

When is Swiss chocolate Swiss enough? Toblerone Chocolate Recently Found Out, and it Didn't Make the Cut.

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by Lindsey Sadler

The crinkle sound of the gold foil. The rich smell of honey and almond. The unique design of peaks and valleys. And the delicious taste of Swiss chocolate. There is little doubt that since its creation in 1908, Toblerone-branded chocolate has made a name for itself in the chocolate world. But one of its original and defining characteristics has recently been cast into doubt—its “Swissness.”

In 1868, Jean Tobler opened a confectionery shop in Bern, Switzerland that was an immediate success and grew into a chocolate factory by 1899. A decade later, Jean's son, Theodor Tobler and his cousin, Emil Baumann, invented a unique and innovative chocolate bar, a special recipe of milk chocolate, almond-based nougat, and honey formed into a distinct triangular shape. Theodor named this new confection “Toblerone,” a combination of his last name, “Tobler,” and “Torrone,” the Italian word for honey and almond nougat. The chocolate bar's popularity and international recognition only grew from there, including a feature at the 1964 World's Fair in New York City and the Expo in Montreal in 1967. In 1969, different varieties of the chocolate were introduced, and in 1970, the now infamous packaging was changed to add a depiction of the Matterhorn in the Swiss Alps, Switzerland's highest and most famous mountain. Since this time, packages of Toblerone have included various indicators that the chocolate bars were manufactured in Switzerland, including the Matterhorn icon and statements like “of Switzerland,” and “Swiss milk chocolate.”

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