



Spotlight Halal: **Chocolate Liquor**

Spotlight Halal is a collection of food and ingredient articles from IsItHaram.com.

This article can be found online at: http://www.isitharam.com/features/chocolate_liquor.jsp

WHAT IS IT?

Chocolate Liquor, also known as 'cocoa liquor' and 'cocoa mass' is a smooth, thick, liquid form of chocolate. It is the purest form of chocolate, produced by grinding cacao beans. Chocolate liquor contains roughly 50% cocoa solids (cocoa powder) and 50% cocoa butter; the pale-yellow vegetable fat of the cacao bean. When it is cooled and molded into blocks, chocolate liquor is known as unsweetened baking chocolate.

Chocolate Liquor is the key ingredient in chocolate. It is used as the base for cakes, brownies, cookies and candy bars. Chocolate in its most familiar form is made by mixing chocolate liquor with (more) cocoa butter or cocoa, sugar, soy lecithin and, often, milk. The cocoa to cocoa butter ratio determines the darkness and flavor intensity of the chocolate being produced. As with dark chocolate, the higher the cocoa content, the darker and richer the flavor. The higher the cocoa butter and milk content, the lighter the color and creamier the texture of the resulting chocolate. A prime example of a chocolate with a high cocoa butter and milk content is white chocolate. White chocolate contains no cocoa.

HOW IS IT MADE?

Chocolate Liquor is produced by taking cocoa beans that have been fermented, dried, roasted, and separated from their shells. The fermentation process is to remove the fleshy, fruity pulp that surrounds the beans; the fatty beans, themselves, do not ferment. Grinding the processed beans releases the smooth, thick chocolate liquor from their centers.

Cocoa should not be confused with the coca plant, which can be used to create cocaine.



HALAL

Chocolate liquor is the purest form of chocolate, produced by grinding cacao beans.



Chocolate liquor, also known as baking chocolate

References:

Lee KW, Kim YJ, Lee HJ, Lee CY (December 2003). "Cocoa has more phenolic phytochemicals and a higher antioxidant capacity than teas and red wine". J. Agric. Food Chem. 51 (25): 7292–5. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14640573>

Wikipedia: Chocolate Liquor. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chocolate_liquor

RECIPE: CHOCOLATE-DIPPED CRANBERRY COCONUT MACAROONS

Macaroons are any cookies that are made without flour. The most common and popular form of macaroon is made with coconut. This recipe adds the tart flavor of dried cranberries and is dipped in a shell of dark chocolate.

You will need:

- 1 pkg. (14 ounces) sweetened shredded coconut
- 14 ounces sweetened condensed milk
- ½ cup dried cranberries, chopped
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 tsp. almond or vanilla flavoring (non-alcoholic)
- 2 extra-large egg whites, at room temperature
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 pkg. (8 squares) semi-sweet chocolate

Instructions:

1. PREHEAT the oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit (160 Celsius).
2. COMBINE the coconut, condensed milk, dried chopped cranberries, sugar, and vanilla or almond flavoring in a large bowl.
3. WHIP the egg whites and salt on high speed until they make medium-firm peaks.
4. FOLD (carefully) the whipped egg whites into the coconut mixture.
5. DROP the batter by the tablespoonful onto baking sheets lined with parchment paper or which have been greased and floured.
6. BAKE for 25 to 30 minutes, until golden brown.
7. COOL.
8. MELT chocolate on low heat on a double-broiler. Dip cookies halfway into chocolate. Let stand until chocolate is firm.

