

Module 0

WELCOME!

0.1 Equipment & Tools



1 Read carefully the list of ingredients and equipment you will need throughout the course. If there are any ingredients or tools that you can't find, talk to your instructor so she can help you to find alternatives.

Here are the fundamental tools you will need in this course to make all kinds of chocolate confections successfully. I share with you below some of the brands I personally use, as a reference.

If you have any problems or doubts about how to find something, talk to your instructor. She will provide a solution and/or a possible alternative.

- **High-speed blender** - It's basically a powerful professional blender. It works by creating a vortex in which food is crushed until the desired consistency is obtained.

We will use the blender to make plant-based milk, cream, caramels, bonbon fillings, and so on. It's an indispensable tool to make raw sweets, since it allows us to obtain smooth and creamy consistencies.

** I personally use **Blendtec**. The jars have thick, blunt blades, which rotate at more than 300 mph to pulverize food. They are also really easy to clean. This blender comes with jars of different sizes, which are especially useful for small quantities or when there is just a little liquid. The twister jar is the one I use most.*

- **Food processor** - The motor of a food processor is usually not as powerful as that of a blender, but the very sharp blades quickly chop, slice and shred food. Generally speaking, unless we are working with large quantities, the mini-size food processor is enough for most of the recipes. I use it mainly to pulverize nuts or seeds, make nut butters and occasionally to blend thick mixtures (e.g. truffles or fudges).

** My food processor is **Kitchen Aid**, but you can find many other quality brands such as **Cuisinart** or **Magimix**, among others.*

- **Electric whisk** - Although it can be used to whip creams (e.g. coconut) or knead doughs, I use an electric whisk (or hand-held mixer) basically to whip aquafaba (liquid obtained from cooked legumes). In this course, you'll use it only in one recipe (chocolate mousse), so you need not buy one if you don't find it necessary. You can always use a hand whisk instead.

** I have the basic model from **Kitchen Aid**.*

- **Small hand whisk** - Very useful to mix liquids and doughs in small quantities.
- **Digital thermometer** - A good kitchen thermometer is essential for tempering chocolate. There are 2 types: probe and laser. Whichever you choose, it should have a digital display. Both types are widely available, so it is a matter of personal preference. With both types of thermometers, you'll need to stir the chocolate constantly to ensure an accurate reading.

** I personally use a rubber spatula with a thermometer incorporated from **Silikomart**.*

- **Digital scale** - In order to temper chocolate successfully, you need to measure ingredients precisely. A scale with a 500 g capacity and a resolution of 0.1 g is sufficient.
- **Measuring cups and spoons** - Although they are less reliable than a digital scale, they are useful for measuring ingredients by volume instead of weight. The proper way to use them is to fill them to the brim, then level off with a spatula. This will ensure you always obtain an exact and consistent measurement.

- **Offset spatulas** - A staple in my kitchen, their shape makes these spatulas very useful for spreading batters or frostings. They are also used to flatten the tops of molds, spread chocolate evenly, and remove the excess easily. I recommend that you have at least one small offset spatula, because you'll use it in many recipes (not just with chocolate).

** All my metal spatulas are from **Ateco** (available online and in specialized stores).*

- **Scrapers** - They are mainly used for removing excess chocolate from polycarbonate molds and clearing one's worktop. I recommend that you use a metal scraper, which will not bend as plastic ones do. They are easy to find online or at hardware stores.
- **Rubber spatulas** - Essential to mix ingredients. Make sure they are 100 % rubber spatulas, are safe to use at high temperatures, and do not have a wooden, metal or plastic handle.
- **Chocolate dipping fork** - This tool is essential for preparing dipped chocolate confections neatly and easily. The tines of a dipping fork are long and thin, to gently submerge the confection for a precise result.
- **Bowls** - Metal bowls are handy for mixing ingredients, but silicone or glass bowls are best for tempering chocolate because they won't heat up as much. Have a few different sizes on hand, and make sure you have at least one bowl larger than your saucepan so it doesn't touch the simmering water. This is the bowl you'll use to temper chocolate using the double-boiler method.

** The silicone bowl I use is from **Silikomart**.*

- **Air-tight glass jars and containers** - I recommend that you use air-tight glass jars and containers instead of plastic to store your food, because ingredients will last longer. Glass is also easier to clean, won't discolor, lasts longer and is reusable.

** I use **Weck** containers. They come in all shapes and sizes.*

- **Baking pans** - Especially when working with silicone molds, it's important to have flat, pans to set your molds on in case of spills.
- **Parchment paper** - Apart from baking, parchment paper is very useful for lining up your molds to facilitate the unmolding process. Parchment is also useful if you don't have a mold for chocolate bars: simply spread the chocolate in a pan lined with the paper and make a bark instead. Just keep in mind that the finish of your chocolate will be matte (for glossy finishes, you need to use silicone or acetate transfer sheets).
- **Strainer or chinois** - It is used to sift flours or strain very thin mixtures. I also recommend that you get a small mesh tea strainer to sprinkle cacao or matcha tea when decorating your desserts.
- **Nut milk bags** - Typically made of nylon, they are mainly used to strain your nut milk, in order to remove any remaining pulp or fiber. They are also useful for making cheese like ricotta.
- **Pastry bags** - I recommend reusable bags, as they are more resistant and will help reduce plastic usage. They are lined with plastic and are very easy to clean. You might want to have at least two. They come in different sizes, but I'd recommend getting the ones that are at least 30 cm long.
- **Piping tips** - For this course you'll only need a round plain tip. However, if you make desserts often it's good to have a few in different sizes and shapes. One closed and one open star piping tip is necessary to make simple but impressive decorations. I also recommend that you get a small brush to clean the tips and a coupler to change bags.

** Most of my tips and pastry bags are from **Ateco**, and they are available online.*

- **Sealed boxes** - This is optional, but on the recipe videos you will see that in order to avoid single-use plastics, instead of wrap I use small boxes to store my molds in the fridge or freezer.

** I have different sizes from **Ikea**, but you can find similar ones at any hardware store.*

- **Decorating tweezers** - Although they are not essential, tweezers are very useful for placing small and delicate decorations such as flowers, herbs or micro greens on top of your desserts.
- **Molds for tarts and other confections** - In this course, you'll need at least one 10 cm and one 16-18 cm square mold that you'll use to make a fudge, a brownie and caramel bars. You can choose either metal or silicone molds. Silicone is my personal choice since the molds are lighter, easy to store and especially non-stick, for effortless unmolding.

** All my molds are from the Italian brand **Silikomart**, which is number one in the market.*

- **Molds for chocolate** - Polycarbonate and silicone are the two main types of material used for commercial chocolate molds. I recommend that you have at least one of each (polycarbonate for bonbons and silicone for chocolate tablets or bars)

- **Polycarbonate:** These molds are solid and essential for making bonbons. The benefit of using polycarbonate molds is that the chocolate is released very easily if it has been correctly tempered.
- **Silicone:** Although polycarbonate molds are better for making bonbons, silicone molds are great for items such as chocolate bars.

Cheaper molds such as those made with thin plastic are to be avoided, because the plastic warps easily and they are also prone to scratches, which will result in inconsistencies in your chocolate.

** Once again, all my silicone molds are from **Silikomart**.*

0.2 Pantry Building

These are all the basic ingredients you will need for this course. In addition, I suggest certain other ingredients that you may wish to experiment with, but which we won't be using during this particular course.

When building your pantry it's important that you prepare your shopping list in advance:

- **For dry ingredients** - Bulk shopping is the most cost- and time-efficient way to procure dry ingredients. By purchasing large quantities, you reduce unnecessary packaging and plastic waste. Also, you will usually get better prices than if you buy packaged or canned ingredients.
- **For fresh ingredients** - The best approach is to wait and shop for them at the last minute, so that they are as fresh as possible.

Dry Ingredients

All quantities are approximate and are rounded up to the next unit to be on the safe side, to ensure that you have enough of all of them.

Whenever possible, my recommendation is to buy high-quality, organic and raw (not toasted) ingredients. That way they'll keep the highest nutritional value.

Cacao

- Raw cacao butter · 1 kg
- Raw cacao paste/liquor · 1 kg
- Raw cacao powder · 500 g
- Raw cacao nibs · 100 g

Nuts & seeds

- Cashews · 750 g
- Almonds · 500 g
- Hazelnuts · 500 g
- Walnuts · 300 g
- Peanuts · 250 g
- Pecan nuts · 200 g
- Macadamia nuts · 150 g
- Pistachios · 100 g
- Sesame seeds (white and/or black) · 50 g

Sweeteners

- Maple syrup · 1 l
- Coconut sugar · 400 g
- Runny raw honey (optional) · 350 ml
- Coconut nectar · 250 ml
- Medjool dates · 30 unidades
- Pure maple butter (if you can't find it, it can be replaced by maple syrup) · 50 ml

Optional: date syrup, yacon syrup, monk fruit, maple sugar, date sugar

Salt & spices

- Pink Himalayan salt
- Maldon sea-salt flakes
- Garam Masala
- Cardamom
- Ceylon cinnamon
- Saffron threads

Oils & extracts

- Extra-virgin coconut oil - 250 ml
- Extra-virgin olive oil (EVOO) - 200 ml
- Raw coconut butter - 50 ml
- Pure vanilla extract - 60 ml (bottle of 2 fluid ounces)
- Vanilla beans - at least 1 bean
- Orange essential oil - 15 ml (bottle of 0,51 fluid ounces)
- Lemon essential oil - 15 ml (bottle of 0,51 fluid ounces)
- Rose water - 15 ml (0,51 fluid ounces)

Optional: essential oils such as lavender, yuzu, peppermint...



When buying vanilla extract or paste, be sure to read the label very carefully, because refined sugar is added to most brands. If you cannot find a good brand, I recommend that you use the seeds of the beans instead.

Superfoods & others

I recommend that you to buy 1 small packet of each of the following ingredients:

- Matcha powder (ceremonial grade)
- Lucuma
- Maca
- Bee pollen (or dried mulberries for the vegan option)
- Sweet miso (white)
- Tamari
- Tahini
- Peanut butter (or peanuts to make it yourself)
- Gluten-free oat flour (or oat flakes to make it yourself)
- Shredded coconut
- Espresso coffee
- Canned organic and unsalted chickpeas (for aquafaba)
- Full-fat coconut milk (50 % coconut and water)
- Freeze-dried or dehydrated raspberries

Optional: mesquite, chia seeds, hemp seeds, dried petals, edible gold leaf...

Fresh Ingredients

- Ginger: 1 root of approximately 60 g
- Rosemary: 2 sprigs
- Avocado (ripe): 1 unit
- Lemon: 1 unit
- Raspberries: 200 g
- Physalis: 4 units