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The Chocolate Fantasy (reading – 6.6. - 12.6.)

by: **Kadence Buchanan**

Chocolate is produced from the beans of the cacao tree, which originated in South America, and now grows in Africa, the West Indies, the tropical parts of America, and the Far West. Used as the main ingredient in numerous recipes, chocolate constitutes one of the most loved materials known in today's food world. Children and adults both appreciate chocolate's unique aroma, taste, color and texture and prefer it in comparison to other foods.

The cocoa beans, from which chocolate is produced, are large pods. Once harvested, both the pulp from the pods and the bean are allowed to ferment in the sun. The pulp evaporates and the bean develops its chocolaty flavor. Later, the outer skin is removed and the beans are left in the sun for a little longer or they are roasted. Finally they are shelled and the kernels are used for making cocoa and chocolate.

Chocolate once purchased has to be stored in a cool, dry place, away from heat or direct sunlight. Most chocolate can be stored for about a year. When it is stored in the refrigerator or freezer, chocolate can last even longer, but one should be careful with its wrapping as it might pick up flavors from other foods if not properly handled.

If you enjoy using chocolate in your meals, you have to be aware that it should not be melted over direct heat, except when melted with other ingredients, and even then heat should be very low. For easily melting chocolate, begin by breaking it into smaller equal-sized pieces (chunks) of chocolate and placing them into a heat-proof bowl or pot. Then you should place the bowl or pot over a pan of hot water, making sure the base of the bowl is not in direct contact with the boiling water. Once the chocolate starts to melt, stir gently and if necessary leave over the water a little longer. No drops of water or steam should come into contact with the melted chocolate at any time as it will solidify.

After your chocolate is melted, you can use it to create anything, from chocolate cookies and treats to cakes and beautiful decorations. Keep in mind that chocolate sets best at 65° F although it will set, more slowly, in a slightly hotter room. Finally, be careful when you place chocolate into the refrigerator especially after the melting process, as it might develop a white bloom.

About The Author

Kadence Buchanan writes articles for <http://inutritioncentral.com/> - In addition, Kadence also writes articles for <http://foodandourlives.com/> and <http://universeofbeauty.net/>.





Everything You Wanted to Know about Bordeaux Wine Tours (reading – 13.6. - 19.6.) by: **Terry Roberts**

When thinking about a vacation in France, there is always the image of going on one of the many delightful, relaxing and wonderfully delicious Bordeaux wine tours. The Bordeaux region of France has long been known for the amazing wines it has produced - and continues to produce. The Bordeaux region was divided into four wine producing areas by Emperor Napoleon III in 1855, and each area produces a unique and distinctive type of wine. Since the region of Bordeaux is relatively small, it is possible, with some planning, to tour each of the regions and sample the amazing qualities of wines produced in the area.

Most wines on the Bordeaux wine tours will be reds, but with constant pressure from other wine growing countries, the French vineyards and wineries have responded with an ever increasing variety. Today, on a wine tasting tour of the area, participants can expect to sample the traditional full-bodied red wines, together with medium-bodied reds and dry and sweet white wines.

There are many options when considering one of the many Bordeaux wine tours. One of the more popular tours for wine lovers, and those new to wine tasting and enjoyment, includes the harvest tours. These tours allow participants to actually work alongside the grape pickers in the field, helping with the harvest for a brief period of time. Lunch is then served in the fields and is usually a traditional French meal, served, of course, with wonderful wines from the winery. After lunch the tour continues with wine classes, wine tasting and then ends up with dinner in an authentic Bordeaux restaurant. For those that really like to learn about wines and wine making, this is an ideal chance to experience the whole production.

In addition to the harvest tours there are also many other options for Bordeaux wine tours. There is a bicycle wine tour offered through the area that allows participants to experience the countryside in a relaxed and enjoyable way. Everyone will ride bicycles to and from the very centrally located vineyards and wineries, and will also stop for lunch at local restaurants for wonderful traditional fare.

For those that wish to travel in comfort, Bordeaux wine tours have just the options. There are limousine tours that will provide individual or small group wine tastings at various chateaus and wineries within a given area of Bordeaux, or may complete a larger circuit of the various wine houses. There are also large charter bus services that provide guides, instructors and even chefs that can provide ideas for meals that are compatible with the various types of wines found in the Bordeaux area.

About The Author

Terry Roberts is a professional translator and linguist, with a wide range of interests. To read more about wine tours in Bordeaux, and wine tours in general, please visit his website: <http://wine.food-and-beverages.com>.





The Mystery Of An Opal (reading – 20.6. - 26.6.)

by: **Sher Matsen**

There is no other stone that has the mystery of an opal. With its fiery colors and magnificent spectrum of color it draws you in and you are helpless to look away.

Every opal is different. There are no two stones the same. And every stone reflects the light differently depending on its depth and personal characteristics. This stone eludes a mystical aura without even trying.

Opals are extremely popular for jewelry and it's not hard to figure out why due to such a beautiful array of color. Soft and feminine yet fierce and bold.

Opal has the honors of being October's birthstone. Back to ancient times it has been associated with magical qualities. It was believed to bring both good and bad luck. Some cultures used opals in white magic and believed they brought good fortune. Other cultures considered them a third eye that would allow you to tell the future.

Opals are a semi precious stones but a black opal can cost as much as a diamond. The amount of fire in the opal and where it comes from will determine the price. Pale opals can be purchased quite cheaply but the more fiery or red the more expensive the opals become.

Opal jewelry comes in a variety of style and is set in both gold and sterling silver. Sometimes you'll see triplet or stacked opals, other times they are set solitaire. They also come in a variety of different cuts.

There are several types of opals:

The fire opal is probably the most popular. It is translucent with fiery orange and red flecks. The colors are vivid and intoxicating. This opal is sometimes called the Mexican opal or the Cherry opal.

The white opal is an opaque milky white with light flashes of rainbow colors.

The boulder opal is a natural solid opal with a fine layer of opal deposited on an iron base.

The water or jelly opal is colorless and transparent and has no color play.

The crystal opal is also transparent, but display a rainbow of color. It is so transparent you can see through it on a light surface.

The Mosaic opal is just what it says. Small irregular pieces of opal tightly fit together. It's a great way to use chips and is very affordable.

The opal doublet is made of sliced layers of natural opal that is too thin to be used in a single set. It is bonded and set on black glass or ironstone which enhances its color. The doublet opal is much cheaper because you are buying less true opal.

Synthetic opals are created in a lab and although they basically have the same properties as a natural opal by law the jeweler must tell you if it is a synthetic stone.

Contrary to what you hear opals are no more difficult to take care of than other stones. You should not knock or bang them and you should keep them out of direct sunlight or heat.

One thing you need to know is that opals cannot be cleaned in commercial jewelry cleaner or any other harsh chemical solution. Rather use a soft brush and water with a dab of vinegar, then rinse thoroughly.

Water will not hurt your opal unless it is a doublet or triplet then it should not be immersed in water. Solid stones are fine. See that's not so difficult.

So the next time an opal draws you in and wants to go home with you why not add this beautiful mysterious stone to your jewelry collection. Only then will you experience the mystery of the opal.

About The Author

Sher Matsen from Estate Jewelry International has been serving customers for over 20 years, providing fashion, jewelry, and wedding help. Please visit us at <http://www.estatejewelryinternational.com/>.



Cosmopolitan Magazine Subscriptions, The History (reading – 27.6. - 3.7.) by: **David Chase**

It's interesting to look back at the origins of Cosmopolitan Magazine, seeing their first subscription numbers (in the 25,000) range, into what it has become now, a modern day success. It's almost amazing how the content has evolved over the years, from a one-time family magazine back in the late 19th century, to what it is now, a demographic exclusive to females. Just look at the cover art:

<http://cosmopolitan.magazinepromotion.com>

Before cosmopolitan magazine experienced worldwide success, the initial founders and editors (Schlicht & Field) went out of business only 2 years after the company's launch. Only after E.D. Walker, an ex editor for Harper's Monthly purchased the rights to Cosmopolitan magazine did the business really take off. He didn't settle for the old way of doing things, with an innovative sense he introduced book reviews, serial fiction, and color illustrations to the magazine.

Only 1 year later after Cosmopolitan's booming popularity, E.D. Walker sold the company to John Brisben Walker, who quickly employed some of the nation's top writers. He went on to open a free correspondence school, which he had to retract almost immediately after only 2 weeks, more than 20,000 people signed up.

Cosmopolitan magazine was later sold to William Randolph Hearst in 1905. He began to expand the magazine by employing top writers, and investigative journalists. Some of the best articles written came from the recruiting sense of William Hearst, he employed Alfred Henry Lewis, David Graham Philips, Ida Tarbell, Upton Sinclair, Sinclair Lewis and George Bernard Shaw, whom all went on to write some of the

most famous articles of their time.

As decades past, the magazine changed from strictly articles to short novels and stories, sales soared (1.7 Million copies in circulation) and over 5 million in advertising revenues in 1930. Cosmopolitan magazine proved to be an unbelievable success, after the Second World War magazine sales topped the 2 million mark. Unfortunately demand for the magazines content decreased in the 50s, circulation numbers crippled to just over a million, despite the reduced revenue cosmopolitan magazine subscriptions were still a profitable venture, even today Cosmopolitan is one of the most subscribed to magazines in the world.

About The Author

You can find more current information on cosmopolitan magazine and subscription offers here: <http://cosmopolitan.magazinepromotion.com>.

