

Chocolate Chomtdown: Impossible chocolate eating competition

Description



Impossible chocolate eating competition will debut in Portland

How much chocolate can you eat in a single sitting? An average 1.5-ounce bar? Maybe a couple of bars? A few before getting sick?

A new eating competition, Woodblock Chocolate's own Chocolate Chomtdown, is coming to [ChocolateFest](#) in Portland, asking competitors to eat a whopping 26 ounces of chocolate in five minutes. Although, as chocolate maker and competition organizer Charley Wheelock admitted, nobody's actually expected to succeed.

â€œI would be impressed if somebody eats 10 ounces,â€ Wheelock said. That would be 10 ounces from one of Woodblock's 26-ounce â€œbig and tallâ€ bars, a massive delicacy that usually retails at \$50, meant to savor over months or split among a dozen friends.

Instead, five pre-selected contestants â€“ including selmerier Mark Bitterman and chocolate maker Sarah Hart â€“ will have five minutes to eat as much of the big and tall bar as they can. Judges will weigh the remains, awarding the winner with an edible chocolate trophy and the title of â€œChocolate Eating Champion of the World.â€

(That title sounds a little grandiose for an inaugural competition featuring five handpicked contestants, but Wheelock seemed unconcerned: â€œUnless someone disputes it, the title stands.â€)

OK, 26 ounces sounds like a lot, but this is chocolate we're talking about, not hot wings. How hard can it really be?

To put it in comparison, let's turn to Guinness World Records, who has a record for the most chocolate bars consumed in one minute — currently standing at three (set by Pat Bertoletti and Joey Chestnut in 2010). If you take the minimum bar weight for the record, 1.73 ounces, multiply it by three bars per minute and again by five minutes for the Woodblock challenge, you come to 25.95 ounces over five minutes — amazingly close to the 26 ounces used for the challenge.

But what the math doesn't represent is the arduous experience of eating so much chocolate at once — the aspect that sets the Chomtdown apart from all other chocolate eating competitions.

It's more of a mechanical problem, Wheelock explained. "Once your mouth gets coated with cocoa butter, it gets thick."

It takes heat to melt the thick fats in the chocolate, so drinking cold water only helps solidify it, he said. So even if you don't get tired of the taste, you might have trouble physically eating very much of it.

Setting the bar so high offers an intriguing challenge that could turn the Chocolate Chomtdown into an annual tradition — especially if Wheelock opens it up to the general public.

Instead, the chocolate maker first turned to local celebrities — Portland Mayor Charlie Hales and singer Storm Large turned him down; "they're chickens," he said — and ultimately to friends and colleagues in the industry.

With them onstage, he plans on turning the inaugural Chomtdown into a spectacle. He's even bringing in a Taiko drumming band, who he said is constructing a heart-pumping five-minute composition for the contest. He wanted a confetti cannon, but said the organizers of [ChocolateFest](#) drew the line.

It's worth noting that his chocolate eating competition will be just one part of the three-day [ChocolateFest](#) event, a fundraiser for the World Forestry Center that offers samples of some of the best chocolate in the Pacific Northwest.

Wheelock is hopeful that the Chocolate Chomtdown will help get [ChocolateFest](#) some more attention, bringing more awareness to the overall chocolate scene in Portland.

"We're proud of the chocolate in this town," he said. "It's going to be quite a show."

[Jamie Hale](#)

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Date Created

January 20, 2015

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