**Basic small-batch ~85% dark chocolate recipe (excluding my trade secrets developed during formulation development, scale up, and process development). Of course everything can be scaled linearly. Volumetrically, it’s about a 3:3:1 ratio of cocoa powder:cocoa butter:sugar.**

* 1 cup cocoa powder (~88g, Valrhona preferred)
* 1 cup cocoa butter (~224g, can substitute some for coconut oil)
* 5 tbsp finely ground sugar (~50g, ~1/4-1/3 cup depending on bulk density). It’s really tough using table sugar without a mill or great mortar & pestle. You can find baker’s sugar (also known as caster sugar) in some places. Alternatively you can use confectionary (powdered) sugar, but the corn starch is undesirable.

**Master Batch Record:**

1. Under low heat, melt cocoa butter
2. Gently stir in cocoa powder
3. Add sugar
4. Keep heat low (115-130F) and continue to mix (≥15 minutes) until sugar is well dispersed/dissolved. Do not allow to boil or burn. Keep between 115 & 130
5. Remove from heat and cool to ~80-85F while stirring occasionally
6. Temper to anneal between 86 and 90F for at least 15 minutes, preferably much longer (1-2 hours). This works best if you seed with previously made dark chocolate of the proper crystal form (e.g. a crushed commercial bar or previous batch). This is the most critical step and far easier to do with a sous vide cooker or double boiler. You should start to see and feel the chocolate thicken/crystallize. If you put a few drops onto a cooler surface, it should produce a shiny and hard cast. If it appears matted and/or soft then you’re not there yet.
7. Remove from heat and cast into mold with additives\*
8. Set in refrigerator for ≥1 hour (or freezer for ~15 minutes if in a rush). If you’ve tempered really well then you don’t need to cool beyond room temperature, but the colder temperature will help speed the hardening process.
9. Remove from mold or break/cut and eat as desired

\*additives can include nuts, chili or hot pepper powders, coconut, fruit, sea salt, etc etc etc…

**Bonus:** for the best hot chocolate *ever*, after step 5…

5a) Cut at least 50/50 vol/vol with lightly sweetened almond milk (2:1 milk:chocolate best)

5b) Stir in hot chili, peanut butter, or whatever suits your fancy as desired

5c) Mix until well blended under medium heat (~130-180F)

5d) Drink while hot