

# Truffle delight



**Posh Nosh**  
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Food Editor

If I had the wherewithal to go to Alba every year for white truffles, I would. During truffle season, the intoxicating aroma of the prized fungi hangs in the air. The Italians are generous with it too, shaving it on food with abandon.

Use in profusion, or not at all, seems to be the mantra.

Alas, my means are much more modest. I have to look for ways to get my truffle fix without resorting to truffle oil, which contains no truffle but a facsimile of it from the chemical compound 2,4-Dithiapentane.

Recently at an Italian restaurant, I order a truffle sandwich that satisfies my truffle craving. It is simple too: toasted ciabatta spread with cream cheese and black truffle paste.

When I see truffle paste at Culina, I figure I can make my own sandwich.

It comprises 70 per cent black truffle, olive oil, truffle juice, black truffle aroma and salt. The truffle aroma seems suspiciously like 2,4-Dithiapentane, but it is quite subtle here.

Instead, there is a good aroma of the fungi without the over-the-top, too-good-to-be-true flavour of truffle oil.

Toast some ciabatta, spread with mascarpone cheese, which tastes much better than cream cheese, then spoon some of this paste over. Eat. Swoon. Repeat.

Plantin Truffle Paste, \$59.50 for a 120g jar from Culina, Block 8 Dempsey Road, 01-13 Dempsey Hill, tel: 6474-7338, open: 10am to 9pm (Monday to Thursday), 9am to 9pm (Friday to Sunday)

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## Crunchy oat cookies

Depending on how you look at it, oats are either delicious or a tedious health food to get through to keep cholesterol levels low.

Most mornings, my breakfast is a bowl of steel-cut oats. It fills me up and stops me from snacking before lunch.

A more palatable way of getting some oats in the diet might be to munch on these delicious oat biscuits as a snack, instead of scarfing down chocolate or chips.

They are not stodgy at all, and the flavour of celery adds some interest. The square biscuits are also sprinkled with flakes of sea salt.

Have them with cheese or pate by all means, but I like them plain. Paxton & Whitfield Celery & Sea Salt Oaties, \$14.50 for a 150g tin from Takashimaya Food Hall, B2 Takashimaya Shopping Centre, tel: 6738-1111, open: 10am to 9.30pm (Sunday to Thursday), 10am to 10pm (Friday and Saturday)



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## Hot chocolate for cold days

Crazy as it might sound for someone who loves air-conditioning, I have been doing without it on some nights, when it is so cool it is almost, dare I say it, chilly.

When I wake up, all I want is a hot drink. Usually it is green tea, but I cannot resist a cup of hot chocolate too.

British brand Montezuma's Mint Drinking Chocolate is irresistible to me because I love chocolate and mint together.

The surprise when I open the bag is that, apart from cocoa powder, there are flakes of organic dark chocolate too.

Just heat some milk in a pan and whisk the cocoa mixture in until everything comes together. This takes just a couple of minutes.

Then, take some comforting sips. There is just a hint of mint, nothing that might overwhelm the chocolate, but there is enough for me to wonder if there is time to enjoy another cup.

Montezuma's Mint Drinking Chocolate, \$21 for a 300g bag from Supernature, B1-05/09 Forum The Shopping Mall, tel: 6304-1336, open: 10am to 7.30pm daily



## Satisfying nutty snack

There is nothing I like more than sitting down in front of the television with a big bag of salt-and-vinegar potato chips, the sharper the vinegar, the better.

Potato chips are not the best for snacking, alas, but nuts are. They are nutrition dense and a little goes a long way.

Marks & Spencer's Balsamic Cashews is a good find. The vinegar is not as stinging as I like it to be, but balsamic is mellow to begin with.

A very small handful of nuts makes a satisfying snack without my wanting too much more.

On a side note, the nuts are supposedly "tumbled" with black

pepper too, but that does not register on my palate in any meaningful way. It is not a bad thing. Overusing pepper is a crime against food.

Balsamic Cashews, \$19.90 for a 320g tub from Marks & Spencer. For the list of stores, go to global.marksandspencer.com.sg