



# Choco Tasting Club

1<sup>st</sup> tasting - 2012, Nov 1st

Theme: Trinitario from Dominican Republic

## Tasting 3 Organic Trinitarios from the Dominican Republic

1	Michel Cluizel	Eclats de caramel" (Milk, salted butter)	Trinitario
2	Pralus	"Republique Dominicaine"	Trinitario
3	Valrhona	"Tainori"	Trinitario



### What is Trinitario?

There are three different types of cocoa bean which are used in chocolate production today. They are the noble **Criollo**, the common **Forastero** and a hybrid between the two, **the Trinitario**.

Criollo and Trinitario are often referred to as fine or flavour cocoa beans, while Forastero is considered the ordinary or bulk bean for mass production.

Over 90% percent of the world's cocoa is bulk production, mostly from the Forastero bean.

### Dominican Republic: a key country for Organic Cocoa production

The Dominican Republic **ranks first in the global ranking in organic cocoa production and export, with about 60% of the global market share**. In 2009 it exported over 62,000 tons of cocoa mainly to the United States and Europe.

The Dominican Republic is also a location where some of the best chocolatiers work directly and closely with the farmers improving impressively the **quality** (harvesting, fermentation, drying...). The general knowledge and quality in Dominican Republic are excellent. They have an excellent "terroir".

Production is distributed in **40,000 large, medium and small farms**.



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Duarte province is **where the greatest amount of organic cocoa is produced in the world**. It is "world's cocoa capital". The best cocoa beans in the country are grown in Cibao Valley, San Francisco de Macoris, and Santiago.

After the Dominican Republic, the countries that export more organic cocoa (in tons) are Mexico with 2,500; Peru with 1,850; Madagascar and Tanzania with 1,500; Vanuatu with 500 is in sixth place; Bolivia with 400 is in seventh place; Panama is in eighth place with 350, followed by Costa Rica with 300; and Sri Lanka is in tenth place with 200 tons.

For export purposes, the organic cocoa is certified by various organizations responsible for verifying and granting a seal guaranteeing its organic status and its quality level.

## Sample #1: Valrhona, "Tainori"

Comments freely inspired by Hans-Peter Rot review (12-Dec-2009)

SCORES	Score/10	Weight
Aroma:	8.5	10%
Look/snap:	9	5%
Taste:	8.5	35%
Melt:	8.5	5%
Length:	8.5	15%
Opinion:	8.5	30%
Total/100:	85.25	100%

It is part of a collection of powerful yet complementary scents, **strong and effervescent** emphasizing **grapes and fermented cranberries, and also piquant and stout, throwing off alcohol and undertones of cedar and spice.**

Tainori has a dark **cranberry-cedar-sharp** flavor but, comparatively, with a **less-than-polished** feel. It is indeed rough around the edges, but it is also intensely **chocolaty and aggressive** yet delicately **nuanced with apricot, soft spice, and even a bit of banana.**



Such a potentially aggressive theme is a bit uncommon for a Dominican chocolate.

Tainori is indeed a welcome addition to the somewhat limited vignette of Dominican chocolates, and it also shows that Valrhona still maintains a firm footing during its meanderings into the darker side of chocolate.



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## Sample #2: François Pralus, “République Dominicaine”

Comments freely inspired by Alex Rast review ( 3-Feb-2008)

SCORES	Score/10	Weight
Aroma:	9	10%
Look/snap:	3	5%
Taste:	9	35%
Melt:	5	5%
Length:	8	15%
Opinion:	8.5	30%
Total/100:	82	100%

The aroma is powerful and very rich, starting out with tobacco, and then moving to deep blackberry and raspberry fruitiness with characteristic Pralus smoky hints.

It definitely dispells any finish worries and builds excitement for the flavour. Here the bar doesn't disappoint, starting out on a brief cherry high before rolling through with an ultrapowerful chocolatey wave. So far, so good, but it tapers off rather quickly into coffee with hints of straw and then dies, a bit of an exit on a whimper after coming in with such a big bang.



Texture is another story – and Pralus seems to decide upon a “rustic” approach, yielding a rough and oddly fluffy texture, even if it melts with exceptional creaminess.

Pralus delivers a definite must-try.

## Sample #3 : Michel Cluizel, “Eclats Caramel Beurre Sale”



In addition to containing cocoa butter and chocolate liquor, milk chocolate contains either condensed milk (most European varieties) or dry milk solids. Milk chocolate must contain at least 10% chocolate liquor (in the United States), 3.39% butterfat, and 12% milk solids. Milk chocolates are typically much sweeter than dark chocolate, and have a lighter color and a less pronounced chocolate taste.

Here, we have a milk chocolate 45%

This bar is a salted milk chocolate with crunchy bits of butter caramel -- more commonly called toffee in the US.

The milk chocolate is creamy and contrasts well with the wonderful crunch of the caramel bits.

The salt is light-handed, brightening the flavor without making it taste salty.