

chocolate: good for what ails ya

With the new wave of medical research on the benefits of dark chocolate, the former guilt-inducing dessert is changing its image into being a healthy pleasure, thus spawning a new trend in chocolate treats with the bonus of added nutritional benefits. *Pilates Style* nutrition editor, Liz Lipski, Ph.D., C.N.N., agrees that chocolate has been getting a good rap of late. "The benefits of chocolate derive from the high antioxidant content, with dark chocolate leading the pack," says Lipski. "Chocolate has heart-protective benefits, and studies show that it may help lower 'bad' LDL cholesterol as well as normalize blood pressure."

So go ahead, indulge your inner chocoholic and enhance your well-being. Just bear in mind that chocolate still does have a high calorie content, so enjoy it in moderation.

Latin for "real," **VERE DARK CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES** are made from nuts, seeds, brown rice and dark chocolate and contain significant enough amounts of anti-



oxidants, fiber and the natural sugar inulin to enhance digestion and immune function. The vegan and gluten-free truffles come in cream, cognac, coffee and Earl Grey tea flavors (\$10 for four; veregoods.com).

BORBA CLARIFYING ANTI-BLEMISH CHOCOLATE BAR is infused with a special bio-vitamin complex that helps clear breakouts (\$8 for a 1.79-ounce bar; nordstrom.com).



Developed by Keith Scott-Mumby, M.D., and sweetened with xylitol, **THE DOCTOR'S CHOCOLATE** raspberry chocolate truffles are formulated

with an amino acid derived from green tea, and flavonoid-packed unprocessed chocolate, which helps combat stress and sharpens cogni-

tive ability (\$49.95 for a 65-piece bag; scott-mumby.com).

Handmade, all natural and wheat-free, **THE PROTEIN BAKERY BROWNIES** boast 11 grams of pure whey protein along with the dietary fiber of rolled oats. Try wicked mint, peanut butter and coconut (\$2.89 each; proteinbakery.com).



Formulated by Phillip Cohen M.D., **ECCO BELLA'S HEALTH BY CHOCOLATE BARS** organic Swiss chocolate comes in three forms: the Beautiful Bones Bar with bone-building calcium, vitamins D, K and K₂; the Women's Wonder Bar with isoflavones, soy and the female balm chastetree berry; and the Instant Bliss Beauty Bar with cranberry seed oil and omega fatty acids for a smoother complexion (\$5.95 for 1.75 oz. bar; eccobella.com).



Organic and fairly traded, **GREEN & BLACKS DARK 70% BAR** contains enough cocoa to deliver your daily dose of antioxidants and heart-healthy benefits (\$3.69 for 3.5 oz; greenandblackdirect.com).



COCOA VIA DARK CHOCOLATE BARS are supplemented with calcium, folic acid, and vitamins B₆, B₁₂, C and E and also contain flavonols, which stabilize blood pressure, increase flexibility of blood vessels and promote a healthy insulin level. Choose from original, crispy, blueberry and almond (\$4.99 for 3.9 oz. bar; cocoavia.com).

BIJA OMEGA TRUFFLES are packed with Udo's Choice 3-6-9 Oil Blend of omega fatty acids, which assists in cardiovascular, digestive, joint and immune system health as well as weight maintenance. Choose from dark 70, milk hazelnut and maple white (\$3.79 for 4 pieces; florahealth.com).

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JAM session

For a healthy spin on the traditional peanut butter sandwich, try High Desert Food's certified-organic jarred fruits. But don't even think of referring to the sweet spreads as jams or jellies. For one thing, the Durango, CO-based company employs organic and sustainable farming practices on its on-site orchard. For another, because of the low sugar content of its new jams and jellies (6 grams per tablespoon, compared with most others' 12), the company has come up with the moniker *confiture*, which means, appropriately enough, preserved fruit. Made from tree-ripened fruit picked at its peak of flavor and preserved with a pinch of organic sugar, the 7.6 ounce gift-worthy jars sell for \$7.99 and come in 17 flavors, including pear merlot, apricot amaretto, wild blueberry apple and peach vanilla bean at highdesertfoods.com. —AA