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## Chinese Cuisine

### Is Chocolate healthier than green tea?

"Chocolate contains up to four times the anti-oxidants found in tea." Sound too good to be true? In fact, that was the conclusion of a recent study by Holland's National Institute of Public Health and Environment. Researchers found that chocolate - specifically dark chocolate - contains 53.5 mg of catechins per 100 grams. (Catechins are the powerful anti-oxidants that help prevent against cancer and heart disease). By contrast, 100 ml of black tea contains a mere 13.9 mg of catechins.

Eating chocolate to stay healthy? Well, why not? Scientists have established that there are important health benefits to be gained from drinking red wine, so why not chocolate as well? But I wouldn't trade my morning cup of tea for a box of truffles just yet. For one thing, as Karen Allen points out in a report for the BBC, the amount of cocoa powder in chocolates may be quite small. Chocolates often contain other ingredients, such as saturated fats, that more than outweigh the health benefits to be gained from cocoa's cancer-fighting chemicals.

More importantly, the Dutch researchers were not comparing chocolate to green tea, which is rich in catechins. Furthermore, evidence is mounting that scientists have only begun to discover the numerous health benefits associated with drinking green tea. Still, a cup of green tea with a chocolate biscuit or a piece of dark chocolate sounds like a great way to begin the day!

### The Asian Connection

You may wonder what place an article on chocolate has on a site devoted to Chinese cuisine. After all, the cacao tree is native to the tropical regions of Central and South America, and while the Spanish introduced chocolate to the Phillipines, it is not a traditional Asian food. Also, chocolate candy never caught on in Asian countries, partly due to a lack of refrigeration facilities.

However, things are changing. Chocolate consumption in China alone has increased by forty percent since 1992. And in 1997 Bernard Callebaut, the famous chocolate manufacturer, felt confident enough of Asians' fondness for chocolate to open a factory in Singapore. As a concession to Asian tastes the chocolate is less sweet; it also has a higher melting point.

### Recipes

- [Chocolate and Banana Springroll](#)
- [Chocolate Lotus Seed Paste Mooncake](#)
- [Dofu Fa](#) - soybean milk topped with sweet syrup. You can spice it up by adding grated chocolate.
- [Vegan Chocolate Truffles](#)

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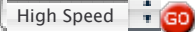
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### More Chocolate Articles....

[The Sweet Science of Chocolate](#) - This site is packed with information on chocolate - history, how it is harvested, and chemical properties. You can also take a virtual tour of a chocolate museum. Simply the best chocolate site I've found on the Internet. From Exploratorium.

[Chocolate Timeline](#) - Covers the history of chocolate beginning with its earliest origins (there is some thought that the Mayans were not the first to cultivate the cacao tree) through to its role in cheering up American servicemen during World War II. From CuisineNet.

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