminently readable history of chocolate. They emphasize the origins of cacoa in the New World, and the Spanish conquerors' response to their "discovery" of cacoa. The story fascinates, and I liked how the authors presented all the options when historical records were scarce or contradictory. The text is interspersed with clarifying illustrations, some are in color. The 19th and 20th centuries are covered in brief. The book ends with the resurgence in deluxe chocolates that use the rarer yet better tasting cacoa beans, and explains why these chocolates are so much better tasting than the supermarket candy bar. All in all, an excellent read.

27 of 28 people found the following review helpful.

Delightful Reading!

By chronic_student

This book was an extremely readable examination of the history of chocolate, starting with the ancient MesoAmericans and ending with contemporary European and American chocolate makers. Anyone interested in the history and development of their favorite confection or beverage should read this book - it's written engagingly in the first half, and then peters out just a tad towards the end. I wished for more about the modern chocolate industry, and a little more about the current manufacturing spike in fine chocolates. But as an anthropological study revolving around the development of chocolate, I could ask for nothing more. Coe and Coe have inspired a chocolate tasting party and an academic interest in a gastrologic subject.

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