

The best vegan chocolate taste test: brands, bars, sweets and gifts



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Chocolate lovers following a plant-based, flexitarian or dairy-free diet, or those who simply don't like milk, never have to go without their favourite rich, sweet treat anymore, as there are plenty of delicious vegan chocolate options available: dark, 'milk' and white and everything in between.

What is vegan chocolate?

Chocolate is made with grounded and roasted cocoa pods, the fruit of the cacao tree. Without the addition of milk and other extra ingredients, chocolate is actually plant-based. In fact milk

plant-based alternatives, such as rice, oat and coconut.

Once the dairy is taken out, vegan alternatives contain the same ingredients as standard chocolate, such as cocoa butter and mass, and sugar. Unlike many non vegan chocolate bars and treats, most plant-based chocolate doesn't contain palm oil, making it even more environmentally friendly. Take Cadbury Dairy Milk for instance, the brand's classic milk chocolate bar contains palm oil, whilst Cadbury Plant Vegan Chocolate Bar swaps it for **sunflower oil**.

Some vegan chocolate brands use ethically sourced coconut sugar, raw cane sugar or agave syrup instead of refined white sugar, however, sugar is sugar and using alternatives to sucrose doesn't make the chocolate any healthier or add any noticeable nutrients to it.

Most dark chocolate bars are suitable for vegans and those suffering from lactose intolerance as these naturally don't contain dairy, so brands like Divine and Green & Black's do have some plant-based products in their range, however, always check the list of ingredients, as some companies sneak milk into their dark chocolate products, or add other ingredients, such as non plant-based honeycomb, marshmallows, caramel or biscuit pieces.

Coeliacs and those avoiding gluten needn't worry as chocolate is naturally gluten free, but, as above, always check for added ingredients which may contain gluten.

Some of the most popular and delicious vegan chocolate brands on the market are: Ombar, HiP, Raw Halo, Booja Booja, Rhythm 108, Nomo, Doisy & Dam, Vego, Pico, Moo Free, The Raw Chocolate Company and iChoc.

Popular 'corner shop' non vegan brands that have released plant-based versions of their products include Galaxy, Cadbury, Topic, KitKat, Milky Way Magic Stars, Bounty and Lindt.

Non vegan chocolate companies that offer several vegan options are: Montezuma, Vivani, Tony's Chocolonely, Green & Black's, Divine Chocolate, Monty Bojangles and Ritter Sport.

Supermarkets also offer their own plant-based chocolate. Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda and Morrisons all have excellent options.

For something more luxurious, an elegant gift or for a special occasion, independent chocolate shops are a good option as many offer vegan alternatives.



Does vegan chocolate taste good?

The short answer is yes, vegan chocolate is as good as its non vegan counterpart, with many omnivores and flexitarians choosing it for environmental or dietary reasons. It has the same chocolate flavour, texture and creaminess and comes in a huge variety of treats, such as chocolate truffles, boxes of luxurious chocolates, Easter eggs, mini eggs, one-portion chocolate bars, buttons, pieces, fondants, and even vegan chocolate frosting. Like standard chocolate, it can be melted to make ganache, rocky road, tiffin, truffles, spreads and sauces and it can be tempered too.

These days plant-based chocolate comes in lots of flavours, including nuts, coffee, caramel, white, nougat, raspberry, strawberry, marzipan, orange, coconut, pistachio, fruit and nut, vanilla, mint, champagne and many, many more.

Something stronger...vegan chocolate flavoured alcoholic drinks

There are not just chocolate bars and sweets that are plant-based. For those enjoying something stronger, these days there are vegan chocolate-flavoured spirits and liqueurs too.

Award winning [Zymurgorium Choc-A-Bloc Gin](#) is made with Grand Cru de Sambirano, chocolate from Madagascar which gives the gin delicate and elegant notes of cacao rather

with a more intense dark chocolate flavour, Mozart, the maker of the indulgent chocolates, has ventured into alcohol with the delicious [Mozart Dark Chocolate Liqueur](#), which works well on its own with ice or in a creamy cocktail. [Shannon's Vegan Chocolate Cream Liqueur](#) with added coconut is a bit like Bounty in a bottle and can be enjoyed on ice or with vegan cream, vegan salted caramel cream or coffee.



Taste test: the best vegan chocolate bars

With all the delicious plant-based chocolate on the market, choosing the best ones in this taste test was very difficult, however, whilst all these chocolate brands were very good, we selected the ones that really stood out.

Best flavour range: Ombar

Salted caramel chocolate truffle, raspberry and coconut centre, pistachio centre, blueberry, and fruit and nut are just some of the many delicious flavour in the raw chocolate company range. Fairtrade, organic, palm-oil and refined sugar free, [Ombar](#) is as tasty as it is environmentally friendly.

Best wide range: Doisy & Dam and Rhythm 108

Rhythm 108's range include chocolate bars, truffles, single portion bars, filled soft bake cookies, biscuits, Easter treat bundles including mini eggs, all in delicious flavours such as mint fondant, hazelnut truffle, pralines and orange.

Best for creaminess: Ombar, Raw Halo, Nomo, Vivani and H!P

This was probably the toughest category as all the vegan chocolate brands we tested were velvety and creamy, but Ombar, **Raw Halo**, **Nomo**, **Vivani** and **H!P** were the ultimate winners.

Best 'corner shop' brand: Galaxy, Lindt and Ritter Sport

These brands are generally available from corner shops, although some of their vegan versions aren't, but can be bought in supermarkets. We tried Galaxy Vegan in Caramel and Salt, Cadbury Plant Vegan Chocolate, vegan KitKat, vegan Bounty, Ritter Sport Dark Chocolate and Marzipan, Lindt Classic Recipe Vegan Smooth Chocolate Bar, Topic Whole Hazelnut Vegan Gluten Free Chocolate and Bounty Vegan Gluten Free Chocolate. The clear winners were Galaxy, Lindt and Ritter Sport. Galaxy's flavour was delicious and the chocolate very creamy, exactly as the dairy version, and Lindt and Ritter Sport tasted luxurious and are of very good quality. Cadbury alas came bottom of the bunch, and has a very long way to go to get good marks.

Best supermarket vegan chocolate: Tesco Free From Honeycomb & Raspberry Chocolate Bar

A good chocolate bar that combines the tartness of raspberry with the sweetness and crunch of plant-based honeycomb for a satisfying texture and mouthfeel. At **£1.70 for 90g** is also good value for money.

Best vegan white chocolate: iChoc and Vivani

iChoc White Vanilla is sweet, creamy and milky, **Vivani** Organic White Chocolate Nougat Crisp is smooth with a good nougat crispiness.



Best vegan milk chocolate: Nomo

Creamy and milky with a good chocolate flavour, you won't miss the dairy variety.



Lindt Excellence Dark 70% Cocoa Chocolate Bar and [Pico Super Dark 85%](#) are intense, full of flavour, aromas and tones. The choice of dark chocolate connoisseurs. For a dark chocolate with added extras, Tony's Chocolonely does an excellent and very satisfying [Dark Lemony Caramel Cocoa Biscuit](#) 51% bar.



Best for gifting: Booja Booja and Monty Bojangles

[Booja Booja](#)'s truffles have been popular with vegans and those suffering from lactose intolerance for years. They come in beautiful gift boxes of different sizes and boast a variety of exciting and classic flavours, such as rhubarb and vanilla fool, fine de champagne, honeycomb and caramel, toffee strudel and orange. The company also does vegan Easter eggs filled with truffles. Monty Bojangles only offers one type of vegan product in their range, [Cocoa Nib Nights](#) truffles with cocoa nibs, but whilst their selection is limited, the chocolates are very good.

Best new product: Mummy Meegz Chuckie Egg

If you miss the extra sweetness and childhood memories of creme eggs, you'll love [Meegz Chuckie Egg](#), an oat milk chocolate egg with a fondant centre. Sustainable, ethical and anti-slavery. Available from 1 May.