

Topic: Chocolate

Key questions:

- I can explain how an event from the past has shaped our life today.
- I can describe events from the past using dates when things happened.
- I can begin to explain how a location fits into its wider geographical location
- I can present a product in an interesting way
- I can evaluate and suggest improvements to my product

Key facts and figures

Who was Christopher Columbus?



Christopher Columbus was a 16th-century explorer who brought back some cocoa beans to Spain in 1504 from the 'New World', as America was then called. The King and Queen of Spain failed to realise the importance of the beans among the gold and precious gemstones Columbus returned with. This was discovered some twenty years later by Hernán Cortés when he arrived in Mexico in 1519.

Who was Hernán Cortés?



Hernán Cortés was a Spanish explorer who conquered the Aztec Empire in 1521. Cortés was offered the bitter drink chocolatl by Montezuma but it was not to his liking. He noticed that the beans were being used as local currency (four beans bought one rabbit, ten beans bought one slave) and realised the significance of what he had found – he could grow 'money' on trees!

Cortés' white skin and beard convinced Montezuma II and the Aztec people that Cortés was the god Quetzalcoatl whose return was prophesied. But Cortés and his men didn't behave like gods and the Aztecs grew suspicious. They were asked to leave. Later, Cortés returned with 600 armed soldiers. He captured and destroyed the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan, and built Mexico City in its place. All that remains of the original city is the ruin of the main temple.

Where are cocoa beans grown?



Since the 2000s, Western Africa produces almost two-thirds of the world's cocoa, with Ivory Coast growing almost half of that amount.

Chocolate Timeline

Key vocabulary

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cacao • chocolatl • Fair trade • cash crops | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayan • Aztec • Christopher Columbus • Hernán Cortés | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • biome • harvesting • export • import |
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