

# The Mellieħa Chocolate Artist

◆ **By Jamie Anthony Cini**

Andrew Farrugia from Mellieħa is a full time lecturer at the Institute of Tourism Studies, and he has a world-wide reputation as an extraordinary *chocolatier*, who can turn a slab of chocolate into a glorious and attractive art.



When Michelangelo worked on a block of marble or stone he chiseled off the extra pieces and ended up with his famous masterpiece. When Andrew Farrugia is given a giant block of chocolate, ice or butter he quickly gets to work to uncover the shape which lies deep within the slab and the end result is always astonishing. Andrew has sculpted away with all these materials to create a variety of shapes, sculptures and memorable items that have become world hits.

A few months ago, Andrew hit the international news in a big way – he was featured in endless TV shows, newspapers and magazines, from Belgian TV to BBC and even as far away as China and Mexico. People flocked to interview him and learn more about his amazing feats with chocolate. He was captured into the limelight by being chosen by a leading Belgian chocolate firm – Belcolade – to design, sculpt and exhibit a train made out of chocolate.

Dreams of Roald Dahl and his amazing chocolate factory come to mind and with Andrew's attention to detail, conscientious patience and craftsmanship

he made it a truly impressive train which sparked and attracted everyone's attention. The train wasn't given locomotion but a piano he had built out of chocolate could be played by any pianist whose audience would be assured of sweet tunes wafting out of the *chocolatier's* piece. People gathered to see the piano and loved it.



Andrew put in a few weeks of arduous work and meticulous attention to detail for his train to be accepted and lauded as a world record. The previous record was of 15 metres, while this Maltese train was more than double at 34 metres.

The train was assembled in Malta and shipped in its entirety to Brussels where it became an immediate media hit, with a multitude of journalists thronging to get a glimpse of the train and a clip of the Maltese *chocolatier*.

Belcolade is a leading Belgian chocolate which is used extensively by the best confectioners and professional *chocolatiers* all over the world, including Malta. It gives the finished a finer better taste. I asked Mike Conway, MD Maltos Ltd, for a few comments about our own chocolate artist. He told me: "We are extremely proud to be associated with Andrew. He is truly a professional and knows his chocolate better than most people I've ever met. He is really respected abroad and is thought of as something of a legend."



Whenever Andrew exhibits abroad he is naturally proud of his work and even prouder of Malta. When he is back home he enjoys imparting his craftsmanship to his young but passionate ITS students.

At this moment Andrew is working on another Guinness World Record. He, accompanied by his loyal team, are building a scale replica of the



Burj Khalifa, the tallest building on earth which is situated in Dubai. This is going to be about 50 feet tall, 5 storeys high and as he has done with the train, he is building it in Malta and then exporting it to Dubai. Finally it will be assembled in the Dubai Shopping Mall in February. We wish him the best of luck.

**Ahead** ▶▶▶▶▶

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