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Fifty Colorado products perfect for the pantry, the gift list, or tonight's dinner table.
By Amanda M. Faison
October 2008

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Taste the onset of fall in Big B's Fabulous Juices. Thirty-five years of making cider and juices in Hotchkiss have perfected these organic refreshments. While we love sampling the variations (from cherry-apple juice to ginger-apple cooler), we always go back to the well-rounded flavor of the original Big B's: a gallon of cold-pressed apple cider that's made from the pulp of 48 apples.
www.freshapplecider.com

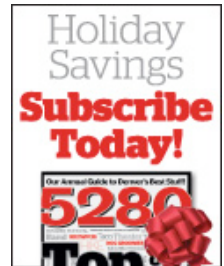
Throw a Continental Sausage on the grill. This Denver company's recipes haven't been altered in more than 35 years, which means Continental makes sausage by chopping (not grinding) all-natural meats and using whole, organic fruits and veggies rather than powders, flavorings, or MSG. Bonus: Get to know the Continental Deli in Cherry Creek North—the shop serves as the company's retail outlet, and it's also a popular lunch spot.
www.continentalsausage.com

Savor De Vries Costa Rican Trinitario dark chocolate. If you think all the talk about single-origin chocolate is just jibber-jabber, take a small bite of this bar and discover the depth and richness that comes with quality. Denver-based chocolatier Steve De Vries explains it this way, "Chocolate is about what happens in your mouth." And we can attest that one tantalizing bite will convince you that chocolate is food, not candy.
www.devrieschocolate.com

Top a slice of baguette with Sunlight. This semi-hard, raw-milk goat cheese, courtesy of Niwot's Haystack Mountain Goat Dairy, has a washed rind, tastes slightly sweet, and is aged for 60 days. Pair with dried cherries, sliced apples, or grapes—and sip a Sauvignon Blanc or a refreshing lager.
www.haystackgoatcheese.com

Pat on Sweet Mama's Kansas City Style Rub from Savory Spice Shop. This sugar- and paprika-spiced rub with a salty-smoky taste pairs well with just about everything you put on the grill. The sugar-salt balance is killer—and perfect on oven fries.
www.savoryspiceshop.com

Dress up a cheese plate with Frasca Food and Wine's Red Pepper Jelly. The recipe for this zippy and sweet accompaniment originated with chef Lachlan Mackinnon-Patterson's grandmother. Try it at the restaurant, and then serve it at home paired with cheese, roasted potatoes, or simply bagels and cream cheese.



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www.frascafoodandwine.com

Get in line for Carly's Gold. This Carbondale-made mustard is often one of the first items to sell out at Colorado farmers' markets. The recipe is top-secret, but fresh herbs, olive oil, and mustard seeds combine for a clean, slightly acidic taste that heightens flavor. We like it as a dipping sauce or on grilled salmon. www.carlysgold.com

Sip on a cup of Novo Coffee. In a world overrun by Starbucks, this Denver-based specialty coffee company stands as an oasis. We could wax rhapsodic about single-origin beans from La Concordia, Colombia, or the caramelized flavors of Ojo de Agua from Volcan, Panama, or you can just try it. You will taste a difference. www.novocoffee.com

Nurse a glass of Stranahan's Colorado Whiskey. This smooth and pure-tasting whiskey reflects the Rocky Mountains—and the fact that the Denver-based distiller only makes three barrels a week. To truly appreciate the spicy undertone, serve Stranahan's on the rocks. www.stranahans.com

Chew on a piece of Colorado Homestead Ranches Jerky. One of the things we like best about these elk and buffalo jerkies is that they don't contain nitrates—the Paonia-based company knows the offerings are flavorful enough without synthetics. We favor snacking on the savory, slightly smoky buffalo. www.homesteadranches.com

Toss back a handful of Patsy's Candies Original Popcorn. Legend has it that Cracker Jack was spawned from this Colorado Springs company's recipe. Whether it's true or not, we know that the butterscotch-coated popcorn is divinely addictive. www.patsyscandies.com

Dip into Wen Chocolates' caramel sauce. Made in Denver by pastry chef William Poole, this decadent treat can easily be enjoyed by the spoonful. Of course, it's more polite to drizzle it over ice cream, crêpes, shortbread cookies, toast.... Poole also makes a chocolate sauce that's so dark it's nearly black—and it glints as if made with gold. We dare you to find something more decadent than a scoop of vanilla ice cream topped with both. www.wenchocolates.com

Fan the flames with Danny Cash's High Altitude Gourmet Hot Sauces. These habanero-based sauces—created by a Mohawk-sporting, motorcycle-riding bad-boy—aren't for the faint of heart. The garlic-serrano blend rates a seven out of 10. (According to Cash, Tabasco rates a four on the scale.) Now that there are six sauces, this Denver resident has branched out into condiments. Keep an eye out for the kicky habanero ketchup and habanero honey mustard. www.highaltitudegourmet.com

Munch on cookies from Ice Box Bakery. These Boulder-made, refrigerated cookie doughs trump the commercial slice-and-bake disks—and well they should as they're free of preservatives and stabilizers. And did we mention these all-natural doughs were dreamt up by Boulder pastry chefs Allison Patterson (former owner of Allison's Espresso) and Jennifer Bush (of Blue Fine Pastries fame)? Flavors range from deluxe chocolate chip to farmers' market cherry pie, but our pick is the chewy ginger spice. www.iceboxbakery.com

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