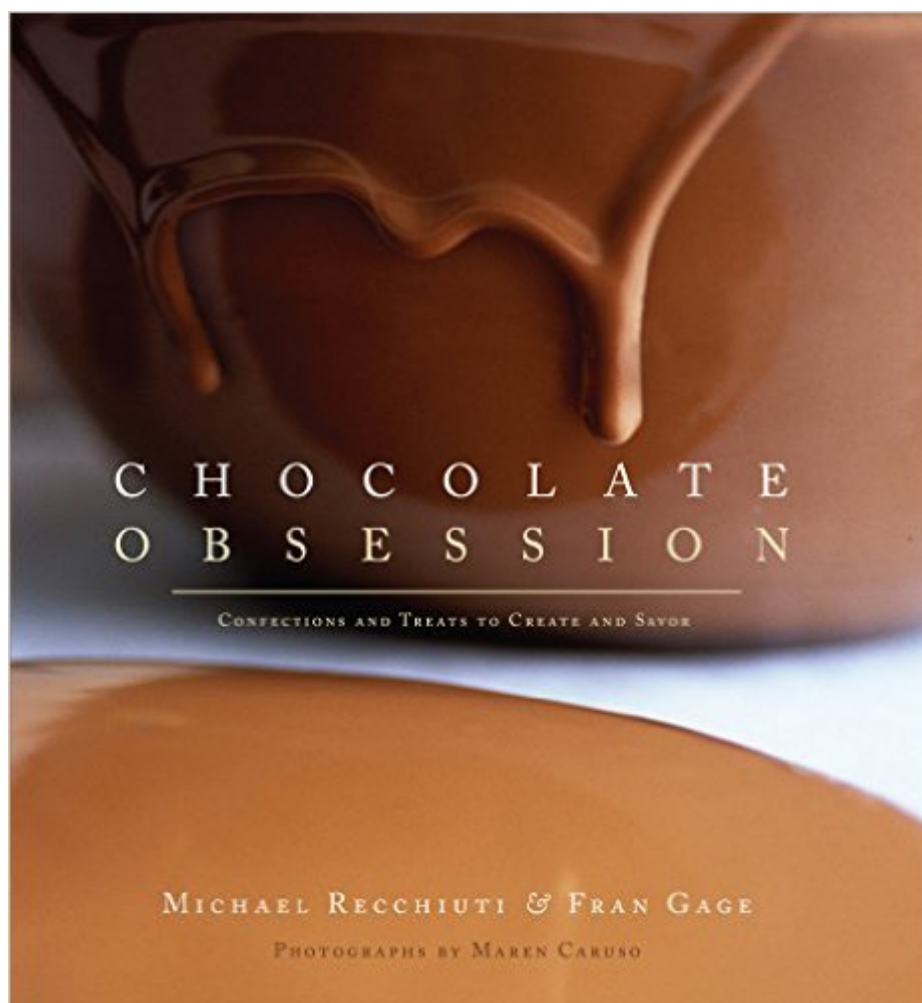


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Chocolate Obsession: Confections And Treats To Create And Savor



Synopsis

Known as the "Picasso of chocolatiers," Michael Recchiuti creates confections that are every bit as daring and original as any of his namesake's artworks. But unlike the painter, the chocolate maker has made it possible for even the amateur to achieve his artistry. In *Chocolate Obsession* Recchiuti, owner of the famed artisanal chocolate company in San Francisco, divulges his professional secrets and techniques, allowing home cooks to reproduce his exquisite confections in their own kitchens. Opening with a complete discussion of chocolate from bean to bar, the book goes on to offer detailed instructions for dipped chocolates, truffles, and molded chocolates, including Recchiuti's signature ganache flavors: Earl Grey tea, burnt caramel, tarragon with grapefruit. Also featured are recipes for such sinfully delicious treats as Chocolate Shortbread Cookies with Truffle Cream Filling, Double Dark Chocolate Souffl s, and Rocky Recchiuti Brownies. With more than 60 recipes in all, this book will satisfy even the most obsessive chocolate lovers among us.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'Chocolate Obsession' by San Francisco chocolatier, Michael Recchiuti and San Francisco Patisser and writer, Fran Gage is a book of recipes and techniques from the point of view of the very high end chocolate candy maker. It is to chocolate and Thomas Keller's *'French Laundry Cookbook'* is to the recipes of American *'haute cuisine'*. If you wish to find an introductory book on chocolate making, get a copy of the excellent book *'Bittersweet'* by Alice Medrich, which the authors cite in their bibliography and which I have reviewed and found an excellent introduction to the subject. The book centers around the very distinctive chocolate styles of Recchiuti Chocolates, which are

distinguished by, among other things, the use of a lot of flavors one does not typically find paired with chocolate such as teas, tarragon, cardamom, and especially caramel. The one thing which makes this book accessible to the experienced chocolate maker is the fact that it deals primarily with the very simplest forms of chocolate candy such as truffles, dipped and moulded chocolates, `snacks' such as s'mores, chocolate barks, chocolate drinks, and sauces. In all this, caramel is much more than just another ingredient for Recchiuti. It appears over and over in many different forms from caramelized nuts in the `snacks' to flavorings in ice cream. There are things in this book for the novice who has aspirations to be a skillful chocolatier. While I'm sure I probably have them in at least one of my hundreds of cookbooks, I'm pleased to find recipes for both graham crackers and marshmallow, leading to the ability to create entirely homemade s'mores.

My initial opinion of this book, prior to purchasing it, was that it would be a book of fancy chocolate confections that would be hard to make, and too extreme to enjoy; treats such as "Earl Grey Tea Ganache" and "Tarragon Ganache with Candied Fruit", as well as other eclectic sweetness. It seemed too sophisticated for my average Joe palate. But the name of Michael Recchiuti was the draw, and after flipping through this wonderful labor of love, I realized that I was a chocolate snob. Shame on me. First of all, the physical book itself is glorious. It has been beautifully brought together with raised lettering on the cover, and the feel of those satin pages, along with clear, crisp photography that makes you anxious to get started! Then there is the educational content. Michael is a Master Chocolatier, which is his hard-earned title and is very well-deserved. And despite the gamut of unusual and standard chocolate flavors and concoctions he has created, his way of talking to you is that of a good friend who wants to share his knowledge with you in the most earnest way possible. He has covered everything and he does so in an encouraging and kindly fashion with one of his best sections being "Organizing Chocolate Work"; it was very much appreciated that he gave a timetable to help determine your level of expertise. You need to learn in steps and he graciously helps you climb that ladder of knowledge. Also, he adds wonderful stories and such to weave his history and love affair with that dark and tempting devil of sweetness. This is a great teaching tool and chocolate creations book, as well as a coffee-table libretto that you can peruse when you want to kick back and relax.

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