

Winnowing cacao seeds (close-up)

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On a cacao plantation in Barlovento, Venezuela, visitors gather around a bowl of roasted cacao seeds to winnow them -- removing the papery membrane from the outside of the seeds. The seeds come from the cacao tree (*Thebroma Cacao*), which is native to tropical Central and South America. Winnowing is one of the many steps that turns the cacao seeds into cocoa. Before winnowing, the seeds have been picked, peeled, fermented, dried, and roasted. Later, they'll be ground into a paste.



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