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# QSR SmartChain

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## Distinct DRINKS

Specialty beverages  
go mainstream

Smoothies  
Bring Benefits

Iced Coffee  
Heats Up

Chocolate  
and Coffee

GHIRARDELLI CHOCOLATE

# The Dynamic Duo

## Chocolate and coffee are a winning combination in specialty beverages

Most consumers think of chocolate as a confection that comes in solid form. In fact, chocolate got its start as a beverage as far back as 1,100 BC and wasn't used in its solid state until the mid-1800s. Even after centuries of use, chocolate can still create an emotional connection with consumers by including ingredients or presentations that remind them of their childhood. Today, the use of chocolate drinks in bakery, café, and other quick-service or fast-casual outlets, often combined with coffee, is as popular as ever.

Chocolate beverages, both hot and cold, are an integral part of the specialty beverage market, says Chris Eklem, director of sales and marketing for foodservice/specialty ingredients at **Ghirardelli Chocolate**.

"We've had very strong growth over the last several years," Eklem says. "Operators are looking to provide excitement and sizzle to their customer base and bring foot traffic in the door by producing a premium offering. The specialty coffee and chocolate combination has been beneficial for us."

Restaurants can bring a premium brand to their menu by using Ghirardelli products to make both hot and cold chocolate-based beverages. Ghirardelli offers a line of hot and iced chocolate drinks that allows operators to expand their specialty beverage options to chocolate-craving consumers. These are suitable for both restaurants and institutional usage.

Ghirardelli created a line of premium hot chocolates and mocha mixes specifically for specialty coffee retailers. Ghirardelli Sweet Ground Chocolate and Sweet Ground White Chocolate create an intense and complex taste; Sweet Ground Chocolate is blended with just the right amount of sugar and real vanilla, while Sweet Ground White Chocolate follows the same formula and is for white chocolate lovers. Both may be combined with steamed milk or gourmet espresso for a rich, indulgent specialty beverage.

Peppermint flavor adds a seasonal twist to a hot beverage and can create a lingering chocolate experience. Ghirardelli's new Peppermint Ground Chocolate is blended for the perfect flavor of chocolate balanced with a hint of peppermint. Since no additional peppermint syrup

needs to be added, it provides cost savings and a consistent taste in every drink.

Created with chocolate lovers in mind, Ghirardelli's Barista Dark Chocolate lets operators prepare mochas or hot chocolate with the intense flavor and velvety texture of real Ghirardelli chocolate. Combining their specially developed dark chocolate mini chips with steamed milk and a retailers' own gourmet espresso produces a great mocha that can distinguish an operator from the competition.

Ghirardelli also offers Double Chocolate Hot Cocoa that is mixed with water.

To capitalize on the frozen specialty beverage trend, Ghirardelli created several drinks to be enjoyed during the warm, summer months. Double Chocolate Frozen Hot Cocoa with Ghirardelli Premium Double Chocolate Hot Cocoa is combined with milk and ice and prepared in a blender. Top with whipped cream and some chocolate mini-chips for a great iced treat. Espresso may be added for coffee lovers.

Ghirardelli's Premium Double Chocolate and White Frappé Classico are specifically formulated to stay thick and not settle when mixed. Frappé Classico contains no freeze-dried coffee, so an operator can add their



own premium espresso, or leave the coffee out altogether. It is also great as a smoothie base—simply mix with milk or water and customize by adding flavored syrups.

"Many of our customers have been using our products in smoothie operations and they have been very successful," Eklem says.

According to Eklem, some specialty coffee shops and quick-service operators are using Ghirardelli's new Peppermint Ground Chocolate to make either a decadent hot chocolate or a milkshake that can be offered year-round or as a special holiday treat. This product can even extend to baked goods for coffeehouses and cafés.

While some restaurant operators use Ghirardelli products to make their own proprietary beverages, others are anxious to promote the fact that they use Ghirardelli products.

"Customers know the Ghirardelli brand and that those restaurants using it will provide a quality product and experience," Eklem says. "The smart coffee shop or company will offer their customers the power of our brand awareness."

Eklem also sees the specialty beverage market expanding into other venues, such as hotels and cruise lines, as some of these establishments are putting in espresso bars to build sales. Some workplace offices are offering similar options for their employees.

"This trend is starting to catch on in other parts of the world as well, such as in Europe, Asia, and even the Middle East," he says.

**Hershey's Food Service** provides exciting, on-trend recipes that tap into customers' desires for Hershey's branded ingredients and lead to increased profitability for operators. Hershey's is committed to providing operators with delicious recipes to help drive traffic, boost margins, increase check averages, and build repeat business.

A survey by Hershey's showed high consumer awareness and acceptance of the Hershey's brand. According to the survey, 93 percent of consumers said they would try desserts made with Hershey's branded ingredients, 75 percent said they would definitely order a dessert made with Hershey's ingredients, and 61 percent said they would be inclined to go back to a restaurant that featured Hershey's branded ingredients.

This brand awareness extends to the specialty beverage market as well, and

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Hershey's offers a full range of specialty beverage recipe ideas. Many of these are iced or frozen beverages made with Hershey's cocoa, toppings, or syrups. For instance, Chocolate Iced Coffee and Frosted Mochas are made with Hershey's chocolate syrup, and Dark Chocolate Frappé and Old Fashioned Cream Soda are each made with Hershey's Special Dark Syrup, Semi-Sweet Chocolate Chips, and Hershey's Cocoa.

The Old Fashioned Cream Soda made with Hershey's Special Dark Syrup is a nostalgic reminder of a drug store treat. New flavor combinations like the Mocha Toffee Twister Shake made with Hershey's Chocolate Syrup and Heath Toffee Bits satisfy patrons' desire for an indulgent sweet treat. The Coffee N' Fudge Chiller offers a great afternoon pick-me-up.

Coffee purveyors are already ubiquitous and other retailers and large chains are catching on to the trend and rolling out a line of flavored coffees. The trick is to appeal to customers and keep them from going elsewhere for their specialty drinks, says Michael Szyliowicz, cofounder of Denver-based **Mont Blanc Gourmet**, a leader in the specialty beverage industry focusing on product formulation of syrups and confections for top-tier café and restaurant chains. The company specializes in gourmet chocolate syrups for coffee-based beverages and also works with some large quick-service chains to build their specialty beverage offerings.

The challenge for retailers is to offer a better tasting product to an increasingly sophisticated consumer. Most operators seek to differentiate themselves from the competition by carving out a niche with their own proprietary flavor profiles.

"We work as a strategic partner to create customized specialty beverages for coffee shops and other operators that regularly result in double-digit sales growth for our clients," Szyliowicz says. "Our clients have found developing their own unique flavor has helped them differentiate themselves from their competition and provide variety for their customers, both of which positively impact their bottom line."

Mont Blanc Gourmet can help retailers stand apart from the crowd by helping them develop distinct and innovative private-label products. Whatever the idea or vision, Mont Blanc's highly-trained staff can bring it to life in their lab. Mont Blanc Gourmet offers a variety of gourmet syrups, including dark and white chocolate, caramel, sugar-free, chai tea, and single-origin syrups. They also offer frozen drink mixes. The addition of



chocolate to specialty beverages continues to be a trend, Szyliowicz says, and chocolate is becoming increasingly more sophisticated.

"Every customer has a different taste profile for coffee, and when you add the various flavors of chocolate to that you get many different tastes," Szyliowicz says. "Chocolate must be customized to each coffee, to each taste profile."

Using beverages to drive customers into the restaurant has proved so successful, many are ramping up their efforts to increase their beverage segment. In March 2010, McDonald's began plans to offer soft drinks, tea, and coffee for \$1, regardless of size.

Even Starbucks is looking to improve on its specialty beverage segment. The company announced in March that it will begin allowing its customers to design their own

frappuccinos, which makes up about 10 percent of Starbucks' U.S. revenue. The company is teaching its baristas quicker methods for preparing the blended iced beverage and using more efficient blenders. Customers may choose the type of milk or syrup and whether to make it decaffeinated, among other choices. All other drinks on the Starbucks menu can be customized, so it seemed only a matter of time before the company encouraged customers to have their frappuccinos any way they want.

"The pressure is on to build a better beverage program," Szyliowicz says. "This trend is not going away. From my perspective, the trick is finding the right balance between quality and convenience. If I had to predict, I would say we will continue to see growth offerings for iced coffee as it is proving to fit this bill."

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# The Players

## Big Train

25392 Commercentre Drive  
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800-244-8724  
www.bigtrain.com



Founded in 1991, Big Train has grown to be the leading manufacturer and distributor of premium branded and private-label powdered and liquid concentrate beverages serving the specialty coffee, foodservice, and retail industries in the U.S. and abroad. Big Train is known for high-quality beverage solutions that are great tasting and easy to prepare. Big Train offers a wide array of products, including blended ice coffees, coffee-free blended crèmes, chai teas, fruit smoothies, kids' beverages, hot cocoas, low-carb beverages, and flavored syrups, to more than 20,000 customers.

## Bunn

1400 Stevenson Drive  
Springfield, IL 62703  
217-529-6601  
www.bunnomatic.com



Bunn is a partner you can count on for profitable, reliable beverage equipment and great service wherever you serve customers around the world. Offering a complete line of dispensed beverage equipment, BUNN manufactures coffee brewers and grinders; liquid coffee dispensers; iced tea brewers; cappuccino, granita, and juice machines; super-automatic espresso systems; precise temperature water systems; water quality systems; and paper filters. The Bunn-O-Matic Corporation serves beverage equipment customers throughout the world, with plants and warehouses in Illinois, Iowa, New York, and California, as well as in Canada, Mexico, Germany, China, and the United Kingdom.

## Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream

4301 Hacienda Drive, Suite 550  
Pleasanton, CA 94588  
800-531-2663  
www.dreyersinc.com



In 2006, Dreyer's became a wholly-owned subsidiary of Nestlé®. Today, Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream is a \$2 billion company. Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream Holdings, Inc., and its subsidiaries manufacture and distribute a full spectrum of ice cream and frozen dessert products. The company's premium products are marketed under the Dreyer's brand name throughout the Western states and Texas, and under the Edy's® brand name throughout the remainder of the United States. Internationally, the Dreyer's brand extends to select markets in the Far East, and the Edy's brand extends to the Caribbean and South America.

## Ghirardelli Chocolate

1111 139th Avenue  
San Leandro, CA 94578  
800-877-9338  
www.ghirardelli.com



Ghirardelli Chocolate Company has been focused on premium chocolate since its founding in 1852, making it the longest continuously operating chocolate company in America. Ghirardelli is also one of only a handful of companies that controls all aspects of chocolate making, from cocoa bean to finished products. This control over the manufacturing process, combined with Ghirardelli's proprietary bean blend and unique methods of roasting and processing, guarantees the highest quality chocolate with the smooth, intense taste that Ghirardelli is known for. Ghirardelli premium chocolate is perfect for use in baking and cooking, coffee, and cocoa drinks, as well as blended beverages.

## Grindmaster-Cecilware

4003 Collins Lane  
Louisville, KY 40245  
www.gmcwcorp.com



Grindmaster-Cecilware's™ extensive product line is the basis for the company's mission: to build the next generation single source global beverage and foodservice equipment solution. Grindmaster-Cecilware manufactures a comprehensive line of quality beverage dispensing equipment for hot, cold, and frozen beverages and a complementary foodservice equipment line. For the past 99 years Grindmaster-Cecilware has contributed significantly to the history and evolution of the beverage and foodservice industry. Our unwavering commitment to customer focused solutions drives innovation that is proven in the customer experience.

## The Hershey Company

14 E. Chocolate Avenue  
Hershey, PA 17033-0804  
877-772-3556  
www.hersheys.com



The Hershey Company is the largest producer of quality chocolate in North America and a global leader in chocolate and sugar confectionery. The company has operations throughout the world and more than 12,000 employees. With revenues of more than \$5 billion, Hershey offers such iconic brands as Hershey's, Reese's, Hershey's Kisses, Kit Kat, Twizzlers, and Ice Breakers, as well as the smooth, creamy indulgence of Hershey's Bliss. Hershey is a leader in the fast-growing dark and premium chocolate segment, with such brands as Hershey's Special Dark and Hershey's Extra Dark.



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## The Players

### Monin Gourmet Flavorings

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800-966-5225  
www.monin.com



Founded in Bourges, France, in 1912, Monin Gourmet Flavorings is driven by time-honored flavor traditions entrusted through three generations of the Monin family. Today, Monin is the world's leading provider of premium gourmet flavorings. With an uncompromising standard for quality and flavoring expertise, Monin Gourmet Flavorings is dedicated to producing premium products for creating a full range of customized and distinct beverages. Monin matches quality products with attentive, first-rate customer service and innovative recipe applications to give operators proven, successful beverage offerings.

### Mont Blanc Gourmet

2925 E. Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80206  
800-877-3811  
www.montblancgourmet.com



After nearly two decades of creating high-end chocolates and gourmet cocoa for premier hotels such as New York's Plaza Hotel and notables like Pope John Paul II, the mother and son team of Mont Blanc Gourmet has developed a product to give them worldwide recognition. In 2000 they launched a line of premium syrups and drink mixes to capitalize on the coffee revolution. Irene and Michael Szyliowicz's forward-thinking philosophy and willingness to take risks is paying off. Mont Blanc Gourmet has experienced remarkable growth, with sales increasing from \$1 million to \$13 million.

### Sara Lee Foodservice

3500 Lacey Road  
Downers Grove, IL 60515  
630-598-6000  
www.saralee.com



Sara Lee Foodservice is a leading supplier of coffee and tea, meat, and bakery solutions, providing value beyond its products to a broad base of foodservice operators throughout North America. Sara Lee Foodservice markets products enjoyed away from home for every daypart under such well-known brands as Douwe Egberts coffee and Pickwick and Paradise teas; Sara Lee, Chef Pierre, and Bistro Collection bakery products; and Sara Lee, Jimmy Dean, Ball Park, and Hillshire Farm meats. Sara Lee Foodservice products are available in restaurants, retail establishments, schools, convenience stores, healthcare facilities, hospitality venues, and other foodservice operations.

### S&D Coffee

300 Concord Parkway South  
Concord, NC 28027  
800-933-2210  
www.sndcoffee.com



Privately owned by the Davis Family since its founding in 1927, S&D has grown from a small company to one of the largest coffee manufacturers and roasters in the United States. The company provides coffee, tea, and juice to more than 70,000 commercial customers throughout the country through an extensive national network of approved distributors and a traditional route delivery network. The firm is dedicated to quality and is ISO 9001:2008 certified.

### Vitamix

8615 Usher Road  
Cleveland, Ohio 44138  
440-782-2451  
www.vitamix.com/foodservice



Vita-Mix® Corporation is a family organization with global reach. It provides a high level of value benefit to its customers by developing, producing, and marketing high-performance, durable, reliable, and innovative blending equipment to the consumer market and foodservice industries.

### YoCream

5858 NE 87th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97220  
800-962-7326  
www.yocream.com



YoCream International, Inc. is a world leader in the frozen yogurt industry. Since 1977 YoCream has pioneered the innovation, production and marketing of frozen yogurt and fruit-based frozen desserts and beverages. The company operates a state-of-the-art production facility in Portland to manufacture its "true" frozen yogurt, which contains real yogurt that is fermented and cultured onsite daily. YoCream's products are characterized by great flavor and significant health benefits. The company offers over 110 flavors of frozen yogurt, ice cream, frozen custard, sorbet, smoothies, frozen carbonated beverages, slushes, and frozen drink mixes. YoCream products are sold domestically and internationally through a strong and growing network of over 200 distributors.