

# HOW BEST TO CHOOSE & USE CEREMONIAL CACAO

(They're NOT all the same)

Plus 7 Divinely Delicious Recipes



**Akuna**  
Wellness

<https://akunawellness.com.au>



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><u>What is Ceremonial Cacao</u></b> & How is it Different?	<b>01</b>
<b><u>The Health Benefits</u></b>	<b>02</b>
<b><u>Are they all the same?</u></b>	<b>05</b>
<b><u>Our Favourites</u></b>	<b>06</b>
<b><u>Coffee Vs. Cacao</u></b>	<b>07</b>
Things to consider <b><u>When Selecting a Cacao Brand</u></b>	<b>08</b>
<b><u>How to Prepare Ceremonial Cacao</u></b>	<b>09</b>
<b><u>Divinely Delicious Recipes</u></b>	<b>10</b>
<b><u>About Lesley &amp; Akuna Wellness</u></b>	<b>18</b>

**Akuna**  
Wellness

# WHAT IS CEREMONIAL CACAO

## *& How is it Different?*

---

Ceremonial cacao is made from the beans of the cacao plant and has many medicinal properties. Many people who participate in ceremonial cacao rituals report feeling a sense of clarity, heightened senses, and a deep sense of connection to their inner selves and the world around them. However, these days ceremonial cacao is also consumed because of its medicinal properties, it is truly a superfood and many people use it daily as part of their health and wellness regime.

Ceremonial cacao has a long history dating back to the ancient civilizations of Central and South America. The Mayans and Aztecs considered cacao to be a sacred plant and used it in various rituals and ceremonies. Cacao was also believed to have medicinal properties and was used to treat a variety of ailments.

Ceremonial cacao movement can be traced back to the 1960s and 70s, when Westerners began to rediscover the spiritual and medicinal properties of cacao.

### **Why Ceremonial Cacao is Different to Cacao Powder?**

Unlike Cacao powder, Ceremonial Cacao is cacao in its purest form. That is, it has not been defatted and endures minimal processing, under very low temperatures to maximise its health benefits.



# THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF CEREMONIAL CACAO



The main component of a ceremonial cacao ritual is, of course, the cacao itself. Ceremonial grade cacao is typically made from pure, raw cacao beans and is minimally processed to retain as many of the plant's beneficial compounds as possible. It is often consumed as a hot chocolate drink, but can also be consumed in other forms such as a smoothie or even raw.

Here are some very powerful reasons to consider drinking this delicious superfood;

- enhances cognitive function
- boosts mental health
- reduces oxidative stress with antioxidants
- supports cardiovascular health
- metabolic health
- mediates the natural inflammatory response

Additionally, Ceremonial Cacao can:

boost energy levels  
strengthen bone & skin health  
reduce the risk of cancer.

It also contains essential minerals for overall health and wellness such as;

- magnesium
- calcium
- iron.



## *Cognitive Function & Mental Health*

Theobromine is a mild, but natural stimulant that interacts with adenosine receptors throughout our body. Benefits of this include a boost to our energy levels and greater cognitive function.

Our bodies contain neurotransmitters like dopamine, serotonin and anandamide. Cacao contains several compounds that are similar to these, they include: tryptophan, tryptamine, phenylethylamine (PEA), and natural cannabinoids called N-acylethanolamines.

These are able to activate our brain pathways that control behaviour and memory, improve focus, and elevate feelings of joy and pleasure. This is a powerful combination of brain enhancing factors that can provide positive mental health with sensations of joy, happiness and wellbeing.

## *Powerful Antioxidants*

Flavanols are powerful antioxidants and are contained in cacao. These protect our cells from oxidative stress damage by scavenging free radicals, thus preventing chronic inflammation.

Another benefit of flavanols is that they inhibit the activation of pro-inflammatory enzymes in our body when they become over active. This stops any excess production and circulation of inflammatory molecules in our bodies.

It can also prevent development of chronic inflammation conditions that include cardiovascular disease and metabolic syndrome.



## *Metabolic Syndrome & Diabetes*



Factors contributing to metabolic syndrome and diabetes include; high blood pressure, high blood sugars and obesity.

With this comes chronic inflammation, higher heart rate and chronic stress.

Theobromine acts to dilute the blood vessels (vasodilation) which leads to lower high blood pressure.

Cacao, through this process is able to improve symptoms and conditions associated with metabolic syndrome.

## *Theobromine – Boost Energy*

Theobromine is found in cacao and is a natural stimulant, although unlike caffeine it is less potent as a stimulant and doesn't over activate the adrenal system. Effectively you get a sustainable uplifting effect without the peaks and troughs associated with caffeine.

Theobromine blocks the adenosine receptors in the body and by influencing the effects of adenosine, boosts energy, enhances focus and mood, creating a truly uplifting effect.

*"Cacao is one of the best natural food sources. It contains more antioxidants, gram for gram than blueberries, the highest magnesium content of any whole food, phosphorous for bone health, and potassium that supports menstrual cramps and healthy skin."*

*Mikhaila Todd (Nutritional Expert)*

# ARE ALL CEREMONIAL CACAO PRODUCTS THE SAME?

While all ceremonial cacao products are made from the beans of cacao, there are some subtle differences like varying levels of caffeine and farming methods. Therefore, when considering a ceremonial cacao, there are a number of important things to consider:

## 1. High or Low Caffeine Content

The most ideal cacao products are lower in caffeine and draw their feel good energy boost from theobromine. Caffeine over stimulates the nervous system which can deliver a sudden boost of energy followed by a crash. Ultimately, personal preference will come down to taste, caffeine content and the general feeling one gets from the cacao.

## 2. Quality of Cacao

Criollo cacao is considered to be the highest grade of ceremonial cacao in the world. High quality ceremonial grade cacao has low levels of caffeine (approx. 40mg/serve) about half a standard coffee.

## 3. Taste and Feeling

Some brands & types of Cacao are silky smooth, and many are quite quite granulated - even when heated and mixed. Most people prefer the, harder to get, higher quality, silky smooth & creamy brands. (see next page for specific brands)





## MY FAVOURITES

### Creation Cacao

**Creation Cacao** has been described as a slow to medium energy burst over 6 hours or so, without any noticeable crash. This cacao also has a high content of naturally occurring cacao butter in the mix, meaning it is very smooth and flavoursome, rather than bitter like many others.

**Creation Cacao** is a very high quality, ethically sourced and certified organic cacao that comes from a family of growers in Northern Peru, around the Tarapoto region. They grow the Criollo cacao so when using this cacao you are getting the best in the world.



### Woodfire Ceremonial Cacao

Another type of cacao I really like because of its smoothness, divine taste and ease of preparation is **Wood Fire Ceremonial Cacao** – it's also organic & ethically sourced from the Honduras using the Trinitario variety.

**Wood Fire Ceremonial cacao** is cacao in its purest form, that is, it has not been defatted and endures minimal processing (a very gentle wood fire roasting), under very low temperatures to maximise its health benefits.

The Trinitario cacao was created when the commercial Forastero varietal and the more rare Criollo variety of cacao were cross-bred in order to save the Criollo tree from becoming extinct.

So this variety combines the hardiness and high yield of Forastero and the refined taste of Criollo, the highest quality cacao in the world.





# CACAO VS COFFEE

Cacao	Coffee
Approx. 40mg caffeine per cup	100-200mg caffeine per cup
Rich taste and delicious	Alluring aroma and full taste
Traditional ritual and meditative function	Enjoyable ritual
Mild processing – non addictive	Highly processed and addictive
High levels of theobromine – enhances mood and energy	Over stimulates the nervous system, causing jitters
Lowers blood pressure and protects the heart	Known to cause a build up of adrenaline
Aids mental clarity	High in certain vitamins
Rich in antioxidants (40 times more than blueberries)	



# OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

---



## Quality

Look for ceremonial cacao that is made from high-quality, sustainably-sourced beans. This will ensure that you are getting the most nutritious and flavourful cacao possible.



## Cacao Content

The higher the percentage of cacao in the product, the more pure and potent it will be. Look for products that have at least 70% cacao, as this will provide the most benefits..

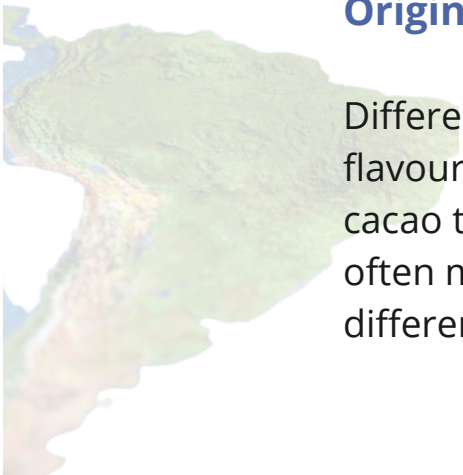
## Additives

Some ceremonial cacao products may contain additional ingredients, such as sweeteners, flavourings, or herbs. While these can be enjoyable, they can also dilute the potency of the cacao and may not be suitable for those looking for a more traditional or pure experience.



## Origin

Different regions of the world produce cacao with unique flavour profiles & properties. For example, South American cacao tends to be more fruity & earthy, while African cacao is often more chocolatey & nutty. Consider trying cacao from different regions to find the one that resonates most with you.





# HOW TO PREPARE CEREMONIAL CACAO

---

Once you have chosen the best ceremonial cacao for you, ([Click here to buy online](#)) the next step is to prepare it. There are many different ways to do this, but here is a simple recipe that you can follow:



- 1** Add approximately 2 tablespoons of cacao (20g) to 150-170ml hot water (do not boil)
- 2** Add your preferred taste; honey, cinnamon, cardamom etc
- 3** Heat and infuse over stove top – do not microwave.
- 4** Stir well, whisking is good, until it bubbles
- 5** Pour into a cup, add an intention and enjoy!

You can also use oat milk or a nut milk if you want to get the hot chocolate effect.

# 7 Divinely Delicious Cacao Recipes.

---

1. Velvety Cacao Chia Pudding
2. Divine Cacao Bliss Balls
3. Banana & Cacao Breakfast Smoothie
4. Super Antioxidant Smoothie Explosion
5. Hot Velvety Ceremonial Cacao
6. Luscious Healthy Chocolate Pudding
7. Decadent Raw Cacao Brownies

Easy-to-make recipes  
that are good for you &  
temptingly delicious.



**Akuna**  
Wellness

# Velvety Cacao Chia Pudding

## *Ingredients*

- 2 tbsp chia seeds
- 6 tbsp coconut milk OR nut milk
- 4 tbsp water (hot)
- 1 tbsp (15g) [ceremonial cacao](#)
- 1 tsp maple syrup
- Fruit (optional)



**Akuna  
Wellness**

## *Directions*

- Use the hot water to Melt the Cacao to a smooth consistency.
- Gently stir all ingredients together until the seeds start soaking & refrigerate overnight.
- Add fruits to the pudding (e.g. banana, strawberry, blueberries, kiwi fruit)



# Divine Cacao Bliss Balls

## *Ingredients*

- 1 cup mixed nuts
- 1 cup medjool dates (pitted)
- 1/3 cup desiccated coconut
- ¼ cup [ceremonial cacao](#)
- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- 2 tbsp honey or maple syrup
- 1.5 tsp fresh orange juice
- ½ tsp orange zest
- ½ tsp cinnamon



## *Directions*

- Process nuts in a blender or food processor until fine
- Add the dates & cacao and process again
- Add remaining ingredients and process until it forms a sticky consistency
- Form into balls, roll in coconut and refrigerate

# Banana & Cacao Breakfast Smoothie

## *Ingredients*

- 1 cup oat milk or nut milk
- 1 small frozen banana
- 1 tbsp (approx. 15g) [Ceremonial Cacao](#)
- 1 tbsp almond butter
- handful of ice
- 1 serve [vanilla protein powder](#) (if post workout)



**Akuna  
Wellness**

## *Directions*

- Blend all ingredients
- Pour into a glass
- Enjoy!

# Super Antioxidant Smoothie Explosion

## *Ingredients*

- 1 cup frozen organic blueberries
- 1 banana
- 1 tbsp [Ceremonial Cacao](#)
- 250ml filtered water.
- 2 tbsp hemp seeds
- 1 tsp chia seeds
- 1 tsp [Saybo Revive](#)
- 1 tsp Maca powder



## *Directions*

- Place all ingredients (except the Revive & Maca) in a blender & blend until smooth (20-30 seconds).
- Add the revive and maca and blend for further 10 seconds.
- Pour into a glass & enjoy.

**Akuna  
Wellness**



# Hot Velvety Ceremonial Cacao

## *Ingredients*

- 1-2 tbsp [Ceremonial Cacao](#)  
(depending on how rich you like it)
- 1 tsp maple syrup or honey
- 200ml coconut milk or your favourite nut milk

## *Directions*

- Place half the milk in a pot over the stove top and add the cacao.
- Heat & stir until the cacao is melted and mixed.
- Add the rest of the milk and sweetener and heat to your desired temperature. (Do not boil)
- Pour into a pre-heated cup & sip slowly.

# Luscious Healthy Chocolate Pudding

## *Ingredients*

- 230g steamed sweet potato.
- 100g medjool dates
- 50g cashews
- 75ml nut milk of your choice
- 15g [Ceremonial Cacao](#)



**Akuna  
Wellness**

## *Directions*

- Soak Medjool dates & Cashews in hot water for 5 minutes.
- Add all ingredients into the blender & blend until smooth.
- Divide into 4 small bowls and serve.

# Decadent Raw Cacao Brownies

## *Ingredients*

### **Brownies**

- 300g pecans, walnuts, or almonds
- 250g pitted medjool dates.
- 40g [Ceremonial Cacao](#)
- 1 tsp vanilla essence (organic)
- Pinch of salt (Sea or Himalayan pink salt)

### **Chocolate Avocado Grenache**

- Flesh of 1 medium avocado
- 115g maple syrup
- 40g [Ceremonial Cacao](#)

20cm square pan lined with baking paper.



## *Directions*

- Process the nuts to desired consistency in a food processor.
- Add the dates, ceremonial cacao, vanilla essence, salt.
- Process until the mixture resembles a doughy consistency. If too dry, add some water or nut milk and process again.
- Scoop out the mixture into the lined pan and flatten the surface

### **Avocado Choc Ganache**

- Process all ingredients until completely smooth.
- Spread the ganache on the brownie mix.
- Decorate to your desire. I like to use crushed pistachios with dried rose petals. (Delicious & pretty)
- Chill the brownies in the fridge for 20 minutes or until firm.
- Cut into squares & serve



# ABOUT

Hi, My name is Lesley Komlos, I'm the co-founder of Akuna Wellness. I work closely with Tyler Tolman and use his teachings to coach people on the 7 principles of health.

The philosophy behind creating Akuna Wellness is to provide high-quality life enhancing products that use wild-crafted and organic ingredients from all over the world (though we love to use local where possible).

I hope you've enjoyed the information & recipes - I'd love to see photo's of your creations, you can send them to me at [hello@akunawellness.net.au](mailto:hello@akunawellness.net.au) .  
Created for you with love ♥



*Lesley Komlos*



**Akuna Wellness**

Akuna is the Aboriginal word for flowing water & symbolically water has a wonderful undertone of purity and fertility & is often seen as the very source of life itself.

## Connect with me & Akuna Wellness



[@akuna.wellness](https://www.instagram.com/akuna.wellness)



[facebook.com/akunawellness](https://facebook.com/akunawellness)



[AkunaWellness.com.au](https://AkunaWellness.com.au)



[facebook.com/lesley.komlos](https://facebook.com/lesley.komlos)



[hello@akunawellness.net.au](mailto:hello@akunawellness.net.au)