

A field of cacao (*Theobroma cacao*) trees.



Cacao leaves emerge copper -
red in hanging bunches.



The flowers and fruits develop directly on the main stems in a process called cauliflora.



Chocolate is made from ripe cacao seeds.



The outer covering of the cocoa seed is technically an aril.
It can be eaten and has a pleasant chocolate taste.



The white seed covering needs to be removed before the seeds are roasted. This is accomplished by fermenting the seeds between banana leaves. Banana leaves are used because they have a waxy coating that does not change the flavor of the seeds.



Fermentation is not just an easy way to clean the seeds. Fermentation actually flavors the seeds and gives them the chocolate taste.

The seeds are dried after the seed covering is removed.
This is followed by roasting the seeds.

Dried
seeds



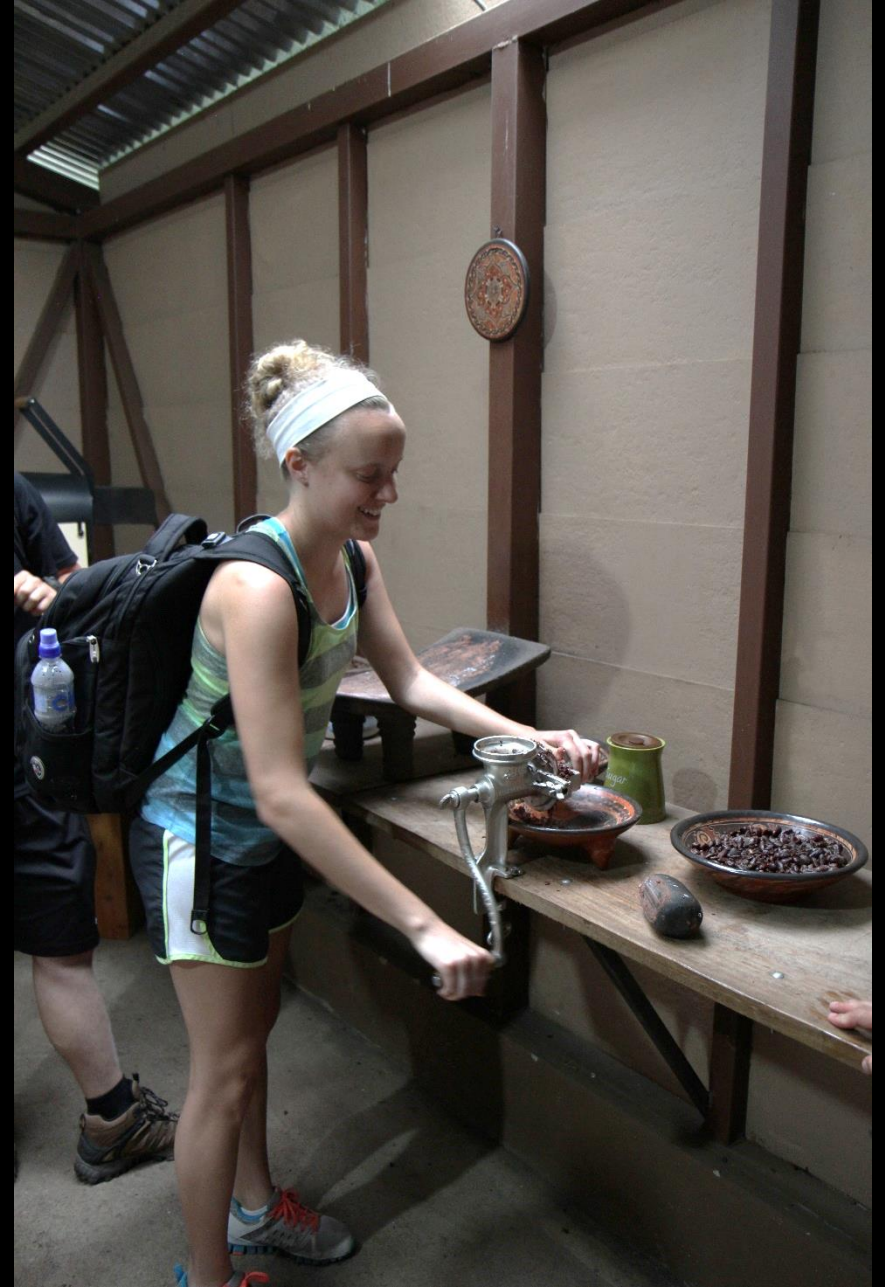
A commercial Bendig Eco-2000 rotary toaster for roasting seeds.



The roasted seeds ready for grinding.



Grinding roasted seeds creates a chocolate powder and paste.



Ground chocolate is bitter in
taste until sugar is added.



Warmed chocolate ready for tasting.

