TAN BUN SKRATI

# newsletter September 2018

**Harvest season**

At the time of issuing this newsletter the main harvest of 2018 is coming to an end. The harvest has been exceptionally good. In all gardens the trees gave more cacao pods than usual. From January to June we had already harvested more than during the whole of 2017. The smaller harvest at the end of the year still has to come. Provided that the current dry season doesn't last too long, this late harvest promises to be a good one too. Many trees are already again bearing cherelles, the young cacao pods.

During the harvest peak in April and May a lot of our attention went into the post-harvesting of fermenting and drying the beans. As a result, we were forced to produce bars at a lower pitch



*photo: Tan Bun Skrati*

**New! Cacao beans and nibs / Cacao tea in new resealable packaging**




*photo: Tan Bun Skrati*

Chocolate is made of cacao beans. When you crack a roasted bean, the shell comes off as husk and the bean breaks in little brittle pieces called cacao nibs. We've been selling the husk as cacao tea for quite a while. From now on the cacao beans and cacao nibs are also available. These can be enjoyed as a healthy snack. The nibs can be used to make a tasty topping on for example yoghurt and ice-cream or to lend bite to a fruit salad. With both beans and nibs you can make your own cup of skrati, the traditional Surinamese hot chocolate as well. How-to-prepare instructions for this DIY skrati can be found on the back-of-pack information. In beans and nibs the rich Trinitario flavour profile – with nutty, fruity, floral and spicy notes – can be tasted in its purest form.

We've seized the occasion to give the cacao tea a make-over. The cacao husk now comes packed in the same convenient, resealable standing pouch bags as the beans and nibs. So no more hassle with opened half-used bags when you don't use all tea in one session.

From September 1 the new products are available at Body in Balance in the Nassylaan 75 (Parmaribo Center) and during weekends at the Clevia Park Market in Paramaribo North. But do ask your regular Tan Bun Skrati seller for them too, so we'll be supplying them in the near future too ☺

**Booklet on cacao in the 'Suriname Informatie' series**

Recently no. 20 of the 'Suriname Informatie' series, about cultivation of cacao in Suriname was published. In it author Jan Veltkamp discusses the history of the cultivation and processing of the crop in Suriname from the late 17th century to the present day situation. Special is the extensive coverage of the so far little known attempt of reviving the cacao cultivation on a large scale following World War II. Thousands and thousands of trees were propagated from leaf cuttings in the so called cacao-pépinière that was built to this end in the Cultuurtuin Paramaribo (see photo). The local craft and cottage industry of skrati making also receives attention. Beans were coarsely ground for the locally consumed hot chocolate. As can be gathered from a 1927 handbill for S.M.T. chocolate, the skrati in these days was checked for purity by the military pharmacist.




The booklet (in Dutch only) can be bought in Suriname at the bookstores and at Tan Bun Skrati. In the Netherlands and for the rest of the world it can be purchased through the author via veltmak@xs4all.nl



*photo: NMVW-collectie*




*photo: Ricardo Liong-A-Kong*

**Surinamese cacao in Zeeland and the Zaan Region: new resellers in Zaandijk and Middelburg**

From the beginning of cacao cultivation on plantations in the late 17th century untill mid 18th century a large part of the crop was shipped as dried beans to Zeeland. There the beans were further processed in to cacao blocks, that – just like the skrati in Suriname – had to be dissolved in hot water or hot milk to become a cacao drink. With the development of more efficient cacao butter presses and the invention of alkalization it became possible to produce chocolate bars that were edible from the hand. The drinking chocolate from Zeeland then lost in popularity. More and more the center of cacao processing in the Netherlands shifted to the Zaan Region north of Amsterdam. Cacao from Suriname played a vital role in the emerging of the cacao-industry of thát region too. In the beginning the processing, as in Zeeland, was done in windmills. Later it took place in factories.





*photo's: Smells like chocolate*

Last spring Ingmar Niezen and her partner Kinito Van Dunem opened *Smells like chocolate* in the village of Zaandijk. Their cacao/chocolate concept store can be found in the tiny wooden house on the Lagedijk 14, right next to windmill 'De Bleeke Dood' (The Pale Death). Among others they offer cacao beer, cacao cheese and handmade paper with cacao husk. And chocolate of course. Loads of chocolate. Aside from locally produced bars they also sell the tree-to-bar chocolate from Tan Bun Skrati.

More information about *Smells like chocolate* can be found on their website and facebookpage.

Another place where you can indulge in single origin chocolate is Sjakie's Chocolate Museum in the town of Middelburg. Tan Bun Skrati's Surinamese chocolate should not be missed in the assortment of the museum shop, which holds more than 400 chocolates by makers from all over the world. Besides the chocolate museum the monumental building 'Huis 's Hertogenbosch' at the Vlasmarkt also houses Sjakie's art gallery with monthly new exhibitions, Sjakie's rose garden and Sjakie's candy store! Keep an eye on Sjakie's facebookpage for updates on chocolate-related events. You don't have to enter the museum to get to the chocolate goodies, the museum has a seperate etrance.



*photo's: Sjakie's Chocolademuseum*

**Short documentary "De erfenis van de slavernij" (The heritage of slavery)**
On the occasion of celebrating the abolition of slavery in Suriname 155 years ago, filmmaker Kevin Headley made a short documentary on the heritage of slavery. In a series of short interviews the filmmaker is on a trail looking for positive ways of dealing with the heritage of slavery. Some of the topics addressed are tourism, coffee, skrati, koto's and social mobility.

On July 1 the documentary was televised. It can now be watched online too. Unfortunately it is in Dutch. English subs are as of yet still in the making. The Tan Bun Skrati feature starts at the 7:57 minute mark.



*foto: Kevin Headley*

**Skrati recipe: Kit-Ling Tjon Pian Gi's healthy cookies**
Easy to make, healthy oatmeal/banana/chocolate-cookies are what Kit-Ling Tjon Pian Gi made using the 100% chocolate bar. Here's her recipe:

Ingredients:
* 3 bananas (pen'peni, well ripened)
* 1/3 cup coconut oil (cold pressed)
* 2 cups Quaker Oats (fast cooking)
* 1 bar Tan Bun Skrati (chopped in cubes)
* 1 teaspoon vanilla essence

How to make:
* Squash the bananas * Mix all ingredients / add skrati last * Bake in a pre-heated oven for 30 to 45 minutes at 180 degrees Celsius (356 degrees Fahrenheit) * Let's eat!




Do you have a recipe using our chocolate too? Let us know. We'd love to hear it!





*photo's: Kit-Ling Tjong Pian Gi*

***If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, just respond to the email with a "NO" and we'll stop the dispatch.***

A complete and up-to-date summary of our points of sale can be found here. Before going to the store, we advise to first inquire about availability of stock.

Every Thursday and Friday we open our workshop to host workshops.

Via the facebookpage you can follow us closely.  Like us to stay in the loop!


TAN BUN SKRATI

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