



### Everything in your own hands

When we tried to confirm our appointment with Peter Beier, we received an e-mail that he was at a cocoa plantation. We found out later that indeed he owns his own plantation but that's not all. With twenty years of experience Peter knows what he is talking about. He doesn't want to think about anything else but chocolate. This philosophy must have helped him because he now owns four shops, another three franchises and a large production facility outside the city, because in his shops they only make hot chocolate. "I sell the most chocolate in Copenhagen. We have just one product and that is chocolate and I want to be the best in that. By making everything in a central location, I know that the flavour will always be consistent and good. The big difference between others and us is that we have the complete process in our own hands from bean to bonbon. I have my own cocoa plantation in the Dominican Republic and also my own orchards of apples, pears and soft fruits. We even have our own almond trees and they are so difficult to maintain that no one else wants to do it, so we are ahead of others in that respect." Even in Copenhagen Peter has his own learning institute where a small plantation is built. "A good employer should know everything. We deliberately choose to have our own plantation so we don't need to compromise when we import. It is not a matter of money, but a way to make the very best and you can adapt the flavour to your own liking." His ambition for perfection goes even further; he only employs people who are fully trained in the business. "It is more expensive, but I know what I have. We treat everyone to a nice breakfast and a free lunch. It is motivational and you are not eating sweets all day. Every store has fruit plates for our staff. It has to be a pleasure to work for us and that results in quality."

Peter tells us that the entire process is in his hands but we haven't heard any mention of a small dairy factory. Does he own that too? "That's not necessary since we work with hardly any dairy. I don't use butter or cream in my ganache. The Danish like concentrated flavours and a ganache contains mostly chocolate with a bit of milk and maybe cognac. It gives a much purer taste." Peter is pretty clear when it comes to prices. It doesn't matter if you buy one gram or one kilo bonbons, the price is the same. "I don't force people to buy more; they should take what they like." We don't see anything strange in the store, some nicely displayed pralines and some pre-wrapped little boxes. The boxes are special as they are made of the waste of the cocoa beans. The chocolatier has his own opinion on flavours: "It is pure chocolate or marzipan with a suitable flavour, no whipped butter cream or heavy ganaches. We pack our boxes to the rim; people are not here to buy air."