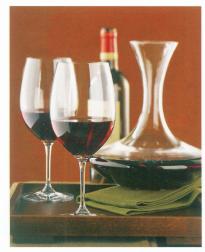
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Our Editors Share Their Favorite Wines, Restaurants and More

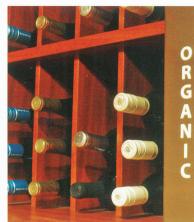












OREGON: 250 WINES RATE 90+

DISCOVER NEW YORK'S FINGER LAKES

THE BEST RARE WHISKIES

CHOCOLATE FOR VALENTINE'S DAY

Candy for Grown-ups

BY OWEN DUGAN

have had in the past 12 months. I've noted each under a flavor category; rich chocolate flavor shows first, followed by a subtle mint hint that these are not rigid, but do give a handy thumbnail. Remember to taste grows until it dominates entirely. A refreshing chocolate. (Note: Quanbeyond your usual favorites though; it's a good holiday for exploration. tities are limited; by the time you read this, he might not still be mak-

SALT: Domori is one of the best Italian producers of single-origin www.patric-chocolate.com; \$7.99 for a 2.3-ounce bar bars. Founder Gianluca Franzoni has done as much as anyone in the business to source distinct cacao and process each variety into a unique bar. The D-Fusion line incorporates a single flavor—spicy peppers or mint—into a bar deemed to have complementary flavors. They are all stimulating the palate and ends up masking the flavors the chocolate good, and give off a lot of aromas when you open the package. My faistrying to broadcast. Dolfin, a Belgian producer, solves the problem by vorite is the milk with Guérande sea salt. The creamy chocolate is fairly using pink peppercorns instead. They have a mild heat—more of an dark for milk, and has tropical fruit notes, with salt cutting the sweet- awakening than an assault—and a floral fruit element that comes out ness and fattiness with a bright, almost savory bite.

www.chocosphere.com; \$4.25 for a 0.88-ounce bar

FRUIT: This producer is a new one to me. Byrne & Carlson makes beautiful bars, but don't hold that against them. The range of offerings produced by this New Hampshire company runs from simple almond-studded bars to florid ones decorated with candied pansies. Break a piece of chocolate free from the toppings and you will find very

Texas. Among the company's outhigh quality, not the middling stuff sometimes used as a vehicle for big put is a range of "truffles" (aladded flavors or decorative confections. And the toppings themselves though I would call them are excellent. The candied fruits are not just sweet, but also have some filled or molded chocoacid, providing a good balance of flavors.

www.byrneandcarlson.com; \$8 for a 4.75-ounce bar

Caramel: Napa-based Woodhouse opened in 2004, two years Cabernet, Merlot and Port, all after founders John and Tracy Anderson sold their S. Anderson Vinesourced from Becker Vineyards. yards and opened this chocolate business with their family. They produce They are balanced; the wine is terrific bonbons and flavored bars, but the chocolate caramels are what I there, but does not dominate. The like best. There is a natural kinship between burnt sugar and chocolate, a chocolate is sweet and certain savoriness they produce in the mouth. Woodhouse works that angle good. Serve these blind. and emphasizes it with a hit of salt from a variety of origins and styles. My www.delysia.com; favorite example is the smoked paprika–salt version, which stays with you \$27 for 2.5 ounces as sweet and toasty flavors turn to spice and linger on the palate. www.woodhousechocolate.com; \$12 for six caramels

COFFEE: Shawn Askinosie was a criminal-defense lawyer who heeded the call of chocolate-making in 2005. The Missouri-based bean-to-bar producer quickly entered the top ranks of fine American chocolatiers with a small range of single-origin bars. He has since teamed up with like-minded small producers to create flavored bars. From the beginning he has touted his farmers, and this coffee bar, from his CollaBARation line, is no different. The dark chocolate comes from Peter Cruz, a farmer in the Philippines, and is rich and surprisingly creamy. Intelligentsia, comes from Oaxaca, Mexico (though the origin may change due to availability). It is a bold, delicious bar.

www.askinosie.com; \$9 for a 3-ounce bar

Tor Valentine's Day I usually step away from serious bean-to-bar

HERBS: Shawn McClure started his company, Patric, in Missouri around the same time as Askinosie. McClure had hunted down analysis, processing, origin and other vaguely scientific pursuits great chocolate while living in France, and upon returning home nato focus on what this day is all about: pleasure. This year I am ively decided to try to make it himself. Within a couple of years, his providing a collection of some of the best chocolate candies I small company was born. The mint and nib bar is fascinating. A strong, ing this bar. Quality, however, is consistently high.)

SPICE: Chile peppers in chocolate have been in vogue for a few years. They can be quite good, but often the heat goes beyond with the fairly sweet bar. It is quite aromatic; think

