

Women'sHealth

Is Chocolate The Secret To Glowing Skin? Experts Say, 'Yes.'

It's a sweet treat for your complexion.

By [Deena Campbell](#) Published: Sep 30, 2025 12:47 PM EDT

✓ Reviewed by [Brian Underwood](#) Beauty Director



Chocolate treats (**pudding**, **coated almonds**, a sugared-up version of a **charcuterie board**) have long been seen as a guilty pleasure. But what if I told you the ingredient is actually your skin's secret weapon? While your sweet tooth might crave a square of dark stuff after dinner, your complexion could benefit just as much.

That's because **cocoa**, the raw ingredient behind your favorite desserts, is rich in flavonoids, also known as plant compounds with powerful anti-inflammatory effects. "Cocoa flavonoids benefit the skin from their antioxidant abilities," says **Nava Greenfield**, MD, a board-certified dermatologist at **Schweiger Dermatology**. "Antioxidants are important for anti-aging by helping to fight against damage to DNA that accumulates over the years through removal of oxidative damage that can irreversibly harm DNA."

Will travel for cocoa.

If your idea of a sweet indulgence involves a laying on your back while an aesthetician treats you to a relaxing facial, plenty of spas gone loco for cocoa. Here are a few destinations where chocolate is on more than the dessert menu:



Xocolatl Skin Replenishment, Rancho La Puerta

This unique, indulgent treatment was recently awarded Best Spa Treatment in the *Women's Health* **2025 Travel Awards**—beauty director Brian Underwood raves about its relaxing properties. The treatment is divided into three steps—a body scrub, wrap, and massage—and each involves cacao, which was once considered food for the Gods in Mexico, where **Rancho La Puerta** is located. Your skin—and soul—will leave restored.

Courtesy of Rancho La Puerta