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SPOTLIGHT

From

DIASPORA
INVESTMENT
DESK, GIPC

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The 57 CHOCOLATE SISTERS



GHANA
INVESTMENT
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*Co-founders of '57 Chocolate sat down with the
Diaspora Investment Desk at Ghana Investment Promotion Centre to
share the story of their bean to bar manufacturing company- '57
Chovclates- and how they navigated through the ecosystem.*

DID Kindly introduce yourself
and your business.

'57 Hello! We are Kimberly and Priscilla Addison (aka the '57 Sisters) and we are co-founders of '57 Chocolate, a bean-to-bar manufacturing company located in Accra, Ghana. We take Ghana's raw cocoa and transform it into luxurious chocolate.

The name '57 is short for 1957—the year of Ghana's independence. 1957 was a revolutionary year for Ghana, not only because it was freed from colonial rule, but it is the year that gave birth to the nation's "can do" spirit. It is a call and reminder that sometimes to go forward, we need to look back at our foundation—our roots. We hope that '57 Chocolate inspires people from Ghana, and across the continent, especially the youth, to create, develop and consume made in Africa products of premium value.



DID When was '57
Chocolate established?

'57 The idea for the company came about in 2014 when Kimberly visited a Swiss chocolate factory, Cailler, and learned that most cocoa beans used to make chocolate come from West Africa. However, we didn't start the company until 2016. From 2014 – 2016, we were doing research, talking to key people and chocolate makers in the industry, and learning how to make chocolate from bean-to-bar—which is not an easy thing to do.

DID What inspired you to start
'57 Chocolate?

'57 Having lived in Geneva, Switzerland for a couple of years, we thought it was strange that Switzerland is known for its chocolate, but yet doesn't grow cocoa- the main ingredient in chocolate. Meanwhile, Ghana is the second-largest producer of cocoa but produces very little chocolate itself. We saw a vast need for manufacturing chocolate in Ghana and across the continent of Africa.

When we moved to Ghana in 2014, the candy shelves of supermarkets and malls were overflowing with foreign chocolate bars, many undoubtedly made with Ghana's very own cocoa. Having recognized all of this, we were determined to use Ghanaian cocoa to create a high-quality African chocolate brand that is reputable locally, and internationally, and can compete on the world market.

Our mission is to add value to local resources by transforming them into high-quality products that celebrate African art and culture.



“We are working towards having our chocolate sold across the continent of Africa and around the globe. We hope for our chocolate to continue to reflect and build upon the unique traditions and culture that make us call Ghana and Africa home!”

DID **What sector of Ghana’s economy is ‘57 Chocolate focused on?**

‘57 Manufacturing and adding value to cocoa is the core of what we do.

For us, it’s always been more than just chocolate, it’s about value addition and instilling the importance of manufacturing in Ghana and on the African continent.

Also, we want to bring African art and culture to the forefront and show the world that Africans can make quality products.

We want Ghana to be known for its chocolate, not just its cocoa beans! Over the long-term, we aim to create an African chocolate brand that is known worldwide, but most importantly one that surpasses our lifetime.

DID **How many employees do you currently employ?**

‘57 Currently, we have a strong and mighty team of 12 employees. Many of our staff have worked with us since 2018 and are 18-40 years of age.

We actively train our employees in the art of chocolate making. Much like us, none of our employees had any prior knowledge of chocolate production.



DID **What services/products does your company offer?**

‘57 Our chocolate is handmade in small batches, rich in cocoa, and made without any artificial flavors, colors, or preservatives.

As part of the process of ensuring that our chocolate is of high quality, cocoa is always the first and main ingredient in our dark and milk chocolates, as opposed to sugar which is listed first in many other brands.

Our chocolate challenges the status quo of luxury chocolate being only a product of Europe.



What’s most unique about our business is that we produce chocolate that reflects Ghanaian art and culture, particularly through our Adinkra bars.

Currently, we have 6 signature flavors: 73 percent dark chocolate, 55 percent milk, white, mocha latte (coffee flavor), bissap (hibiscus flavor), and moringa chocolate.

We pair our chocolates with various ingredients like coconut and sea salt. For a complete list of our products, please visit our website, www.57chocolategh.com

Other services we provide include unique chocolate experiences for groups which include a chocolate and tea tasting and an artistic painting experience where participants paint an African-inspired artwork and taste chocolate.

Bookings for chocolate tastings can be made on our website: 57chocolategh.com/pages/chocolate-tasting

DID **Do your services/products address any of the SDGs?**

‘57 SDG9—Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation aligns with our motive of bringing back manufacturing to the African continent. We believe manufacturing is key to economic growth—and this would benefit Ghana greatly. ‘57 Chocolate’s passion is to inspire the people of Ghana, especially the youth to not be

satisfied at merely selling and trading the country's natural resources, but to add value and manufacture Ghanaian products.



DID Why did you choose to set up a business in Ghana?

'57 We are from Ghana. Ghana is our home. And Ghana has so much potential.

Setting up a business in Ghana is not for the faint-hearted—the struggle is real. But if you remain stubborn and determined, you will persevere.

DID What were the challenges you encountered while navigating Ghana's business ecosystem and how did you overcome them?

'57 Since starting '57 Chocolate, we've experienced the following challenges and some of them are still ongoing:

- o Access to finance for business expansion and necessary equipment;
- o High shipping costs (i.e., DHL, FEDEX);

- o Lack of human capital and training in chocolate making. Locally, there is no official training centre for individuals working in cocoa/chocolate;
- o High electricity costs and power outages: We use a generator, but, in the long term, we hope to convert our production center into a solar-powered one;
- o Ghana's climate is very hot which risks chocolate melting: We will continue to develop proper storage facilities as well as acquire temperature-controlled and insulated shipping materials; and
- o Sourcing Ingredients: Certain ingredients needed in chocolate production like milk powder are not manufactured locally which means they are imported- making them more expensive. As much as possible we try to source local ingredients.



DID What are the positive outcomes so far in investing in Ghana?

'57 Through '57 Chocolate, we are creating jobs, training young people, and helping them develop skills.

Our aim is to invest in Ghana's youth and instill the importance of value addition. We believe if Ghana is going to develop, it will be because of its youth.

Kindly send a word of encouragement to other diasporas looking to invest in Ghana to return home and invest in the limitless opportunities the country presents.

'57 We want to leave you with a quote from the late Ghanaian-American fashion designer and entrepreneur, Virgil Abloh. He said, "The thing that I would tell a younger version of myself? That the struggle is the point."

DID Kindly share your social media handles with us

- '57
- @57chocolate
 - @57chocolategh
 - @57chocolate
 - @57chocolate

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