

# BACKGROUND

Chuo Chocolatier (pronounced chew-WOW) is the first Venezuelan Chocolatier based in the United States and Southern California's premier artisan chocolatier.

Founded in 2002 by Master Chef Michael Antonorsi and his brother, CEO Richard Antonorsi, Chuo Chocolatier has pioneered "fusion chocolate" through a commitment to creating uniquely delicious chocolate experiences. Chocolate is part of the brothers' heritage, as their ancestors once ran a small family farm that was an important part of the criollo cacao plantation industry.

The Venezuelan brothers, now San Diego residents, named the company Chuo Chocolatier after the legendary cacao-producing region of Chuo located in central Venezuela to reflect their mission: to produce the highest quality chocolate confections using Venezuelan chocolate, European techniques and all natural ingredients.

Initially, the company started with a single boutique in Encinitas, CA featuring a one-of-a-kind confectionary menu offering chocolate bars, bonbons, truffles and hot chocolate. Their signature flavor was Spicy Maya, a modern twist on the Mayan's ancient hot chocolate recipe made with pasilla chile and cayenne pepper. The Spicy Maya flavor has since extended into a chocolate bar, ChocoPod, and gelato.

Unusual flavor combinations, the heart of Chuo Chocolatier's unique experience, include: Pan con Chocolate: a dark chocolate bonbon filled with toasted panko breadcrumbs, olive oil ganache and a touch of sea salt and Firecracker: caramel fudge with chipotle chile and salt, rolled in popping candy and enrobed in dark chocolate.

Over the past six years, Chuo Chocolatier has expanded their menu to include numerous hot chocolate beverages, gelato and decadent seasonal creations. They've grown from one to three cafe locations in San Diego County. New sites are being considered as the company builds the Chuo Chocolatier café experience. They have since developed their wholesale division to meet the growing demand for their chocolates around the United States. Today, you can find Chuo Chocolatier creations at fine specialty retailers including Whole Foods Market, Pier 1 Imports, Wegman's and Crate & Barrel, as well as premier restaurants, select hotels & resorts including Omni Hotels, La Costa Resort & Spa, Four Seasons, Hard Rock Hotel and more.

## Company Facts

- Solely owned & operated by brothers Michael & Richard Antonorsi
- Production factory and headquarters are located in Carlsbad, CA
- Products sold in over 1,000 specialty food retailers
- 3 company-owned locations: Encinitas, Del Mar & La Jolla, CA
- Online shopping at [www.chuaochocolatier.com](http://www.chuaochocolatier.com)
- Corporate gift programs and event favors
- Chef Michael Antonorsi is available for public appearances, demonstrations and chocolate education

*"Chuo Chocolatier offers what we call, The True Taste of Chocolate®. It's an experience that goes beyond just eating chocolate and moves you to the perfect balance of spices and other fresh, natural ingredients. It's a sensory experience that with each bite arouses your senses through unusual, unexpected and delicious taste sensations."*

– Michael Antonorsi