

Lagusta's Luscious Truffles - The Fruity Box (Vegan, Gluten-Free) **Top Pick**

~~ 5 Star Selection from Go Dairy Free ~~ This product was chosen by our staff as a top pick for quality and taste.

Lagusta and Jacob, two long-time vegans, set out to make truffles that would rival the non-vegan champions of indulgence. I think they just might have succeeded. They knew that to create the best tasting truffles, they would need to use top quality ingredients, which means real food rather than low-fat imitations. Lagusta's truffles are rich with organic coconut milk, organic coconut butter, and organic fair trade chocolate from Callebaut.

I know what you are thinking…probably the same thing I was. Vegan, organic, fair trade, hand made…these things must cost a fortune! Oh how wrong we are. Enjoy the review and the pricing information, which follows it. I have a feeling you will be purchasing your first box of Lagusta's Truffles soon.

Lagusta's Luscious Truffles are sold in small box collections: Fruity, Nutty, Boozy, and Wild. Each contains eight good-sized truffles divided among four to six flavors. For my first samplings of these hand made gems, I chose the Fruity box, if for no other reason than to trial the latest trendy flavor, pomegranate.

Each truffle is enrobed in a thin, delicate bittersweet chocolate shell. This leaves ample room for the soft, chocolate inspired fillings within. Though this was a truffle tactic I had seldom seen, I really liked the higher filling to chocolate coating ratio. As a whole, each truffle variety was very similar. They all had the same thick, creamy center of chocolate, coconut milk, and coconut butter, enclosed within a layer of Scharffenberger chocolate. However, the flavors themselves made each selection distinctively different:

Pomegranate – Curiosity prompted me to select the pomegranate truffle first. My senses were immediately rewarded by the soft texture and delightful flavor of the creamy center. Having only trialed pomegranate once in my life (perish the thought!) I was unable to fully verify the flavor, but from what I remember, this certainly seems to carry the essence in a pleasant but subdued manner. It was lightly sweet with just a hint of bitter cocoa for contrast. Though it incredibly satisfying, it left a delicious aftertaste that left me longing for another.

Coconut – Crispy bits of coconut adorn the outside of this truffle selection, adding texture and flavor to the thin dark chocolate shell. The center was warm and inviting with a mellow but sweet flavor that just hinted ever so politely at coconut. A true cocoa aftertaste lingered just enough to invite the next bite. This truffle quite nearly offered a…dare I say…milk chocolate experience, with a dark chocolate after-bite.

Orange – Though I have never been a fan of citrus flavored chocolates, I found this flavor irresistible. The delicious orange essence was delicate, yet prominent. It blended beautifully with the chocolate center. Unlike many orange-flavored items, this truffle had not a hint of artificiality. Not only did it taste insanely natural, I even bit into a tiny bite of orange zest. My only complaint was the bittersweet shell. For some reason it contrasted the filling just a bit too much for my taste. I would have preferred more of a semi-sweet shell with this truffle, however, since the outer shell was quite thin it was seldom noticeable. I would jump at the chance to enjoy this orange inspired melt-in-your-mouth experience again.

Lemon – I wasn't sure what to expect prior to trialing Lagusta's Lemon Truffle. Though lemon would typically be the last flavor of any baked good or treat I would pick up (second to last in this case) I have had an enormous amount of luck with everything lemon I have trialed lately. Luckily, this truffle was no exception. Though I preferred the orange truffle filling, the lemon followed closely behind. It was identical in its creamy texture and gentle yet prevalent citrus notes. The only discernable difference was the use of lemon zest and lemon oil rather than orange. For some reason, I liked the dark chocolate exterior better with the lemon truffle than with the orange. Though still contrasting, the lemon had just a touch more oomph to compete with bittersweet flavor. Like Lagusta's Orange Truffle, the lemon one exuded an all natural quality, completely void of any odd artificial flavors. Nonetheless, it tasted slightly “candied” and much less harsh than you would think of a truly natural lemon flavor.

Double Chocolate – Lagusta just couldn't settle for a rich chocolate filling housed inside a decadent chocolate shell. She had to attach chunks of semi-sweet chocolate to the outer shell, like mini-boulders, for a triple chocolate threat. The center offers the same smooth and soft texture, just hinting at milk chocolate, while maintaining some bittersweet roots. This is a true chocoholics delight!

So how did the various truffles measure up to one another? Since I couldn't trial them all at once (they are pretty rich after all!) it would be hard for me to compare and select my favorite. They were all incredibly good, true to flavor, and yet quite different. I think it would come down to your natural flavor preference. If I could only choose one, I would likely go for the Orange, or maybe the Coconut…well the Pomegranate was unique…thank goodness they come with several flavors to a box! We love you Lagusta!

My Extra Notes & Tips:

- Do not hesitate to serve these truffles to your dairy-consuming friends. Even the finest truffle connoisseurs would be hard pressed to identify these as vegan.
- Orders must consist of at least two boxes, be sure to mix and match. Lagusta makes a fantastic assortment of flavors. The truffles themselves are definitely gift worthy, though they do tend to shift quite a bit in shipment, and may not have that picture-perfect appearance on arrival. However, not a truffle was chipped, dented or broken of any we received.

Purchasing Information: Lagusta and Jacob produce a batch of their truffles just once every six weeks. It is essential to get your order in, as they have an order deadline set a bit prior to batch production and shipment. Trust me, it is worth it! Why you ask? Well, not only do they taste seriously incredible, these truffles are a satisfying size, and cost only \$13 per box of 8 (\$42 for an assorted box of 28)! My last few truffle-seeking adventures yielded dwarfed versions for \$2 to \$4 a piece. Head to the Lagusta's Luscious website to order some truffles and check out their vegetarian meal home delivery service for NYC and upstate NY.