

STÉPHANE  
L E R O U X

*TECHNICAL AND PRACTICAL BOOK*

**B L E U**  
CHOCOLAT



## PHILOSOPHY AND INTRODUCTION

By Stéphane LEROUX

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Ten years... That's how long it took me to write a sequel to my first book, *Matière Chocolat*. During those ten years, I worked at Belcolate every day, which enabled me to continue growing in my trade as a chocolatier and refine the artistic approach of my work.

In these two books, I shared more than one hundred pieces and demonstrated some unique techniques. These many gestures all prove indispensable in our job. Everything that stems from the mind must be shared.

I also felt it was essential to share my experience in terms of premises, equipment, food and techniques used to make moulds, stencils and the many other skills I use every day to produce my pieces.

Relying on a careful layout and splendid illustrations, I tried to share my working philosophy with you and demonstrate the joy I feel when working with this exceptional ingredient that unendingly obsesses and impresses me.

I am convinced that many paths and techniques to chocolate are left uncharted, ready to be discovered. Novelty comes through the eye and our very personal interpretations. Although nothing is impossible or inaccessible, we must acknowledge the constant work, patience and reflection that we give to our trade and ensuing self-knowledge. This is what I wanted to share with you in this book dedicated to artistic chocolate work. Using new nature and

animal-oriented subjects, I tried to open your eyes to more personal, even abstract possibilities.

The contribution of Tom Swalens - whom I have known for more than 10 years - in showcasing my work proved crucial in this book. Gifted with a true artistic sense, Tom is incredibly demanding, objective and professional. I learned many things through his eyes. Photography is the only means I have to immortalise my creations, although I love the ephemeral, fragile aspect of chocolate. Each creation allows me to grow as though nothing was ever set in stone.

I take huge pleasure in creating and designing my pieces, although the final result is nothing more than the achievement of an idea or a whim (sometimes spontaneous) and more often than not, my pieces are destined to disappear once they have been photographed.

My professional path and many encounters have persuaded me that sharing is necessary, indispensable to preserve the spirit in which one can practice a trade, an art form. I have tried to do this in this book and would like to give my warm thanks to all those who follow my path.

I hope that you will get as much pleasure in discovering and using this book as I had designing and making it.

Enjoy this book and get working!

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# SMALL AND LARGE EQUIPMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

THE HAND

PREMISES

WORK SURFACE

MECHANICAL OR AUTOMATIC TEMPERING MACHINE

TABLE TEMPERING KETTLE OR MELTING KETTLE

DRYING OVEN

ROBOT-CUTTER

MICROWAVE OVEN

INDUCTION HOT PLATE

LASER OR PROBE THERMOMETER

HYGROMETER

ROTATING PLATE

SMALL GRANITE PLATES

STAINLESS STEEL BAKING SHEETS AND GRIDS

SPIRIT LEVEL

COMPRESSOR

SPRAY GUN

SPRAY BOOTH

HEAT GUN AND HAIR-DRYER

COOL SPRAY

PAINTBRUSHES

FOAM ROLLERS

SMALL EQUIPMENT

TRIMMING TOOLS AND OTHER MODELLING TOOLS

CUTTER

ADHESIVE TAPE

## INTRODUCTION

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My philosophy for my artistic work consists in avoiding relying on equipment. Indeed, too much focus on the latter can hinder creativity. That said, do not fall in the opposite extreme. Over the past several decades, I have managed to get a clear idea of all the elements I need to bring together through various training courses, private tuition and demonstrations that have taken me around the globe.

In this book, you will find the basic equipment required to execute artistic chocolate pieces.

## BUTTERCUP

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This very simple yellow flower available in a wide range of sizes offers interesting possibilities to create multiple centre pieces for buffets or to decorate pastries and cakes.

It only requires little equipment and is very quick to make.





## EQUIPMENT AND RAW MATERIALS

Polyethylene sheets (40X60)

PVC roll

Hollow punch pastry wheel

Cookie cutters

Spray gun and compressor

Yellow tempered white chocolate

Half spheres in white and dark  
chocolate (all sizes)

Yellow cocoa butter

Gold glitter flakes

## METHOD

**1 > 2** On your work surface, place a polyethylene sheet and pour tempered yellow chocolate on its base.

**3 > 4** Place a second polyethylene sheet and spread the chocolate using a PVC roll.



- BUTTERCUP -



**5 > 6** Cut the crown of the petals using a hollow punch pastry wheel and cookie cutters. Leave to crystallise for an hour at 16°C.

**7** In the meanwhile, colour the flower hearts using tempered gold yellow cocoa butter to create a velvet effect.

**8 > 10** To assemble the flowers, peel the plastic sheets from the petal crowns and delicately place the latter on the coloured half-spheres.



## CORRUGATED BOARD

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Is there anything plainer than cardboard? I wanted to work this matter for its trompe-l'oeil qualities. Its always very funny to look at spectators observing the result and wondering if it's really chocolate...

Beyond the fun factor, cardboards also offer great possibilities to create volumes and I sincerely think that this effect can have a strong visual impact on the staging of a presentation buffet. Anyway, it's original and unexpected.





## EQUIPMENT AND RAW MATERIALS

Corrugated board (40 x 60)

Brown paper sheet (40 x 60)

Cranked palette knife

Cutter

PVC roll

Bowl and spatula

Soft paintbrush

Pearl effect sparkling powder

Powdered carbon black

Tempered white chocolate

Tempered milk chocolate

## METHOD

**1 ▶ 3** Mix 500 g tempered white chocolate with 100 g tempered milk chocolate until complete homogenisation.

**4 ▶ 6** Pour some of this mixture on a corrugated board, spread it over 2 mm with the cranked palette knife and tap the sheet to remove any air bubble.



- CORRUGATED BOARD -



**7 > 8** Immediately after, place a sheet of brown paper and remove the air with a PVC roll.

**9 > 10** Once slightly crystallised, tear strips of paper to create more realism. Leave to crystallise for an hour at 16°C.

**11** Delicately remove the cardboard and brown paper sheet.



- CORRUGATED BOARD -

**12 • 16** Reuse the same sheet of brown paper to make the other side of the cardboard. The impression will be more realistic and will reinforce the piece.

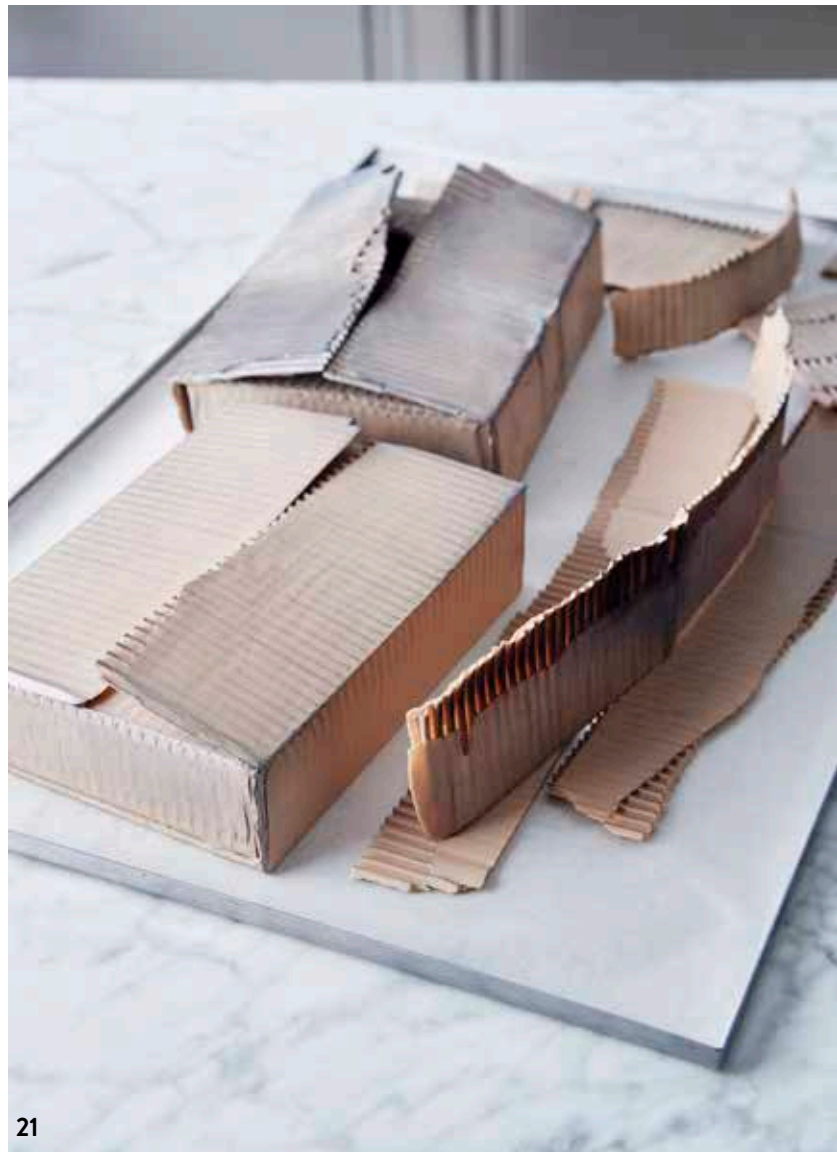




- CORRUGATED BOARD -



17 › 21 After crystallisation, remove the brown paper and colour the cardboard with powdered carbon black and pearl effect sparkling powder.





## CORROSION

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This effect and colours are similar to that of raw chocolate.

Corrugated iron sheets provides great effects. But the little details are very important for more realism. I use a metal brush to reproduce the pitted and structured effect of corrosion, while cocoa butter and the various pigments provide the rust effect.

Since each metal boasts its specificities and nuances of corrosion, this technique can be applied using other colours to suggest copper or aluminium for example.



## EQUIPMENT AND RAW MATERIALS

Baking paper sheets

3 mm thick frame

Three aluminium rulers

Two silicone rulers

Corrugated PVC sheets

Metal brush

Rotating plate

Spray gun and compressor

Cool spray

Soft brush

Tempered dark chocolate

Blue and rust cocoa butter

Sparkling rust food colouring

## METHOD

**1 ▶ 3** Place the frame on a baking paper sheet. Pour and spread the tempered chocolate in the frame without filling it to the brim.

**4 ▶ 5** Remove the frame and place the whole on the corrugated PVC plate. Keep the whole in place using the two silicone rulers.





6 Once the chocolate is crystallised, start structuring the plate with a metal brush.

7-9 Turn the plate, remove the baking paper sheet and structure it on the other side, still using the metal brush.





- CORROSION -



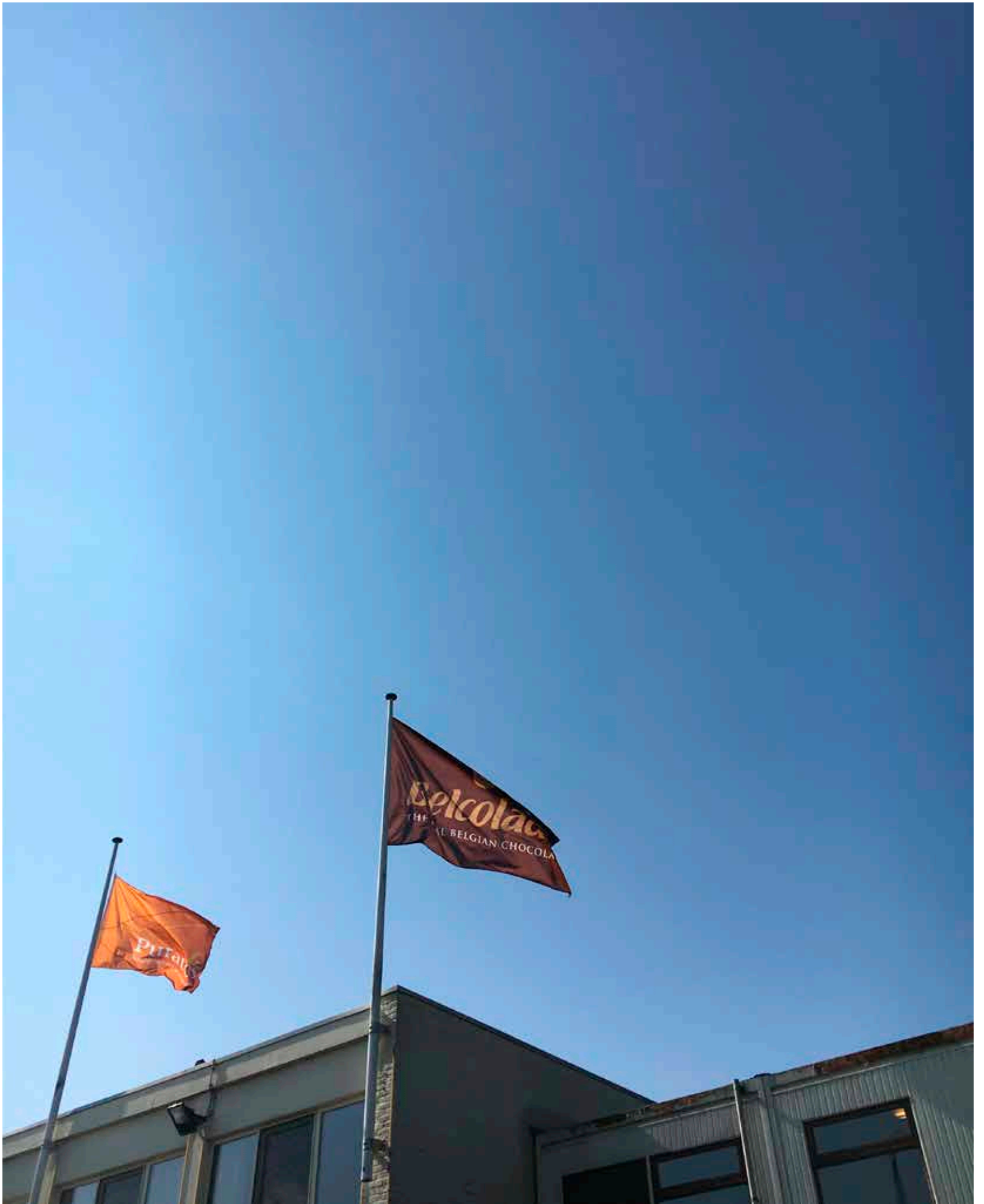
**10 › 11** Colour the plate with tempered light blue and tempered rust coloured cocoa butters.

**12 › 13** To obtain an even more realistic corrosion effect, cool the ends of the plate with a cool spray to create a velvet effect with the rust cocoa butter.



**14 · 16** Once the cocoa butter has crystallised, finish your piece by applying the sparkling rust colour with a soft brush to give more relief.





## BELCOLADE THE REAL BELGIAN CHOCOLATE

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In 1988, Puratos established a new brand of finest quality chocolate exclusively produced in Belgium. Belcolade represented the culmination of a collective passion for the great taste of real Belgian chocolate. As a result, everything was new: supply, recipes, production, packaging, communication, and above all... taste.

### **Made in Belgium**

Mention the name “Belgium” and many people from all walks of life and regions of the world will think “chocolate”. At Belcolade, we take great pride in being a part of the rich tradition and heritage that has earned Belgian chocolate its extraordinary reputation. Moreover, we work hard to protect and enhance it through an unmatched dedication to quality, innovation, customer service and leadership in taste. Thus, all our chocolate is – and always has been – produced in our factory in Erembodegem, near Aalst, Belgium, guaranteeing the authentic Belgian chocolate experience.

### **A passion for taste**

Consumer demand for quality is growing, and at Belcolade, there is no stronger indicator of quality than taste. It’s certainly not a coincidence that you can tell Belcolade chocolate by its unrivalled taste experience, stemming from a rigorous selection of the finest, freshest ingredients and expert blending of the best quality cocoa beans from around the globe. We only use 100% cocoa butter and genuine natural vanilla in our products to guarantee quality standards in keeping with our reputation and today’s marketplace.

### **Expert craftsmanship**

But it’s not just quality ingredients, it’s what you do with them that counts. This is why Belcolade chocolate is made according to the traditional Belgian process of mixing, grinding, conching and tempering. This process has taken decades to perfect. For example, we use a five-rolls refiner to create an extremely smooth and fine texture (20 micron) and take our time to create the unique taste of Belcolade chocolate.

### **A commitment to excellence**

As part of our commitment to develop chocolate expertise, we created the Belcolade Chocolate Centre in Erembodegem, Belgium. Since then, the centre has become an international training venue where professionals from around the world can exchange ideas and share best practices. It’s the place where we provide our chocolate courses and seminars, where we offer technical advice on the latest ingredients, technologies and processes, and where we organise inspiring workshops to produce unique finished products.

