

# Timeline of Ecuadorian Cacao and Chocolate

21,000 B.C.

Cacao existed in the Amazon long before the last Ice Age



3912 B.C.

Oldest traces of cacao consumption found in Mexico



16th Century

Hernán Cortés conquered the Aztec Empire for Spain and discovered Mayan style chocolate



5330 B.C.

First traces of the domestication and consumption of cacao in the Ecuadorian Amazon



13th Century

The Aztecs inherit their taste for chocolate from their predecessors, the Mayas



1889

Opening of La Universal, the oldest chocolate factory in Guayaquil

1860-1930

Ecuador becomes the world's largest producer of cacao, known as the Great Cacao Era

Europe's Industrial Revolution prompts the mass production of chocolate

1840

The consumption of chocolate both as a drink and as a medicine spreads throughout Europe

17th Century

20th Century

Chocolate manufacturing is industrialized producing commercial chocolate with global brands controlling the world market.



1870

The *mélanger* and milk chocolate are invented in Switzerland



A hydraulic press is invented for extracting cocoa powder and cocoa butter from the beans

1820



1960 to 1970

Several cacao processing plants begin operation in Guayaquil, Ecuador

2000

New market demands and food trends, such as organic and raw foods, influence the world of chocolate as selective consumers begin seeking for higher cacao content, alongside traceability of origin, and transparency in processes.

1937

Bios chocolate factory opens its doors in Quito; the firm is established by Romanian chocolate makers escaping Nazi persecution

2005

New local brands of chocolate are founded, in an effort to add value to the cacao beans within a cacao producing country, in this case Ecuador, along with a resurgence in cacao farming due to higher demand.