

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A process for producing a dark brown, natural cocoa product, comprising:
mixing cocoa cake and water, thus producing a mixture;
subjecting the mixture to pressure between about 34 kPa (5 psi) and about 172 kPa (25 psi); and
drying the mixture, thus producing a dried cocoa cake;
wherein the dark brown, natural cocoa product is not alkalized.
2. The process of claim 1, further comprising grinding the dried cocoa cake into a dark brown, natural cocoa powder.
3. The process of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the mixture has a moisture content between about 27% and about 35%.
4. The process of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the pressure is between about 34 kPa (5 psi) and about 152 kPa (22 psi).
5. The process of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the mixture is subjected to the pressure for a time of between about 20 and 40 minutes.
6. The process of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the mixture is at a temperature of less than about 125°C.
7. The process of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the mixture is at a temperature of between about 85°C and 120°C.
8. The process of claim 1 or claim 2, further comprising:
grinding cocoa nibs, de-shelled cocoa beans, or a combination thereof, thus producing cocoa liquor; and
pressing the cocoa liquor, thus producing cocoa butter and the cocoa cake.
9. The process of claim 8, further comprising roasting the cocoa nibs, the de-shelled cocoa beans, or the combination thereof.
10. The process of claim 2, further comprising mixing the dark brown, natural cocoa powder with a cocoa powder.
11. The process of claim 10, wherein the cocoa powder is natural.
12. The process of claim 10, wherein the cocoa powder is alkalized.
13. A dark brown, natural cocoa product obtained by the method of any one of claims 1-12 comprising:
an L-value of between about 10 and about 15;
an a-value of between about 4 and about 6.2;

a b-value of between about 3.5 and about 6.0; and
a pH of less than about 6.

14. The natural, cocoa product of claim 13, wherein the pH is between about 5.1 and about 6.0.

15. The natural, cocoa product of claim 13 or 14, wherein the cocoa product is a cocoa powder.

16. The natural, cocoa product of claim 15, wherein the powder has a fineness of at least 98% of the cocoa power passing through a 200 mesh screen.

17. The natural, cocoa product of claim 13 or 14, wherein the natural, cocoa product has a calculated C-value of between about 5 and about 10.

18. The natural, cocoa product of claim 13 or 14, wherein the natural, cocoa product has a calculated H-value of between about 42 and about 49.