

Middle East

# Caterer

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OUTLET 360°

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# Giant AMBITIONS

Russell Scott, vice president of food & beverage for AccorHotels' Luxury Brands in the Middle East, shares his plans for F&B domination



## Cuvees du Sourceur

Chef Middle East has launched two new chocolate couvertures called Cuvees du Sourceur from Valrhona's laboratory range. The limited edition chocolate couvertures are from two new cacao origins: Bali and Haiti and are aligned with the brand's CSR commitment to support the people involved in plantations and the cycle of cocoa production as well as the perpetual search for rare cocoa beans and flavours. Valrhona's sourcing team headed to Bali and met with the members of the Kerta Samaya Samaniya (KSS) cooperative. The Sakanti Bali 68% comes to life in an acidic, fruity dark chocolate 1kg block. Kilti Haiti 66% is characterised by a powerful chocolatey taste and strong vanilla notes.

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## Chocolat Madagascar

Chocolat Madagascar grows terroir cocoa on the north west and east coasts of Madagascar, crafting their chocolates at their facility nearby. The flavour-some, high quality cocoa does not require large amounts of sugar to enhance its flavour profile. Products include: 100% cocoa chocolate couverture, which contains 0% added sugar and is crafted so that it can be used by chocolatiers and chefs in an easy melt, temper and low oxidation small block format and 80% milk chocolate couverture.

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## Chocolate Experience by Dobra

The Fast Chocolate Experience by Dobra was launched by Aramtec during a culinary day at Hyatt Regency Dubai Creek. The event showcased how to tweak a traditional concept, such as fast food in a different way. Under the slogan 'Reinventing the Classics', the event presented items such as chocolate fries, chic shakes and the donut topper. In the Fast Chocolate Experience, visitors were able to get a 'fast food meal' of chocolate on a tray. Chefs can use the products to serve chocolate fries made from white Belgian chocolate with salty caramel crunch, served with three sweet and sour sauces: mayonnaise, ketchup and peanut sauce. Choose a crunchy topping to finish it off.

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## Veliche Gourmet

Veliche Gourmet has recently launched a complete range of sustainable products including decorations and inclusions. The new range of specially designed decorations and inclusions, for which the company buys cocoa from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms, are now available to turn great creations into extraordinary ones.

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## NEWS

**EMF**, the Middle East coordination office for the Barry Callebaut Group, presents Cacao Barry's initiative towards a sustainable and traceable range of couverture chocolates with pure cocoa taste. Cacao Barry supports the Cocoa Horizons Foundation to improve the living conditions of cocoa producers and their communities.

**Moka General Trading LLC and S.A. Neuhaus N.V.** signed a distributor agreement covering the territory of the United Arab Emirates. In line with this, Neuhaus Boutique Dubai flagship store has recently opened at The Dubai Mall. Together with its gourmet distributor Aramtec,

**Cargill** officially launched Veliche Gourmet in the Middle East last February at Gulfood. Veliche Gourmet is Cargill's premium Belgian chocolate brand with a long established heritage in producing fine quality chocolate, from couverture chocolates and cocoa specialities to inclusions and decorations. By buying cocoa from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms for its chocolate products, Veliche Gourmet also helps to protect the environment and supports sustainable livelihoods for cocoa farmers, their families and communities.

## Natural and authentic

There is a trend for natural and non-GMO sourcing with chocolate. Moka Trade general manager Sheryl Maxwell says: "The current chocolate trends that we are seeing today involves higher demand on chocolates that are all natural/non-GMO."

Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate marketing director Ilco Kwast comments: "The increase in demand for food transparency, is reflected in the growing interest in non-GMO and organic chocolates."

EMF Emirates general manager Pierre Feghali shares the same view, he explains: "A return to transparency through authentic ingredients, has become rapidly popular in the last couple of years. Consumers want transparency on all levels of the supply chain, like where the food comes from and how it's made."

Chocolat Madagascar director Neil Kelsall comments: "The trend is for more healthy and traceable chocolate, with much less sugar."



of the health benefits of dark chocolate, its antioxidant properties, and good fat in the form of cocoa butter.” Because consumers are more health-conscious than before, La Marquise’s Bedoyan states that brands are meeting demand “with an abundant variety of healthy options, such as chocolates with reduced sugar, a combination of nuts and chocolate, organic and all natural ingredients options for vegans and raw chocolate”.

Chocolat Madagascar director Neil Kelsall notes: “Chocolate has a very bad name for health, because of the high sugar content in confectionery processing. Cocoa is very healthy if it is unprocessed, having at least 20 times more antioxidants than broccoli (according to the ORAC scale). The high flavanols of cocoa help reduce blood pressure and reduce risk of heart attacks. However low quality bulk cocoa is very bitter tasting and needs chemical manipulation and flavour manipulation by adding vanilla, sugar, milk and other fat products. High quality, fine flavour single origin cacao does not require chemical processing, thereby preserving the real health properties of cacao.” ☉

about our expectations for this market. The Middle East is a place where people enjoy the finer things in life and, therefore, is an important market for us.”

As pointed out in the trends box-out (see pg 43), there’s a focus on non-GMO, transparency and authentic ingredients. There’s also an increasing focus on health in general across the world. Experts in the industry think that chocolate can actually

play into this trend. Moka’s Maxwell points out that all-natural pure chocolate is high in antioxidants and possesses many health benefits “including an overall improved health as long as it is taken in moderation”.

Antioxidants are mentioned by all, and EMF Emirates GM Pierre Feghali says: “Due to growing health concerns, the demand for dark, sugar-free, and organic has increased rapidly. Consumers are aware



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