Chocoholics Unite As Chocolate Sales Worldwide Defy Recession

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Just in time for seasonal festivities, Mintel reports that chocolate sales around the world have busted through the recession...and likely our belts as well!

In China and the Ukraineâ€"two countries not necessarily recognized for their rampant chocoholic populationsâ€"chocolate confectionery sales rose 18% and 12%, respectively, this year.

Each country has seen steady sales increases since 2005 and Mintel predicts continued growth through 2013.

Other countries have also seen chocolate bars, bags and boxes flying off the shelves, albeit at lower rates.

Brits drove their chocolate market up 5.9% this year, while Americans purchased 2.6% more chocolate than in 2008.

Argentinean sales rose 1.8% from 2008, while in Belgium, a country that claims to produce some of the worldâ€™s best chocolate, sales increased by 3.2%.

â€œItâ€™s clear that despite economic trouble this year, the worldâ€™s chocolate lovers didnâ€™t deviate from their favorite tr Chocolate is a small, affordable indulgence for shoppers who are cutting back on spending elsewhere. Even in countries not known for chocolate consumption, sales are on the rise,â€• comments Marcia Mogelonsky, global food and drink analyst at Mintel.

Itâ€™s the Swiss who flash the most cash for chocolate, forking over the equivalent of US $206 per person per year.

Brits and Belgians follow, spending US $106 and $90, respectively, to satisfy their chocolate cravings. In the US, individuals spend just $55 each, while Argentineans devote an average of US $35 per year on chocolate confectionery.

Manufacturers are determined to keep consumers melting over new chocolate varieties. Despite worldwide economic troubles, Mintelâ€™s Global New Products Database (GNPD) reports that manufacturers launched nearly the same number of chocolate products this year as in 2008.

In Latin America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa, companies have already released more new products than last year.

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