



Askinosie™
chocolate

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Askinosie Chocolate Invited by COPIA to Pay Tribute to Chocolate in Napa Valley

Springfield, MO, February 21, 2008 – Small-batch bean to bar chocolate maker Shawn Askinosie is invited to the annual COPIA *Death by Chocolate* festival as a panel contributor for the discussion on *The Future of Chocolate: Fairly Traded, Organic, Sustainable* to be held on Saturday, February 23, 2008 at 11:30 am. Clay Gordon, editor and publisher of *Discover Chocolate* and moderator for the panel discussion, says of Askinosie, “In addition to making several very fine chocolate products, Shawn is committed to improving the quality of life of the families and communities from whom he buys his cacao beans” in reference to Shawn’s trips to Ecuador and Mexico to share profits with the farmers.

COPIA, The American Center for Wine, Food & the Arts, brings the general public and enthusiasts together with leading vintners, chefs, gardeners and artists to explore and celebrate wine, food, gardens and the arts. The *Death by Chocolate Walk-Around Tasting* will follow the panel discussion from 1:00-4:00pm and will provide visitors the opportunity to meet Shawn Askinosie along with other chocolatiers, confectioners and pastry chefs, and to sample chocolate treats, chocolate-friendly wines and more. Last year over 700 visitors made their way to the Napa Valley to explore the wonderful world of chocolate through a variety of chocolate tastings, cooking demonstrations and chocolate and wine pairing programs, and this February COPIA is expecting no less.

Askinosie Chocolate, a small batch chocolate manufacturer located in Springfield, Missouri, sources 100% of their beans directly from the farmers. Shawn Askinosie, founder and chocolate maker, shifted his focus after 19 years as a criminal defense lawyer. In search of re-wirement outside the courtroom, Shawn began baking. His obsession with cupcakes turned into a passion for making chocolate from scratch. Now Shawn travels to regions of Mexico and Ecuador to work directly with the farmers and source cocoa beans for his chocolate. This allows the chocolate to be traced to the source and labeled Authentic Single Origin Chocolate. It also enables Shawn to profit share with the farmers, giving them a Stake In the Outcome™. Askinosie Chocolate exists to create great tasting chocolate made by people who love the noble craft. Their intention is not to win “the best chocolate in the world” award. But they do aim to be the best little chocolate factory in the world.

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