

Food news by Carolyn Hart

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CHAMPION COCOA Winner of a Gold Star in the 2009 Great Taste Awards, Cafédirect's San Cristobal drinking chocolate is made from hand-picked cocoa grown and processed in or around San Cristobal in the Dominican Republic. Cafédirect puts half the profits back into the growers' businesses – more than £3 million over the past five years – and plans to double that over the next five. £2.29 for 250g, from cafedirect.co.uk/shop.



SOUL FOOD Stewed! is dedicated to making stews as un-stew-like as possible, putting them into cartons and filling them with ingredients such as olives, preserved lemons, walnuts, sour cherries and pomegranate molasses. Go for Persian or Moroccan chicken to excise all memories of school abominations. From £4.49 for 500g, at Ocado and Waitrose.

HELP YOURSELF A vegetarian restaurant that never makes you think, 'What I really fancy now is a large steak...' Situated in London's prime shopping areas of Regent Street and Westfield, Tibits offers innovative and seasonal vegetarian food for which you pay by weight rather than item. Thus you can pile your plate high from 40 veggie dishes, or keep it pleasingly light and cheap. From £1.40 per 100g (020-7758 4110; tibits.co.uk).



WORTH A PUNT An inspired coupling of fruit and sport is achieved in Firebox's china fruit bowls shaped like deflated footballs or basketballs. Yes, it's like finding that fish and bicycles go together after all. Fill them with oranges or, as seems more likely, industrial size packets of Doritos and cheese'n'onion crisps. Fruitballs, £34.95 (0870-420 4489; firebox.com).



IN THE PINK There is no better way to end the holiday than to receive one of the superbly flavoured, hand-smoked sides of Scottish Atlantic salmon from Uig, the estate on the most north-westerly point of Scotland. Perfect for dinner parties, working lunches or very posh sandwiches. Uig Lodge smoked salmon, sides from £36, Uig Lodge, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis (01851-672396; uiglodge.co.uk).