

# COCOA RUNNERS



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## **OVERVIEW OF COCOA RUNNERS CORPORATE VIRTUAL TASTING**

***Chocolate, Wine and More!***

1. Overview of Tasting -- our "Palateons"
2. Logistics (prepayment, ordering etc.)
3. Email template example (to send to invitees)
4. Testimonials
5. Example box (photo)
6. Pricing (See email)

## 1. OVERVIEW OF A VIRTUAL TASTING -- AND WHY A "PALATE-ON" MAY BE EVEN BETTER THAN A PHYSICAL TASTING

Lockdown has encouraged a variety of behaviour. Some are not great -- for example it's all too easy to vegetate and become a couch potato and spend all our time on zooms, teams, etc. On the other hand, the likes of Peloton, Zwift and Joe Wicks have shown us how to exercise at home.

We think that Tastings - of wine, chocolate, coffee and more - can learn from the likes of Peloton. We want to call this, and pioneer, "Palate-ons". We want to make Virtual Tastings more convenient. Less pressure. More personalised. More interactive. Less hassle. Less possibility of embarrassment. More fun. More inspiring. More hands-on. Less stand-offish

So we've designed our Palate-Ons off a number of critical mechanics and principles

1. We don't "lecture". We encourage everyone to participate via some simple interactive software accessed via your phone whilst you see the results "real time" on your main screen
2. We lead the tastings with principals who are passionate and experienced (ie not "hired hands")
3. We ensure that everyone receives the same tasting pack of chocolates, wines, coffees, etc
4. We want to place the product in context. We want you to think a little differently about the "product" by the end of the session. You'll understand more about it's history, what generates flavour and taste, why e.g., beards are key to understand why we started to eat (and not drink) chocolate. And we do this with some simple slides shared via zoom, teams, etc.

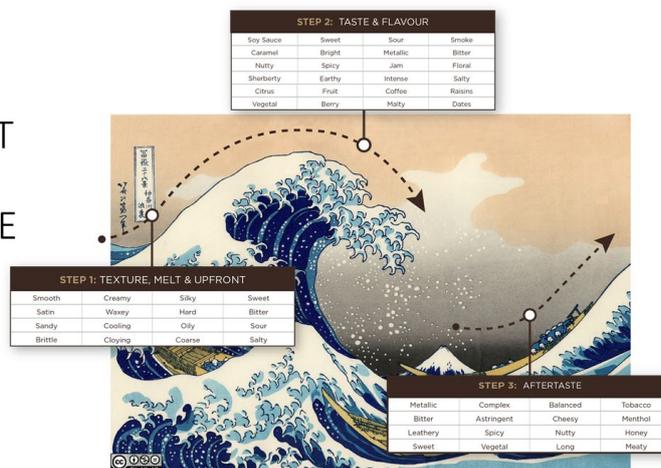
We also pride ourselves on having a different philosophy to most other tastings. We approach tasting a bit like learning how to ride a bike:

- None of us are born knowing how to ride a bike. It takes a bit of practice. Training wheels (stabilisers) can help. And falling off, with some embarrassment, is par for the course. For most of us it's an experience where we remember the good parts and acquire a fun and rewarding skill. Learning to savour craft chocolate, fine wine, specialty coffee etc. is similar
- Even though almost everyone enjoys great craft chocolate and fine wine, no one is born with an innate expertise (and distrust anyone who says they were born with a great palate).
- None of us instinctively can articulate the tastes, flavours, textures and mouthfeel that we experience when we taste craft chocolate or fine wine. We need some basic vocabulary so that we can describe the word on the tip of our tongue. And we need to practise. Just like learning to ride a bike, it takes a while before it all starts to click into place.
- It's about building confidence. And hopefully this should be fun. Virtual tastings can, we believe, have the edge over physical ones here. Normally at tastings (or in the gym), we are nervous around exposure, falling off, looking silly, etc. But at a virtual tasting it can be anonymous. So in a virtual tasting you can learn without inhibition, without the pressure - you learn from observing and sense-checking (this feedback, symposium style, but also anonymous, is key).
- And then as you gain in confidence and interest you naturally want to venture out more and more. It is fun to see how other people are having similar sensations. It reinforces and clarifies. You can sense-check your own ideas against others' without having to 'fall off'. That's why we use the anonymised interactive service. You'll gain more and more confidence in articulating and identifying different textures, flavours and aftertastes. It becomes second nature. Like riding a bike? Think Palate-on

Finally we also use a different “framework” to help you here (think of this a bit like “training wheels”)

- For most of our senses and experiences we’ve developed standardised criteria and scientific measurements. Time has minutes, hours, years, etc. Distance has miles (or kilometers). Weight has kilos (or pounds). Sound has decibels (and pitch, rhythm, frequency, tone, etc.) Temperature has Celsius (or Fahrenheit or Kelvin). Colour, since Newton and his prisms, has wavelengths to describe red, yellow and even stuff we can’t see.
- Food and drink are different. They are about flavour, taste and texture. Judgements are a lot more subjective, after all unlike when we see or hear, when we eat and drink we are doing more than "observing". And we are a long way from having standardised criteria and measurements for “taste” (or more specifically for flavour). We don’t have Newton’s light refracting prism to help us describe and define aromas and flavours.
- Disentangling what we enjoy when we drink and eat is incredibly complicated. To quote Professor Barry Smith of London University “.. what we ordinarily call ‘taste’ involves input not just from the tongue, but from touch and smell. .. The experience often described in unisensory terms as ‘taste’ depends on the multi-modal combining of inputs”. By this he means that when we delight (or not) in food it is all about our sense of taste, smell, texture and a few other senses (e.g., spiciness). Untangling these is part of the problem. And part of the fun.
- So to provide a framework, and some vocabulary, we've developed the “Craft Chocolate Great Wave” with Professor Barry Smith, James Hoffmann of Square Mile Coffee and Rebecca Palmer of Corney & Barrow Wines. These three all have years of tasting experience. And they are all very articulate and passionate, and have put in the hours to acquire this fluency -- see here.

## THE “GREAT WAVE” OF CHOCOLATE TASTING





## 2. PRICING OPTIONS & LOGISTICS

### 1. CHOCOLATE KIT OPTIONS

- a. Pair Kit (mainly comprising of taster bars) | £18.95 inc. VAT per person (plus P&P see below)
- b. Family Kit (full-sized bars) | £34.95 inc. VAT per person (plus P&P see below)

### 2. CHOCOLATE AND WINE KIT OPTIONS

- a. Wine and Chocolate - from £49.95 (two wines) to £59.95+ (three wines) -- again, per person (plus P&P see below)
- b. Wine only from £39.95 (three wines) -- again, per person (plus P&P see below)

Note: We can also offer other bespoke options (inclusion of other materials, thank you cards, etc.). Please enquire separately

### 3. OTHER COSTS

- a. The minimum cost of a Private Chocolate or Wine Tasting is £420 inc. VAT
- b. This includes the £120 (inc. VAT) fee for the Private Tasting and the minimum cost of the chocolate which needs to reach £300 (i.e. 16 Pair Kits, or 9 Family Kits)
- c. This fee is to cover upfront administration costs and also covers 1-2 prizes for the quiz. It does not include logistical support, inclusion of extra materials, etc.
- d. Payment is required upfront, and in full, to secure a slot and start to order. If you need to add more recipients (or reduce numbers), we will respond as quickly as we can
- e. Please either pay by bank transfer (no extra costs) or via credit card on the website (a 3% surcharge will be applied)

### 4. ORDERING

- a. We STRONGLY recommend that the individuals place their own orders (with a coupon that discounts the product to zero and can grant free shipping), as this means that they can track delivery, contact their local delivery partner, etc.
- b. If you want to place orders on their behalf, that too is an option. But it may make "chasing" orders more problematic (see shipping below)

### 5. SHIPPING LOGISTICS

- a. For international and domestic corporate tastings we sell the chocolate "ex-warehouse", and then we will separately contract the logistics for international orders. Please note that we cannot unfortunately guarantee delivery times or reliability for international orders; this is contractually between you and the delivery partner
- b. We will do our best to support you but please be aware that once the items leave the warehouse, most post offices insist on talking to the recipient rather than our warehouse
- c. If something goes awry and replacements need to be sent out, claims need to be made, etc. we will do our best to support you. But we will need to charge for new boxes and extra delivery costs may be incurred

### 6. SHIPPING COSTS AND TIMELINES

- a. Within the UK our "baseline" shipping costs £3.95 inc. VAT. via a 2-3 day RM tracked service; this can be upgraded to "next working day", but orders need to be placed

(and paid for) before 11 am the day before and we work here on a “best efforts” basis

- b. Wine and Wine & Chocolate kits require shipping via DPD which costs £7.95 (and is only available for the UK). We CANNOT ship wine outside the UK (although we can advise on wines to be tasted “alongside”)
- c. International shipping costs and timelines vary depending on location. For indicative purposes:
  - i. Mainland Europe starts at £9.95 per box and takes 3-5 working days minimum
  - ii. The US costs £19.95 and takes 5-15 working days on average, and sometimes longer (especially during peak season)
- d. We can arrange for your international orders to be shipped via a number of services including the Royal Mail, DPD and DHL. Please note that for international orders there may sometimes be customs charges and delays

## 7. MECHANICS

- a. We are happy to host tastings on our own Zoom account (we can host up to 400 people)
- b. Alternatively we can work with you to use Google Meets, MS Teams, Webex, etc.
- c. Unless specifically requested (and consents granted) we do NOT record sessions

## 8. OPTIONAL AND SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

- a. Attend a regular public tasting. These are held every Wednesday, and you can sign up via the website (<https://cocoarunners.com/calendar/>) -- attendance is free of charge (if you want a chocolate kit, see here: <https://cocoarunners.com/shop/by/events/virtual-chocolate-tasting/>)
- b. Confirm the number of participants, their locations, which chocolate kits, and date & time of the tasting
- c. Prepay for the above confirmations (either via an online payment link or invoice)
- d. Send the below **template email to invitees** as they will need to order their own kit via our website (alternatively, someone on your end can order each kit). Note: for UK shipments we recommend a minimum of a working week for orders to be placed and delivered, and for international orders this needs to be 2 weeks for Europe and 3-4 weeks for US and ROW.
- e. We can track the usage of your personalised coupon code. This means you can see who has ordered and if you need to do another ‘push’
- f. Ahead of the tasting (typically on the same day), we email all the guests with the Zoom link details

### 3 TEMPLATE EMAIL TO INVITEES

Hi

We'd like to invite you to a Craft Chocolate Tasting on **[insert date]** at **[insert time]**. The session will be held over Zoom, hosted by Cocoa Runners, and ahead of the session you'll need to order your Craft Chocolate Tasting Kit from the Cocoa Runners website.

Please see below for details:

- i) Order your chocolate kit [here](#) and make sure to use the coupon code **[insert coupon code]** at checkout. Please order your chocolate as soon as possible.
- ii) Make sure you also opt for the "**free shipping**" option.
- iii) Once you've ordered the kit - we'll reach out directly with the Zoom link!

Please note: make sure your order is completely FREE before you press "Pay Now".

#### What's Inside the Tasting Kits?

1. There is no gluten, nuts or alcohol included within the selection of bars we send out
2. However two bars do contain milk

In preparation for the tasting, make sure you have a glass of water (and wine or beer) to hand, plus some coffee beans, if you have some around (all will be explained). It would be great if you could bring along a second device too (mobile, tablet etc.)

If you have any questions, please reach out directly to [harmony@navigatorcommerce.com](mailto:harmony@navigatorcommerce.com).

We look forward to seeing you there!

## 4 CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

*“Brilliant and Insightful! Would definitely recommend it, we had a lot of fun!”*

*“Thank you for going **above and beyond on the logistics** and for delivering a very **insightful and engaging session!** We had a wonderful time!”*

*“A really **fun and informative tasting** with a host whose passion and excitement about craft chocolate was infectious.”*

*“What a great idea. A **fantastic way to get together with your company over Zoom**, I would highly recommend.”*

*“**Excellent experience.** There is a saying that every day is a school day, I learned a lot about chocolate production during the tasting. It was informative and delivered with enthusiasm.”*

*“Well done all, super client feedback in my breakout [group], I’m delighted. Please pass on my thanks to anyone and everyone involved in deciding on this as an event- it was terrific.”*

*“It was a very enjoyable experience and now feeling high on chocolate. Greatly appreciated.”*

*“It was brilliant. Creative. Interesting. Social. Informative. Delicious.”*

*“Many thanks for inviting us to the chocolate tasting. Fantastic idea and really enjoyable!”*

*“This week was quite hectic and yesterday I really enjoyed this hour being “now and here”. New energy fulfilled me. When remembering chocolate tasting, I’m still smiling. I really have taken some lessons to learn – up to now I was relying more on % of cocoa and also price. Spencer opened eyes that 85% organic dark chocolate does not mean always what we want to expect. Looking on labels, labels, labels.*

*“The presenter certainly knows “chocolate” and his knowledge sharing was most entertaining and enlightening. Despite my love for chocolate, he certainly highlighted my lack of familiarity of what goes into a making a good chocolate.”*

*“Thank you for the invite to a memorable event which was very entertaining. It was definitely an interesting hour of indulging in excellent chocolate.”*





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**EXAMPLE OF FAMILY BOX (£34.95) -- note contents may vary!**



**EXAMPLE OF COUPLE BOX (£18.95) -- note contents may vary!**

