

I hope by now you've picked up the key difference between the chocolate you're familiar with lacing the checkout queues at the supermarket and the chocolate I'm talking about here. The chocolate I'm referring to is raw chocolate. Yes, I said RAW Chocolate and herein lies the difference between chocolate; the trans-fat-sugar-laden-dairy-drenched substance that you see on the shelves and chocolate; the Superfood. Simply put, raw cacao is a superfood. But cacao beans are typically subjected to excessive heat, then melted, processed, chemicalised and added to 3 of the most common allergy-forming foods of our time - dairy, sugar and trans fats. Once cooked it loses most of its nutritional goodness, energy and vibrancy. The nutritional benefits of eating cacao in its raw form are vast. Cacao is amongst the most complex foods on our planet. This is why chocolate cannot be artificially synthesised.

**magnesium** - Raw chocolate is very high in magnesium. Magnesium increases the overall vigour of the heart muscle. It decreases blood coagulation thus lowering blood pressure. Magnesium is known to be the mineral of the heart, so when you give someone a box of raw chocolates you really are giving a gift of love.

**antioxidants** - Chocolate in its raw form is one the highest antioxidant foods we know of. There are on average 10000 milligrams per 100 grams of flavonol antioxidants in cacao beans vs. 500 milligrams in 100 grams in normal chocolate.

**brain food** - Cacao is rich in certain brain chemicals and in particular MAO Inhibitors. These act as natural mood enhancers and anti-depressants. Cacao is also a natural food source for the amino acid tryptophan, which is vital for the production of serotonin in the brain. Serotonin acts as our stress defense shield.

**eat chocolate, lose weight!** - Ever dreamed those words would fall on your ears? I know I did. There is evidence indicating that MAO Inhibitors present in cacao help to diminish the appetite.

**a purple fruit** - When you break open the raw cacao bean it has distinctive purple hues. It is in fact one of the few purple fruits and hence resonates with our higher spiritual centres. This is just the tip of the iceberg. I could go on for hours, but will finish on this. I was a chocoholic born and bred. I finally decided I was going to get off the mass marketed junk and read a book called Chocolate Busters. The book was quite convincing, not only covering the health implications of dairy, sugar and trans fats added into chocolate but also the aspects of child slavery that go into bringing you a prettily wrapped chocolate bar. I took the plunge and quit eating chocolate. It was only 1 week later when my husband Peter, came down from the study and said I've found you healthy chocolate. "Yeah, right," was all I had to say. He ordered our first cacao product - cacao nibs (which are crushed cacao beans/chips) and explained the raw, unprocessed aspect of this food and the rest is history. I suppose there really must be something in the saying: "If you love something, set it free. If it comes back to you, it's yours. If it doesn't it never was."

### raw chocolate recipes

#### *Raw Cacao Smoothie:*

- 1L water,
- 1/2 cup raw cashew nuts,
- 1/2 cup dates,
- 2 bananas,
- 4 Tbs Raw cacao powder.

Blend the nuts, bananas and dates till smooth. Add Cacao powder and blend through. Add more dates for a sweeter taste or more cacao powder for a more chocolaty flavour.

#### *2 minute Raw Choc Mousse:*

- 2 flat Tbs coconut oil,
- 2 tsp honey,
- 2 heaped Tbs raw cacao powder

Melt coconut oil and mix with honey. Mix in Cacao Powder. Add more honey for a sweeter taste or more cacao powder for a more chocolaty flavour. Put in the fridge if you want the mixture to set. Sit back, relax and ENJOY the Chocolate-Love.

*Peter and Beryn run Raw Cacao Chocolate workshops every month educating people about the wonders of real chocolate and what to do with it. They show you how to make chocolate health shakes that even the kids will love and a chocolate cake that is truly scrumptious, and much more. They also have a 4 week Raw Food course teaching essential know-how for healthy living. For more details visit [www.superfoods.co.za](http://www.superfoods.co.za) or call 021-7864068. But in the meantime if you would like to experiment with some raw cacao recipes call their office on 021-7864068 to get your cacao products or visit them at the Neighbourgoods market on a Saturday morning and pick up your supply of raw cacao beans, nibs or powder and try out these recipes.*