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Hotel Chocolat Summary Background

Hotel Chocolat (shok-o-LA), the British cocoa grower and luxury chocolatier has blazed a trail of innovation and excitement since its founding by entrepreneurs Angus Thirlwell and Peter Harris in 2003. With a commitment to quality ingredients, Hotel Chocolat (www.hotelchocolat.com) offers consumers an original authentic chocolate with a witty fashion edge influenced by the London scene.

Hotel Chocolat holds steadfast to its three secret ingredients: *Originality* for its spirit and innovation that permeates the company, products, packaging and imagery; *Authenticity* for working with real ingredients and pioneering “No Nasties” and “Less Sugar More Cocoa” policies allowing the true flavors of some of the rarest cocoa to shine through, and *Ethics* for making a difference and employing a sustainable agriculture program that benefits the cocoa communities in St. Lucia and Ghana.

Hotel Chocolat first started as a mail order catalog offering innovated products with beautiful packaging. It later evolved to an award-winning ecommerce website. In 2004, the company launched its first retail store in Watford, England. Today, Hotel Chocolat has 32 stores across the UK and is fast planning its global expansion with its first US locations in the Boston area in Fall 2009.

Hotel Chocolat has emerged as one of the UK fastest growing businesses according to *The Sunday Times* 2008 Virgin Atlantic Fast Track. It has won numerous awards including 2007 *Retail Week's* Emerging Retailer of the Year, 2007 Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year and was confirmed as a 2007 Cool Brand alongside marquee brands, Aston Martin and Apple.

For more information, visit www.hotelchocolat.com.

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