

Press Release

La Consigne by Valrhona:

A practical initiative for
reducing waste,
based on circular
economic principles



VALRHONA

Imaginons le meilleur du chocolat®



La Consigne by Valrhona : an environmentally friendly approach to reuse

Valrhona is a conscious company whose mission statement, “Together, let’s use good food to make the world a better place”, conveys the strength of its commitments. For over 10 years, many initiatives have been put in place to radically transform the company so it creates a positive impact on the entire cocoa and chocolate sector. This effort was rewarded in 2020, when Valrhona received B Corporation® certification.

A GROUNDBREAKING ECO-RESPONSIBLE PROJECT

In 2019, with several of its partners and their professional customers, Valrhona launched an innovative scheme that would bulk-deliver chocolate fèves in washable, reusable containers. Returning used packaging is nothing new, so the initiative really marks a return to common sense.

However, very few contemporary industrial and food service operators working outside of the beverage sector have reverted to it because it is such a challenge. By committing to this initiative, Valrhona started a movement and reconfirmed its determination to make a positive impact on the world.





THE LA CONSIGNE BY VALRHONA CONCEPT

The aim is to improve the customer experience by rethinking the way we package products, taking a circular approach to reuse and assuming full responsibility for the waste we produce. With this initiative, Valrhona wants to start a collective movement uniting the entire industry's creators within a circular economy, the ultimate aim being to create a more ethical and responsible gastronomical world.

This complex, ambitious project takes an "open innovation" approach to step-by-step experiments with customers and various partners, with financial support from ADEME (the French Environment and Energy Management Agency). The objective is to hit upon a model that overcomes three challenges:

- reducing the environmental footprint
- improving the customer experience
- guaranteeing the project's economic viability

Given the pandemic, the launch of the returnable packaging scheme, initially called "ComeBac", had to be postponed. It was finally introduced in December 2020 with 7 pastry chefs and chocolatiers in and around Lyon under a new name: La Consigne by Valrhona.

HOW LA CONSIGNE BY VALRHONA WORKS

Chocolate fèves are delivered in 100% recyclable plastic containers that are made in Europe. These containers are then collected, washed and reused for the next deliveries. The aim behind the initial trial was to assess the concept's logistical viability and check that our customers are happy with receiving their goods in reusable containers.

REAL COMMITMENTS

Six months after the trial run was launched, it is now time to get a sense of how things are going. The experiment focused on two products: Guanaja and Jivara, in a 6kg format. Two different types of containers have been tested so that we can identify the best option before the scheme is rolled out more widely.

**Our results from December 2020 to late April 2021:
nearly 1 ton of Valrhona chocolate has been bulk-delivered!**

While all this has been happening, an independent agency has been supporting Valrhona to assess the environmental impact of our new circular model as compared with the previous, much more linear single-use packaging system. "Lifecycle analysis" is being used to identify any unexpected impacts and keep us from simply shifting environmental problems from one stage of a product's life or geographical area to another.

A scheme warmly welcomed by professionals

The scheme's first participants, all based in Lyon, have expressed their satisfaction and even pride at being part of the change and contributing to a practical, environmentally friendly initiative. They are ready and willing to pursue it and co-create the next chapter in the story with Valrhona.

"I've found it a lot more practical than bags and it's a lot better for the environment"

Christophe Rasneur, Pâtisserie Les Gasteliers

"It's good for the planet and doesn't take up any more of my time"

Bruno Saladino, Bruno Saladino Chocolatier



PLANS FOR A GRADUAL ROLLOUT IN FRANCE AND EUROPE

Because the trial run has been such a success, Valrhona plans to roll out the scheme on a larger scale from June 2021.

The La Consigne by Valrhona scheme is being expanded to include **7 chocolate products**.

- **4 dark chocolates** : Guanaja, Caraïbe, Extra-Bitter, Satilia Noire
- **2 milk chocolates** : Jivara, Bitter lacté
- **1 white chocolate** : Ivoire

Initially, Valrhona will organize logistics for **100 pastry chefs, chocolatiers and restaurateurs from the Lyon region**. Each will have their own container that they can return to us for refills.

This new phase should enable us to prove the solution's environmental benefits and economic viability, and we aim to deliver **24 tons of chocolate, saving the equivalent of 1 ton of packaging**.

At the end of 2021, customers in Paris and Drôme-Ardèche were able to join and use the La Consigne by Valrhona returnable packaging scheme. In the long run, our ambition is to extend the scheme across France, Europe and any other potential areas where there is strong demand from professionals.

It is vital that we take it step by step, as La Consigne by Valrhona will require us to make profound changes in the way we work, such as finding the right logistics partners to meet customers' needs and guarantee the best possible experience.

"I'm interested in avoiding waste and being part of an initiative alongside my industry colleagues and Valrhona"

Robert Adam de Beaumais, Maison Buisson



About Valrhona

TOGETHER, GOOD BECOMES BETTER

A partner of taste artisans since 1922, and a pioneer and specialist in the world of chocolate, Valrhona defines itself today as a company whose mission statement “Together, let’s use good food to make the world a better place” conveys the strength of its commitment. Together with its employees, chefs, and cocoa producers, Valrhona creates the best in chocolate to shift the status quo towards a fairer, more sustainable cocoa industry and gastronomy that tastes great, looks great and does great things for the world.

Building long-term partnerships directly with cocoa producers, sharing know-how and looking for the next chocolate innovation are the challenges that drive us to do better every day. Working alongside chefs, Valrhona promotes craftsmanship and supports them in their quest for uniqueness by constantly pushing the limits of creativity.

Thanks to its constant engagement with this *raison d’être*, Valrhona is proud to have obtained the very demanding B Corporation® certification. It rewards the world’s most engaged companies that put equal emphasis on economic, societal, and environmental performance. This distinction emphasizes our “Live Long” sustainable development strategy, marked by the desire to co-construct a model with a positive impact for producers, employees, taste artisans, and all chocolate enthusiasts.

Choosing Valrhona means committing to responsible chocolate made only from cocoa that can be traced back to the producer. 100% of the cocoa that we use can be traced back to the producer, which provides the assurance of knowing where the cocoa came from, who harvested it, and that it was produced in good conditions. Choosing Valrhona means committing to a chocolate that respects both people and the planet.

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