

Newsletter December 2017

Dear chocolate lover,

In Suriname the long dry season is over. The milder months November and December are the best time of the year to plant cacao. Therefore, stories about the tree itself are central to this edition of the newsletter. In addition we will introduce two new resellers in Paramaribo. But we begin with the Holiday Season that is just around the corner.

### Truffels and pralines @ Sip n' Shop XMAS Holiday edition by Galerie De KuS



On the weekend of December 8, 9 and 10, Tan Bun Skrati will be presenting from 17:00 to 22:00 daily at the second Sip 'n' Shop event by Galerie DeKuS. We'll bring pralines and truffles made for the occasion. Because of their short shelf life – no preservatives are used in preparing them – fresh new truffles will be made daily. The truffles are best consumed within 3 days. The pralines can be kept for 2 months.



Pralines and truffles will be sold for 12,50 SRD each or per 5 in a stylish gift box for 65 SRD. You can order now by email [tanbunskrati@gmail.com](mailto:tanbunskrati@gmail.com) or via whatsapp +597 8642609.

There will also be: Azteca Exotic Foods, Aisa Herbs Tea and Spices and The Sweetest Thing, to

name a few. Do drop by, it's going to be a fun weekend!

Click the image for more info on the event (in Dutch).

### News from the gardens: fast fruiterers

In nine out of ten books on cacao, it is stated that planted cacao seedlings only start to bear fruit in the 4th or 5th year. This does indeed happen, but in the field we are regularly noticing trees that start fruiting after 2 years already. In Iwona's cacao garden at Blauwgrond for example, last July we harvested the first fruits from a seedling that was planted there in May 2015.

The right conditions for the trees to thrive must be met though. A couple of things have to be kept in mind when choosing the right spot to plant and maintain a cacao tree. It likes a quiet environment: little to no wind, not too much sun and sufficient rain. But it doesn't like to stand in water, so excess rainfall must be drained. With proper care – keeping the branches free from parasitic plants like *fowru doti* and the stem free from climbers, plus fertilizing with cow dung – the crop can be

harvested much earlier than what is often stated. But, when working with seedlings, the growth and development outcome will always retain a level of uncertainty.



May 2015



July 2017

### **Cacao grafting training @ IICA Suriname**

A plant propagation method that ensures early fruiting is grafting. A scion is taken from a selected mother tree and joined to a cultivated rootstock. The tree that sprouts from this joint carries the characteristics of the mother tree.

We wanted to learn this technique for a long time. When Mr. Curt Delice, who is country representative in Suriname for the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), told us that he has been growing cacao in St. Lucia for years and that he could show us how grafting is done, we took the bait.

We gathered a group of cacao growers, cacao makers, agro processors and agronomists to take part in a spirited training that was hosted by IICA on November 2<sup>nd</sup> at the IICA office in the Cultuurtuin. This is the same wooden white building, where a century ago, Professor Gerold Stahel undertook his breakthrough research on the study of witches broom disease, and where in the 1950s a cacao nursery was built that would go on to produce more than 1 million cacao trees. Vegetative



reproduction of cacao was practiced once again after many silent years. Two weeks later the first grafts started budding.

### **75 trees to Frederiksdorp / workshop on location**

In December, we'll start hosting our tree-to-bar cacao workshops at the former coffee and cacao plantation Frederiksdorp. On November 20 we took 75 trees there. The first 10 were planted with gardener Amar, near the restored monumental buildings and the newly built cabanas.

The 5 month old trees which were taken to the plantation, were grown from cacao seeds that was collected in Stolkertsijver, Lelydorp, Kuwarasan and Tijgerkreek. The trees form a trial planting that will show which trees thrive best in this part of the North Commewijne area. They'll also enhance the touristic part of the plantation. Once the best growing trees are identified, we'll propagate them using the grafting techniques learnt at the IICA.

You can take part in expanding the Frederiksdorp planting too! During the workshops cacao seeds will be sown and grown further on-site, and will be planted, later all over the plantation. This way the planting will gradually grow with the aid of tourists and day trippers.

More pictures of the planting day can be found [here](#). The workshops at Frederiksdorp will be held every Tuesday and can be booked at Access Travel Suriname via [info@surinametravel.com](mailto:info@surinametravel.com)



### **New resellers**

The 72%, 80% and 100% chocolate bars are now available at two new points of sale in Paramaribo. At **VCM butchery and Delicatessen** on the Verlengde Gemenelandsweg you'll find them at the candy corner. Downtown in the Costerstraat, next to restaurant Souposo, **Namasté Yoga Studio** recently opened their doors. Henceforth you'll find our bars and cacao tea there too.

The cattle of VCM graze on fields at Rust en Werk plantation, where in the past candy manufacturers Jamin tried to grow cacao for their chocolate production. The VCM N.V. (United Plantations Company) was even established towards that goal in 1947. The Jamin brothers first bought plantation Geyersvlijt and afterwards also the plantations Maasstroomb and Berlijn. In 1954, Rust en

Werk together with the adjacent plantations were also purchased by the Jamin brothers. Only a small, mosquito infested plot of the original planting remains to this day. From a pod plucked in this little cacao forest we cultivated a seedling that is now growing in our yard.

Did you know that the pure chocolates of Tan Bun Skrati fit into a healthy lifestyle? Since the cacao has not been alkalized during processing, much of the nutritional value remains intact. Moreover, our chocolate consists of only 2 ingredients at the most: cacao and sugar. A 72% chocolate bar from Tan Bun Skrati thus really consists of 72% cacao. It is not adulterated. You'll only need to eat a little of it to be satisfied. And the aftertaste lingers for a long time. Now, when you savor the taste of Tan Bun Skrati chocolate, relaxed after an intense yoga session ... Whoah! A perfect match.



## Growth

Finally, we'd like to thank volunteer Peter Kessels who rewired the electricity in our cacao studio. The rewiring has definitely improved the lay-out of the work space which enables us to roast the beans more efficiently.

To be able to grow as a company the now multifunctional workspace will be further divided into separate compartments and dissolve jams and bugs in the work flow. Next, we will purchase a larger capacity grinder and a tempering machine. We've outgrown our current equipment: too many days of production are required for a relative small output. We cannot finance this from our turnovers alone. If you'd like to contribute to the growth of Tan Bun Skrati and her cacao growers, you can transfer a donation to:

SRD bank account 5591.704.1 or EURO bank account 5521.654.4 of Tan Bun Skrati N.V.

In Suriname IBAN notations for bank accounts are not in use. The swift code of the Surinaamse Volkscredietbank (VCB) is VCBSSPRA.

A complete current summary of our points of sale can be found [here](#).

***If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, just respond to the email with a "NO" and we'll stop the dispatch.***

**TAN  
BUN  
SKRATI**

Tan Bun Skrati N.V. - *tree to bar cacao from Suriname*

+597 458 706 / whatsapp +597 8642609

tanbunskrati@gmail.com

info@tanbun.org

www.tanbun.org

www.facebook.com/TanBunSkrati