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KEN GOTO'S QUEST
**New Heights
in Chocolate**



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Photos by Christina Lord
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Jacques Torres Chocolate,
Brooklyn, NY

From Rocks to Mountains of Chocolate:

Climbing Straight to the Top

by Julia Price

Japan is a captivating country, embracing wonders such as yakitori (skewered grilled chicken), karaoke (sing-alongs), Iron Wok Jan (a Manga comic book mimicking 'Iron Chef'), and Harajuku (the trendy Tokyo fashion district). Despite the recent influx of Japanese chocolate masters however, the cacao sensation is not accustomed to appearing top-list as traditionally Japanese. But just as the French can develop a love of sushi, so can the Japanese cultivate a passion for chocolate. Keitaro (Ken) Goto, of Jacques Torres Chocolates in Brooklyn, is clearly shining proof.

As a high school exchange student in Philadelphia, Goto began his journey, unaware of his future title of 'Chocolate Guru'. He grew up in Tokyo, where his parents still reside, and, aside from his family's garden barbecues, Goto enjoyed a love affair with desserts. His favorites embodied the sugary sweet breads he would pick up from the local convenience store everyday after school, as well as the cakes his older sister occasionally brought home.

However, despite his sweet tooth, Goto's career never really factored in chocolate, unless of course you count the post-adventure snacks he might have enjoyed after a long day out on the rocks of Colorado. Early on, his ideal top-secret goal (shh, don't tell his parents) was to be a professional rock climber. However, after six years of low pay (not to mention the dangers and constant threat of bodily injury), Goto ventured on to his second favorite past time: cooking.



Keitaro Goto taking a break in front of Jacques Torres's chocolate shop in Brooklyn.

