

## **First CHOCOLATE ACADEMY™ center on the African continent Barry Callebaut opens CHOCOLATE ACADEMY center in South Africa**

- **CHOCOLATE ACADEMY center South Africa is the first on the African continent, reaffirming Barry Callebaut’s commitment to the South African market and industry**
- **The academy will offer masterclasses and world-class support, enabling customers to harness their skills to bring the best innovations in chocolate**
- **The CHOCOLATE ACADEMY center South Africa is aligned with 20 CHOCOLATE ACADEMY centers worldwide**

*Johannesburg/South Africa – May 8, 2018* – The Barry Callebaut Group, the world’s leading manufacturer of high-quality chocolate and cocoa products, opens May 8, 2018, the first CHOCOLATE ACADEMY center in Johannesburg, South Africa. For the Group, it is the 21<sup>st</sup> chocolate academy it opens in the world and the first on the African continent. “Not only are we celebrating a milestone for Barry Callebaut, but this marks a special moment for the South African chocolate industry. It reaffirms our commitment to the South African market. The CHOCOLATE ACADEMY center is an invaluable asset to South African chocolate professionals and artisans, offering endless possibilities in all the aspects related to chocolate and cocoa products. We are taking the local chocolate spirit to new heights,” says David Bowrin, Sales Director for South East Africa.

The CHOCOLATE ACADEMY centers are teaching and training centers for artisans and professionals who want to improve their skills in chocolate and learn about new trends, techniques and recipes. More than 500 interested craftsmen attend these events every week in our CHOCOLATE ACADEMY centers worldwide. With the infrastructure available in our CHOCOLATE ACADEMY centers, Barry Callebaut can cater to each and every question on cocoa, chocolate and the technical aspects involved.

South African born Minette Smith, will lead the CHOCOLATE ACADEMY center in Johannesburg with a strong commitment to elevate and innovate chocolate skills throughout South Africa. “The CHOCOLATE ACADEMY center is a magnificent environment, not only for chefs, but also for everyone who has a passion for chocolate. The environment in the CHOCOLATE ACADEMY center will offer world-class support, enabling customers to harness their skills to bring the best innovations in chocolate,” says Minette Smith.

The new academy will host master classes with a strong focus on chocolate fundamentals. Specialty master classes will also be offered and during these classes, talented chefs and industry experts from around the world will be able to share their passion, innovative ideas and expertise around chocolate.

While being globally aligned with the other 20 CHOCOLATE ACADEMY centers around the world, the CHOCOLATE ACADEMY center South Africa will also provide a forum for dialogue with customers through customer-focused demonstrations, innovation workshops as well as inspirational branded events.

Through the CHOCOLATE ACADEMY center South Africa, Barry Callebaut shares with South Africa more than 175 years of rich heritage through its global Gourmet chocolate brands Callebaut (chocolate made in Belgium), Cacao Barry (chocolate made in France) and its decorations brand Mona Lisa.

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**About Cacao Barry® ([www.cacaobarry.com](http://www.cacaobarry.com)):**

*By constantly inventing and reinventing Pastry and Gastronomy, France gave its name and mark to this art. It is a tradition envied by the whole world. It is all about creativity, innovation, and above all passion. Since its creation in 1842, Cacao Barry® has been entirely committed to this heritage. Today Cacao Barry® provides the most complete palette of products, to all passionate chocolate craftsmen around the world: chocolate and couvertures, pralinés, origins and exclusive plantations, decorations and moulds, inspiring them and opening doors to new creative experiences. Besides, Cacao Barry® offers the widest international community of chocolate professionals, Ambassadors' Club and Chocolate Academies to support craftsmen and chefs on their quest for perfection. Cacao Barry® is a global Gourmet brand of the Barry Callebaut group, the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality chocolate and cacao.*

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**About Callebaut® ([www.callebaut.com](http://www.callebaut.com)):**

*For more than 100 years, Callebaut® has been making chocolate in the heart of Belgium and is still one of the rare chocolate makers to select, roast and grind cacao beans into its own secret and exclusive cocoa mass – the most important ingredient for chocolate couvertures. Callebaut® was established in 1850 in Belgium as a malt brewery. Grandson Octaaf Callebaut produced his first chocolate bars in 1911 and began production of chocolate couverture for Belgian chocolatiers soon after. Callebaut® began exporting its finest Belgian chocolates in 1950 and is part of the Barry Callebaut group, the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality chocolate and cacao.*

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**About Mona Lisa® ([www.monalisadecorations.com](http://www.monalisadecorations.com)):**

*Mona Lisa® Decorations was founded in 1987, in the USA by a chef with the vision to produce innovative chocolate cups and shavings for horeca. Since then, the range has expanded to a tool box of shapes, textures, tastes and colors, everything required to make ordinary creations into extraordinary delights. The product portfolio goes beyond ready-made chocolate and sugar decorations to “creative extras” such as transfer, structure sheets and colorings. By empowering creativity, Mona Lisa aims to grow their customer's business which includes artisans, horeca and global food brands. The portfolio is mainly produced in 6 specialist facilities throughout Western Europe and North America.*

*Mona Lisa supports cocoa farming communities thru the Cocoa Horizons foundation and is a global brand of the Barry Callebaut group, the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality chocolate and cacao.*

**Follow Mona Lisa:**

**About the Barry Callebaut Group ([www.barry-callebaut.com](http://www.barry-callebaut.com)):**

With annual sales of about CHF 6.8 billion (EUR 6.3 billion / USD 6.9 billion) in fiscal year 2016/17, the Zurich-based Barry Callebaut Group is the world's leading manufacturer of high-quality chocolate and cocoa products – from sourcing and processing cocoa beans to producing the finest chocolates, including chocolate fillings, decorations and compounds. The Group runs close to 60 production facilities worldwide and employs a diverse and dedicated global workforce of about 11,000 people. The Barry Callebaut Group serves the entire food industry, from industrial food manufacturers to artisanal and professional users of chocolate, such as chocolatiers, pastry chefs, bakers, hotels, restaurants or caterers. The two global brands catering to the specific needs of these Gourmet customers are Callebaut® and Cacao Barry®. The Barry Callebaut Group is committed to make sustainable chocolate the norm by 2025 to help ensure future supplies of cocoa and improve farmers' livelihoods. It supports the Cocoa Horizons Foundation in its goal to shape a sustainable cocoa and chocolate future.

**Follow the Barry Callebaut Group:****Contact for the South African media:**

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