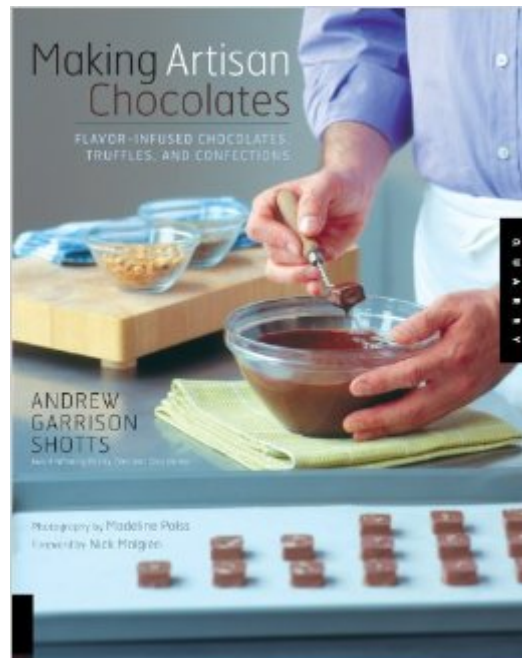


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# Making Artisan Chocolates



## Synopsis

Forget milk chocolate molded into childish candy bars. Today's chocolate candies use chocolates with high cocoa content and less sugar than previously available and are molded into highly decorated pieces of art. Once only accessible to pastry chefs and candy makers, home cooks can now purchase high-end domestic and imported chocolates in their local specialty stores. The recent availability of bittersweet chocolates coupled with our access to a global food market and unique ingredients has created an increased interest in artisanal chocolates. Drew Shotts has been at the forefront of this renaissance because of his daring use of unique flavor combinations not typically associated with chocolates, such as chili peppers, maple syrup, and spiced chai tea. *Making Artisan Chocolates* shows readers how to recreate Drew's unexpected flavors at home through the use of herbs, flowers, chilies, spices, vegetables, fruits, dairies and liquors.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Andrew Shotts is as good of an author as he is a pastry chef (he was named Pastry Arts and Design top10 some year or other). This is a great book, aimed at intermediate or higher pastry chefs. This book does require some specialized equipment to do the fancier techniques (dipping fork, molds, transfer sheets). But even without any specialized equipment, you can make any of the chocolate candies in the book. Contents include the following topics: chocolate basics and flavor pairings, including pairings with traditional flavors and non-traditional spices. About ~35 chocolate recipes. Recipes include standard classics like classic dark, classic milk, hazelnut praline. Recipes also include classic flavors (but maybe not classic pairings) like peanut butter+jam, and banana

caramel. Finally there are non-traditional spice pairings like habanero+peanut butter, raspberry-wasabi, and mango-mint-coriander. Techniques are where I think the book really shines. The book has excellent pictures and descriptions of making truffles, making molded chocolates, and making hand-dipped chocolates. Shotts shows the technique of airbrushing as well as how to use transfer sheets and luster or razzle dust. He does a good job of scaling down the equipment for the non professional. For instance when showing hand-dipped chocolates, he uses a baking pan + saran wrap + knife instead of sheet + frame + cutting guitar. After reading this book, you can go into any chocolate shop and say "I know how they did that technique". Surprisingly, Shotts never mentions tempering machines. Finally, there is a book that shows all the techniques that professionals use.

I have dabbled in chocolate making before, focusing my efforts predominantly on rolled truffles. I got this book because I wanted to learn more advanced techniques, especially related to making molded rather than rolled truffles, and because I wanted more interesting recipes. I'd been getting a lot of my previous recipes from the internet, but they seemed more basic and straightforward and I was looking for more fusion and unusual recipes. I was pleased when I received this book because it delivered in both areas. On the technique side, there is a very thorough body of content here. What's great about it is that it really dives into everything from melting points of different types and brands of chocolate to tools and equipment to basic construction techniques. As a home cook I appreciate that he was able to give such detailed information without coming across as pretentious. He makes it very user friendly to chocolate makers of all levels. One complaint could be that some of the items these recipes require are more specialty items, but they are not always necessary and can be easily purchased online. One of the ingredients I find often called for is Cocoa Butter, which I couldn't find in local stores but found easily online. I have found that after some google searching it is easy to find professional chocolate making tools that can easily be purchased by a home cook. The recipes he provides are also fantastic. They range from more classical recipes like a salted caramel-filled truffle that was absolutely fantastic, to more creative combinations like peanut butter and jelly and lemongrass-coconut. With such a wide range of flavor combinations you are sure to find recipes that speak to different flavor palettes.

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