

## **RE/MAX Joins Revolution in Southern Belize**

*RE/MAX Belize Property Center buys cacao plantation in southern Belize and joins the organic chocolate revolution to uphold fair trade agricultural practices in Belize. Maya Gold lives on in the form of intensely delicious organic chocolate.*

**Feb. 13, 2009** - [PRLog](#) -- There's a Chocolate Revolution underway in Southern Belize and three Canadians are wielding machetes alongside the Mayan farmers of the Toledo Cacao Growers' Association. The Chocolate Revolution began, in the early 90's, just after The Hershey Company relocated from Belize, leaving Belize's Mayan farmers hanging high and dry. The price of chocolate dipped from \$1.75 to 55¢ a pound.

Today, Belize's Chocolate Revolution is just about as sweet as a fermented cacao pod. The Mayan farmers are packing machetes and pruning implements. Over 200 Mayan farmers of the Toledo Cacao Grower's Association (TCGA) are reaping the rewards of the fair-trade agricultural practices put into place by Britain's Green and Black's chocolate company, in 1993, in an historic moment that will forever sweeten the annals of agricultural history. Today, Belize's organic cacao beans are sold for about BZE\$2.30/lb.

If you're into "chocolate with a conscience", the organic cacao farms of Southern Belize will be your cup of tea. The organic cacao farm in Punta Gorda, Belize's Deep South, was recently purchased by Looey Tremblay, Ron Dewhurst and Michael Saunders, all of whom are associated with RE/MAX Property Center <http://www.belizepropertycenter.com> in San Ignacio, Belize. It is the perfect setting for the sequel of Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory.

There's monkey business afoot in Belize; even the primates are chocoholics here. Hunkered under the humid canopy of the lush rainforest, the shade-tolerant cacao trees grow to a height of 20 feet. Swollen with sweet, milky flesh, the ripe pods are a beacon to the forest canopy dwellers. Munching on ripe cacao pods, the howler monkeys spit out the bitter seeds onto the rainforest floor. The new owners of the cacao plantation, all Canadians, told us that monkeys, birds, bats and gibnuts (a Belizean rodent) were the unpaid workhorses of the cacao farm. Ron Dewhurst said "The monkeys munch on some of the cacao pods before they rot and help in dispersing the seeds".

Looey Tremblay, who is the Broker/Owner of RE/MAX Property Center in San Ignacio Belize, gave us the lowdown on how their cacao farm provides the beans for the intensely delicious organic chocolate produced by Britain's famous Green and Black's Organic Chocolatiers <http://www.greenandblacks.com>.

It all started with a fateful meeting with a couple of Mayan cacao farmers during a real estate scouting trip in Toledo, Belize. Tremblay's links to the Mayans actually began years before he physically visited Belize. In a curious twist of fate, Tremblay's RE/MAX office in Canada is just down the road from where Belize's famous "Crystal Skull" was housed in a motel on Victoria Street in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. When asked about this, Mr. Tremblay said "Yes, it's a little weird, isn't it...but I'm not about to question the power of the Mayans". Eighty-two year old Estevan Bol and Florentina Choc (real name – don't question the power of the Mayans) were Mayan farmers who had harvested and pruned their cacao plantation like their forefathers, for decades. When Mr. Tremblay met them in 2008, they were ready to sell their 14-acre cacao plantation, 6 acres of which were cultivated.

Messrs. Tremblay, Dewhurst and Saunders are proud to pay the Mayan farmers a premium rate for the organic cacao, grown without chemicals or artificial fertilizers, which is grown and harvested on their farm. Working closely with Green and Black's agronomist, Marco Figueroa, gave them an intimate peek into the

journey from bean to bar.

While it's a real stretch to believe that anything this delicious could possibly be good for you, Mr. Saunders assured us that raw cacao really is "food for thought". He said "It's rich in minerals, antioxidants and is chock full of natural compounds that seem to relieve depression and create feelings of joy". If you're looking for Brownie points this Valentine's Day, you can't go wrong with Green and Black's Organic Ginger Bar, rated as one of "Food and Wine Magazine's Top 10 Chocolate Picks for Valentine's Day 2009".

With a purchase of Green and Black's Maya Gold chocolate, you are supporting about 200 Mayan farmers <http://www.toledochocolate.com/TCGA.html> and their families in the Punta Gorda area of Southern Belize. If you'd like to discover more about the chocolate revolution that is taking place in the heart of Belize's rainforest, please contact Looey Tremblay.

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About RE/MAX Belize Property Center: Our skilled and talented team of realtors at RE/MAX Belize Property Center are professional, full-time real estate agents who have been trained to North American standards. If you are wondering how you can finance a real estate purchase in Belize, buy a dive shop in Ambergris Caye, explore real estate investment opportunities in Belize or sell your property in Belize, we are the experts. We've got the answers to all those niggling, confounding and important questions about how to buy and sell property in Belize.

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