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America's love affair with chocolate began in the early 20th century. Though it had been around for thousands of years, it was not readily available to average people before the Industrial Revolution. When the Hershey's Milk Chocolate Bar was introduced in 1900, it ushered in a golden age of chocolate candy production and consumption in America. Tens of thousands of new candy bars were introduced in the first half of the new century.

Chocolate is easily America's favorite flavor, which is why we consume billions of pounds, 3.3 billion to be exact, each year. That averages out to just under 12 pounds of chocolate for each man, woman, or child. All that sugar might not be good for our teeth, but new research has shown that chocolate has anti-oxidants that may lower the risk of heart disease and certain types of cancer.

What do we like?

Most of us prefer milk chocolate, which may explain why the Hershey's Bar has been popular for over a century now. We also like other ingredients, like caramel, peanuts, almonds, and nougat mixed with our chocolate. In this article we will review a quintet of chocolate-based candy bars that have stood the test of time.

The Hershey's Milk Chocolate Bar

For most of its history, Hershey's has promoted its top product as "The Great American Chocolate Bar." Few critics would argue with that assessment. Though tastes are subjective, the enduring popularity of the Hershey's bar cannot be questioned. Part of the appeal has always been the Hershey chocolate process, which allowed them to make their chocolate for less than the competition. In addition to the original milk chocolate bar, they now offers a variety of flavors, including Special Dark Chocolate, Cookie Dough Crème, Milk Chocolate with Almonds, Krackel, and Goodbar. All of these flavors are sold around the globe.

Charleston Chew

Named for a popular dance, (not for the city), Charleston Chew was one of the first candy bars that did not feature chocolate as its primary ingredient. The inside of the bar is filled with flavored nougat, which is then covered in a chocolate coating. Charleston chew was one of the top-selling candies of the 1950s and it can still be found on supermarket shelves. In addition to the original vanilla filling, the company added chocolate and strawberry flavors. Their latest variation is the bite-sized versions, which are sold in boxes, rather than in wrappers. They are quite popular at movie theaters and on Halloween.

Sky Bar

Arguably the least celebrated entry on our list, the Sky Bar was introduced way back in 1938. The concept behind it was a bit more sophisticated than most of its predecessors. Each Sky Bar has four separate sections, each of which contained a different filling: fudge, caramel, peanut, or vanilla. It was then covered in milk chocolate and wrapped up. The Sky Bar was the first chocolate bar that had more than one filling. Though it is still produced by its originator (Necco), the Sky Bar has grown increasingly hard to find in recent years. Some online candy stores sell them by the box.

Bosco Milk Chocolate Bar

A popular maker of chocolate syrup, it took Bosco more than seven decades to finally introduce its first chocolate bar. Why so long? Beats us! Their syrup was first produced in 1928 and has been a top seller ever since. The Bosco Milk Chocolate Bar was introduced in 2010! Although it is sure to attract fans of the iconic brand, the company is not offering the bar on a national scale. In fact, they are promoting it as a special limited edition collectorâ€™s series. The best place to find the Bosco Milk Chocolate Bar is on the internet.

Tootsie Roll

Yes, we knowâ€¦the Tootsie Roll is not actually a candy bar, although it is chocolate. The candy, which is sold in a variety of flavors and sizes, is the bestselling chewy chocolate in the United States, and has been for quite some time. They are sold individually and in large bags and bulk quantities. According to the companyâ€™s websites, more than 64 million Tootsie Rolls are made and packaged each day! Larger Tootsie rolls resemble candy bars, but are shaped in more of a log form with precut segments that allow for easy, or easier, chewing.

Online candy stores offer nostalgic and hard-to-find candies at affordable prices. Customers can save bucks if they purchase boxes or candy in bulk quantities.

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