



Chocolate Academy®

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INTERNATIONAL PREMIER JOURNAL FOR GASTRONOMY & CHOCOLATE INDUSTRY

# Journal

Chocolate Academy®

VOL#1 | ISSUE#01 | OCTOBER 2025



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**Chef Dammika Herath in Pakistan**  
International Award-Winning  
Pastry Chef, Chocolatier & Mentor



**The Future of Chocolate**



**The Chef's Journey:**  
From Passion to Profession

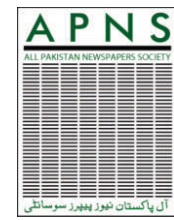


**Cocoa**  
The Nature's Wonder

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### Chief Editor/Publisher

Zainab Ahmad Shafiq

### Deputy Chief Editor

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Fatima Ahmad Shafiq

### Executive Editor

Samina Ahmad

### Food Safety Manager

Areena Asif

### Editor

Fraaz Mahmud Kasuri

### Social Media Manager

Sarmad Asif

### Director Art & Design

Aamir Kashif

### Contributors

Chef Razzaq, Chef Arvinda,

Chef Dammika Herath,

Miss Saman, Amna Munir,

Jannat Ahmad Shafiq,

### IT Manager

Rizwan Hameed

### Chief Photographer

Waqas Ali

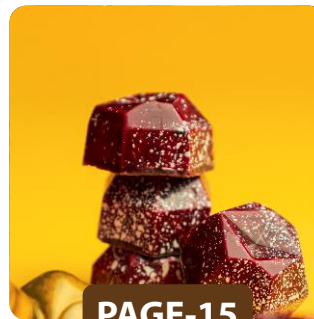
### Photo Editor

Hammad Maqbool

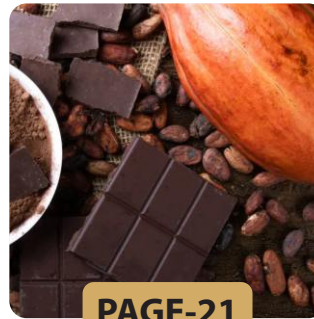
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# EDITOR'S NOTE

## LET'S REFORM PAKISTAN

*Every young Pakistani trained in a trade or service is not just earning a living—they are building the nation.*

I am truly thrilled to invite you to the International Chocolate & Pastry Academy Digital Magazine. It is not just a magazine, it is a peek at our world of creativity, innovation, and chocolate passion. Yes, you read it right, chocolate passion.

When I set out on this path in the first place, I desired something simple: I desired to produce chocolate that is pure, unadulterated, and accessible, and create a space where chocolate knowledge is enjoyable, engaging, and inspiring. Now, all of that has come to fruition in Pakistan's very first specialized chocolate and pastry academy, where every class, workshop, and recipe is designed to inspire creativity and pay homage to the art of chocolate.

This magazine is that mission. Each issue, we'll explore new subjects, from fusion desserts and sustainable pastry to spotlights on emerging stars and global inspirations. It's a place where we learn from each other, revel in creativity, and celebrate the individuals and tales that are defining the future of pastry and chocolate.

Thanks for traveling with us. I hope that these pages will inspire you, will teach you, and will give you a sense of the wow.



+92 309 3331630  
zainab@chocolateacademy.com.pk

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# Chef Dammika Herath in Pakistan

International Award-Winning Pastry Chef, Chocolatier & Mentor



Every master chef carries a story, and Chef Dammika Herath's is one of passion, determination, and creativity. Originally from Sri Lanka and now based in Dubai, Chef Dammika has dedicated over two decades to perfecting his culinary craft. His journey through luxury hotels, international competitions, and the global culinary stage has earned him recognition as a true artist in cookery.

What makes him remarkable is not only his technical brilliance in pastry and chocolate but also his role as a mentor. With a gentle and inspiring nature, he takes pride in guiding the next generation of chefs, instilling in them the values of creativity,

precision, and excellence.

In July 2025, Chef Dammika embarked on a 10-day culinary voyage to Pakistan, arriving on the 17th with a mission to share knowledge, spark imagination, and connect with aspiring chefs.

From Rawalpindi to Lahore, his sessions went far beyond technical training. They became unforgettable experiences—moments of learning, growth, and cultural exchange that left a lasting impact on every participant. Chef Dammika's visit was not just about teaching recipes; it was about igniting passion, building bridges, and creating memories

that will continue to inspire Pakistan's future culinary leaders.



The Rawalpindi Workshop Experience

## The Art of Modern Patisserie

Most significantly, they learned the "why" behind every dish, receiving an insight into a chef's mind. Rawalpindi was the destination that Chef Dammika first visited. It was there that he introduced the world of modern pastry trends into the world of modern patisserie — where art meets science.

Students learned the skill of balancing flavors to reach harmony in desserts. They ventured into plating artistry and discovered how presentation can affect taste.





Pastry is not just about flavor, it's about creating experiences



### The Lahore Workshop Experience

#### Chocolate & Dessert Atelier

In Lahore, the trend was chocolate and contemporary desserts. The session was practical, playful, and interactive, providing participants with a chance to step into the world of imagination by Chef Damnika.

#### Highlights were:

Getting the perfect sheen on mirror glaze cakes.

Creating artistic chocolate showpieces with precision.

Learning the art of plating desserts like an international competition chef.

The workshop was not just about techniques; it was about building confidence, creativity, and curiosity in every participant.

He challenged chefs to blend tradition with innovation, reminding them that great desserts tell stories, create emotions, and unite people.



### Voices of the Students

Participants shared how the workshops made them feel:



It was like entering an international pastry school, right here in Pakistan



Chef made us think, he showed us errors are part of the process



How he taught us about texture and flavors changed my way of thinking about desserts



### A Lasting Legacy

Chef Dammika's visit was not merely a chain of workshops; it was a game-changer for Pakistan's pastry industry. His visit proved that with knowledge, guidance, and passion, the indigenous industry can compete on the international level.

For Chocolate Academy, receiving him was a part of a larger vision: to take the world to Pakistan and send Pakistan to the world.



OUR COURSES

# OUR PROFESSIONAL COURSES

## GRAND DIPLOME EN CULINARY & FINISHING ARTS (4 MONTHS)

This course is meticulously designed for Epicurean Explorers, Creative Culinariums, Artistic Palates, Visionary Gastronomic Entrepreneurs, and Health-Conscious

Connoisseurs. It offers an extraordinary culinary odyssey where heritage and innovation merge, techniques evolve into artistry, and creativity is elevated into

refined mastery. Every moment is crafted to deliver a world-class epicurean experience, inspiring you to redefine the future of gastronomy.



## GRAND DIPLOME EN CHOCOLATE ET PATISSERIE (4 MONTHS)

Discover the art of creating irresistible confections with our 4-Month Grand Diploma in Chocolate and Patisserie. Over 16 weeks, you'll explore diverse specialties—from elegant cakes and classic

French patisserie to artisan breads and handcrafted chocolates.

Your journey concludes with a **Final Display and Competition**, where you'll showcase

your mastery. This diploma is your pathway to iconic recipes, in-depth culinary techniques, and a true understanding of the professional kitchen.



## CAKE DECORATION & FONDANT ART (1 MONTHS)

Over the course of four weeks, you'll gain the knowledge and techniques needed to tackle any designer cake project you can imagine. With a unique, hands-on learning experience, you'll be able to create stunning

cakes like never before. The program includes interactive demonstrations, with all essential ingredients and tools provided. By the end, participants will have the confidence and skills to design and

complete their very own fondant cake as a final project.



OUR COURSES

# BARISTA SKILLS (5 WEEKS)

Over five weeks, you'll develop the essential skills and techniques every professional barista needs to master the art of coffee. From brewing fundamentals to advanced latte artistry, this hands-on

journey will elevate your coffee-making abilities to the next level. The program features interactive demonstrations and guided practice sessions, with all ingredients, equipment, and tools provided.

By the end of the course, participants will have the confidence and expertise to craft a full range of espresso-based beverages, culminating in a signature coffee creation as their final project.



### LAHORE (HEAD OFFICE):

186, Abu Bakar Block, Facing Canal, New Garden Town, Lahore, Pakistan.

0309-3336142 | 0324-8842000

info@chocolateacademy.com.pk

www.chocolateacademy.com.pk

### KARACHI

F-22 Liaquat National Hospital Road, near TV Station, Dawood Society CHS, Karachi.

Call or WhatsApp: 0333-6669828

E: info.khi@chocolateacademy.com.pk

### RAWALPINDI

57-A Iran Road, Opposite PSO Pump, Block A Satellite Town, Rawalpindi.

Call or WhatsApp: 0309-3336144

E: info.rwp@chocolateacademy.com.pk

### ISLAMABAD

Plot No.14-B, 2nd Floor, Sadiq Plaza, Sector G-9 Markaz, Islamabad.

Call or WhatsApp: 0326-8079985

E: info.isb@chocolateacademy.com.pk

### FAISALABAD

House No.72, Officers Colony No.1, Madina Town, Faisalabad

Call or WhatsApp: 0309-7778646

E: info.fsd@chocolateacademy.com.pk

### SARAI ALAMGIR

Al-Ghani Plaza Main GT Road, Sarai Alamgir

Call or WhatsApp: 0300-8400376

E: info.sa@chocolateacademy.com

### DHA

2nd Floor CSD Shopping Mall Cavalry Ground, Lahore.

Call or WhatsApp: 0321-1119277

E: info.dha@chocolateacademy.com.pk

With Courtesy: Le Cordon Bleu



# Opera Cake

Opera Cake is a true French classic — soft almond sponge layered with coffee syrup, smooth coffee buttercream, and rich chocolate ganache, all topped with a shiny glaze. It's indulgent, elegant, and absolutely irresistible!

### What You'll Need

- Almond sponge (joconde)
- Coffee syrup (just sugar, water & strong espresso)
- Coffee buttercream (egg yolks, sugar syrup, butter, coffee essence)
- Chocolate ganache (dark chocolate & cream)
- Chocolate glaze (dark chocolate & butter)

### How to Make It

1. Bake thin almond sponge layers and let them cool.
2. Brush each layer with coffee syrup for that deep flavor.
3. Spread buttercream and ganache between the sponges.
4. Cover with buttercream, then pour on the glossy glaze.
5. Chill, trim the edges, and slice into neat little squares.

### CHEF'S TIPS

- Always use strong espresso — it keeps the cake from being too sweet.
- Chill the cake between layers so it holds its shape.
- Clean your knife after each slice for perfect, café-style portions.
- For a touch of luxury, decorate with edible gold leaf.

## How-To:

# Chocolate Garnish Swirls

Want to make your desserts look like they just came out of a 5-star pastry kitchen? Here's a quick guide to creating elegant chocolate swirls for cakes, pastries, and plates.



### What You'll Need:

- Dark chocolate (tempered)
- Baking/parchment paper
- Small piping bag or spoon
- Offset spatula (optional)



### Melt & Temper

Melt your chocolate gently and temper it so it sets with a glossy shine



### Pipe the Swirl

Fill a piping bag with chocolate. On parchment, pipe free-form swirls, zigzags, or spirals.



### Spread & Shape

Use the back of a spoon or spatula to drag lines through the chocolate — this creates artistic patterns.



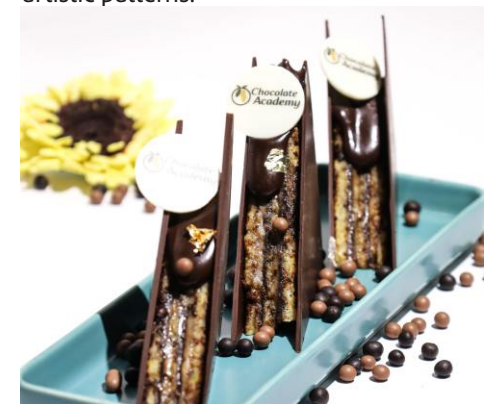
### Let It Set

Leave at room temperature or in the fridge for 5–10 minutes until firm



### Lift & Decorate

Carefully peel off and place your garnish on cakes, tarts, or plated desserts.



### CHEF'S TIPS

- Keep it thin! Delicate swirls look more elegant than thick ones.
- Mix milk and white chocolate for a marble effect.

# The Future of Chocolate



## Sustainable Sourcing & the Bean-to-Bar Revolution

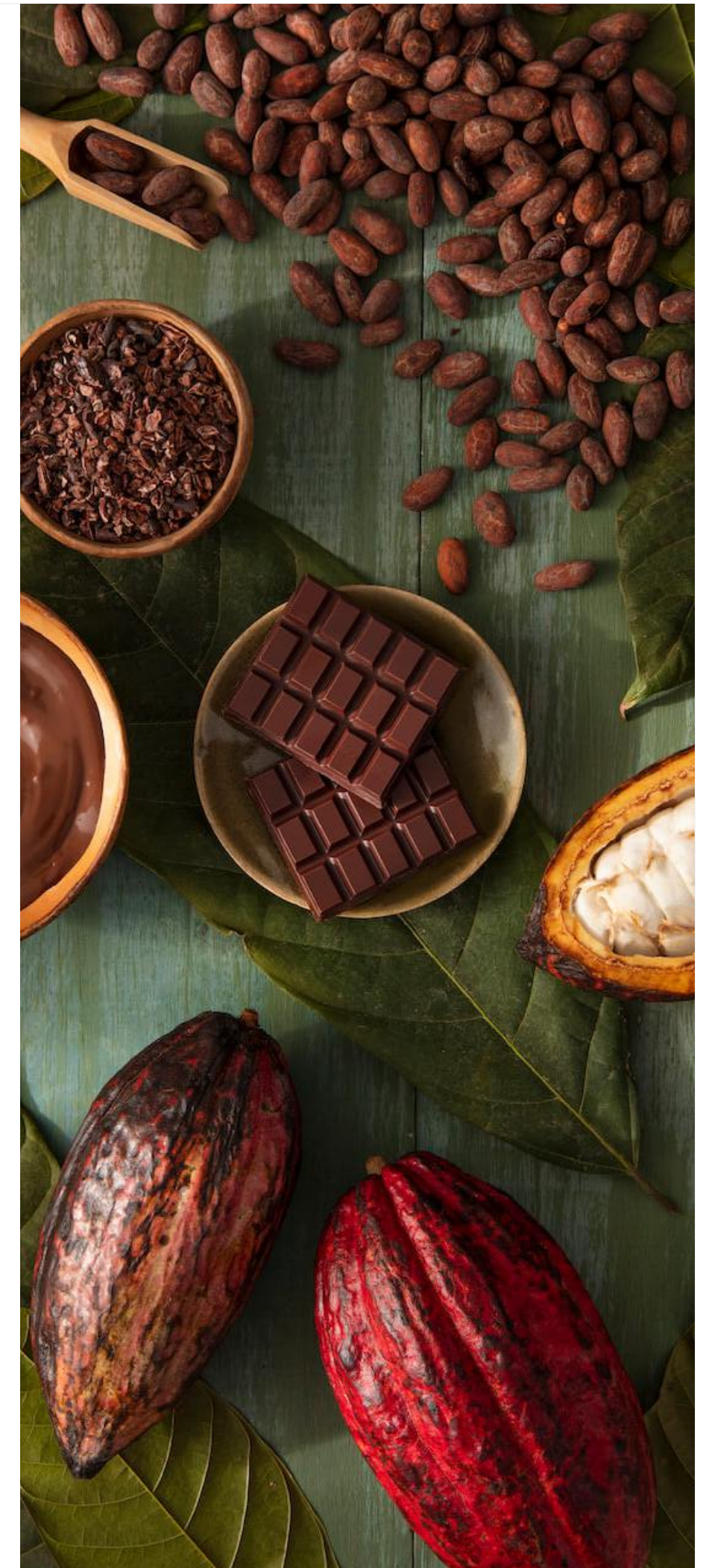
The origins of each chocolate bar can be traced back to the heart of tropical jungles, the natural habitat for cacao trees flourishing in sunlight. However, as the global demand for chocolate intensifies, we must ensure this origin story continues to be just as ecologically sound, and uplifting. Chocolate's future extends beyond merely its flavor profile to incorporate traceability, moral principles, and a defined objective.

## A Shift Toward Conscious Chocolate

Chocolate's irresistible allure, comforting qualities, and artistic preparation have made it a beloved treat across ages. Nevertheless, an intricate web of farmers, artisans, manufacturers, and processors plays a crucial part in every delightful nibble. Currently, the world's most esteemed chocolate makers are spearheading a subtle yet significant change: the Bean-to-Bar Movement. This method prioritizes direct engagement, securing cacao straight from farmers, guaranteeing equitable payment, and upholding open communication across the entire production cycle. This is a movement that combines moral standards with superior quality.

## Why Sustainability Matters

The cacao sector is grappling with significant obstacles, including the detrimental effects of climate change, deforestation, and inadequate income for farmers, all endangering its viability. Sustainable sourcing seeks to address these concerns by safeguarding diverse ecosystems, enhancing soil fertility, and empowering small-scale agriculturalists. Contemporary chocolate makers are also venturing into environmentally conscious packaging, cutting down on carbon emissions, and embracing renewable power sources in their production processes, thus redefining what it means to operate as a socially responsible enterprise.





## From Global to Local: Pakistan's Role

Even though cacao cultivation doesn't occur in Pakistan, the country is quickly evolving into a focal point for both chocolate manufacturing prowess and education. Organizations such as the International Chocolate & Pastry Academy provide training to future culinary professionals not only on creating exquisite chocolate-based desserts,

but also on grasping the bean's complete journey. By fostering increased awareness, cooperative partnerships, and imaginative solutions, Pakistani chefs are actively participating in worldwide discussions, demonstrating that dedication, not geographical boundaries, shapes sustainability efforts.

## A New Kind of Luxury

The chocolate of the coming years will represent more than just lavish tastes or visually impressive displays; it will share narratives that connect individuals. Every bar will embody a solemn pledge to fair trade practices, eco-friendly operations, and exceptional skill.

As worldwide consumer

behavior shifts toward conscientious choices, chocolate is at the forefront, demonstrating that when sweetness is produced honestly, it has the ability to transform the world.

# The Chef's Journey: *From Passion to Profession*



Every great chef begins with a spark, a simple love for creating something that brings joy to others. At Chocolate Academy, we believe that this spark is the beginning of a journey filled with creativity, growth, and endless possibilities. The path from passion to profession is not just about mastering recipes; it's about discovering the artistry, patience, and discipline that transform a dream into a lifelong purpose. In today's fast-evolving culinary world, being a chef means more than knowing how to cook, it's

about innovation, leadership, and storytelling through food. Each whisk, fold, and drizzle represents a chef's dedication to learning and improving every single day. That's why at Chocolate Academy, we don't just teach techniques; we nurture talent. Our classrooms and kitchens are spaces where curiosity meets craftsmanship, and where students learn to turn ingredients into emotions.

students are guided to think like creators, not just cooks. Through hands-on training, professional mentorship, and exposure to real-world culinary practices, we shape individuals who can proudly carry the title of Chef. But beyond skills, we inspire confidence. Many of our students enter the academy with dreams and leave with direction. They discover that success in the kitchen mirrors success in life: it takes perseverance, passion, and a heart that never stops creating. Each success story from our

academy stands as proof that when passion meets guidance, greatness follows. Whether it's opening a bakery, becoming a chocolatier, or leading a kitchen team, every graduate carries forward the values we stand for: excellence, creativity, and love for the craft. At Chocolate Academy, we're not just training chefs; we're shaping the future of the culinary world, one recipe, one dream, and one journey at a time.



# CHOCOLATE ACADEMY PRODUCTS

## Cakes & Celebrations

With traditional flavors or trendy designs, our cakes are designed to make your special occasion irreplaceable. Whether you are getting married, celebrating a birthday, or marking a milestone, we make cakes that not only look but also taste delicious.



## Customized Chocolate Boxes

Elevate your events with our handcrafted chocolate boxes. Ideal for weddings, birthdays, baby showers, and anniversaries, every box is tailored to your theme, favorite flavor, and aesthetic.



## Corporate & Event Gifting

In need of the ultimate gift for clients, colleagues, or partners? Our corporate chocolate hampers and event boxes are designed to delight, marrying sophistication with irresistible flavor. From corporate functions to weddings and birthdays, our chocolate presents are tailored to celebrate every occasion.



BY CHEF SAMAN



The Theobroma cacao tree could be about 10 to 15 thousand years old. The cacao plant first appeared in the Amazon basin, and was domesticated by the Olmec civilization, predating the Mayans.



The fermented and dried cacao beans were regarded as “food of the gods,” and also used as a form of currency. There are four main varieties of the cacao plant: forastero, criollo, trinitario, and Nacional..



Delving into the origin of the fruit and different cacao varieties, with an insight into why cacao is not grown in Pakistan. It is believed that the world's original Theobroma cacao tree could be about 10 to 15 thousand years old. The cacao plant first appeared in the Amazon basin, and was domesticated by the Olmec civilization, predating the Mayans. For the next 3 to 5,000 years, the Mesoamerican civilizations, including the Olmecs, Mayans, and Aztecs, cultivated and

domesticated the Theobroma Cacao plant extensively.

The fermented and dried cacao beans were regarded as “food of the gods,” and also used as a form of currency. There are four main varieties of the cacao plant: forastero, criollo, trinitario, and Nacional. Both the criollo and forastero varieties originated in the Amazon basin. And while the criollo is delicate and difficult to cultivate, the forastero variety, being easier and hardier,

made its way to Spanish, Dutch, and Portuguese colonies in West Africa, South Africa, and Southeast Asia.

The 1700s brought about a new variety of cacao beans in the Caribbean islands. Disease and disaster eradicated almost all the criollo cacao plants, until farmers on the islands planted forastero to strengthen what remained.

This hybrid strain is now known as trinitario. Cacao requires a consistently warm, humid

tropical climate between 20-32°C with abundant, well-distributed rainfall of 1,500-2,000 mm (60-80 inches) annually and high humidity to thrive. It needs shade from direct sunlight, especially when young, and prefers rich, well-draining, slightly acidic soil.

Cacao trees are typically found in equatorial regions, 20 degrees north and south of the equator, which provide the stable conditions necessary for healthy growth. Cacao cannot be grown in Pakistan. The fundamental reason is that Pakistan is

located far from the equator and does not fall within the optimal geographic zone for cacao growth, due to which the country's climate is characterized by extreme seasonal variations and generally lower rainfall and humidity levels, which are not suitable for cacao cultivation and growth.