

Toketa Chocolate Packaging

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The starting points in my design began with ideas around packaging, due to my interest in expanding my knowledge around graphic design. This included working with around coffee or tea packaging and book covers. Ultimately, my design brief required me to design a new chocolate brand, and to create a range of packaging for its products, as an introduction to the brand. The aim was to target towards a younger demographic, of an age range from around 18-30, who live a more natural lifestyle, such as living by a vegan diet. Therefore, natural imagery throughout my designs was a must, but I wanted to challenge this idea by using more vibrant colours, rather than more organic colours like muted browns, pinks or greens. As I became influenced from the Japanese aesthetic, I was required to successfully reflect such aesthetic through my logo (mainly consisting of typography) and interpretations of the landscape. To successfully introduce the new brand, it was essential to showcase a range of products, where I initially planned to create 4 new innovative flavours, with 2 separate styles of packaging, one serving a larger block of chocolate and one serving a smaller block of chocolate.

The starting point for my design began with influences from contemporary, natural chocolate packaging currently on the Australian market, as personal experience with dietary requirements allowed me to focus on this style of design. After analysis, I soon realised to create something that stood out from these designs, which would be considered my competition, I had to draw inspiration from somewhere new to be innovative. This led me to taking inspiration from another culture, one outside of the Western space. Drawing inspiration from Japan allowed me to explore new natural environments, as well as aesthetic expectations – focusing on simplicity in shapes and colour, negative space, asymmetry and contrast.

The name Toketa comes from the Japanese translation of the word 'melted', as my first ideas for a brand included the name of "Melted Temptation". I thought the word Toketa itself sounded similar to chocolate cracking, with the snappy consonants of T and K in the word. I manipulated the font of Toketa to extended certain legs of some characters to reflect Japanese characters, encouraging a buyer to make the connection between my product, and Japan, further suggesting a Japanese influence. The natural landscape of my designs come from real Japanese environments, such as my Salted Caramel packaging is inspired by the location of Meoto Iwa, as well as certain Japanese anime's that particularly use orange lighting, demonstrating environments of rocks sitting in water. Popular Japanese imagery, such as the patterns I created were decided to be of use, therefore my target market of a Western audience can immediately make the connection of my products influence. I additionally looked into the Japanese packaging designer, Yoshihiro Yagi, a designer who was inspired by the Western contemporary minimalist style by using simple shapes and bold colours. He creatively entices a younger audience by capturing a fun and playful design, and his use of bright and bold colours held an influence over my choice of bolder oranges, pinks and blues in my design.

During my process, I came across many issues that set me back. Though I learnt new aspects on creating my own nets with pen and paper and transferring this digitally, precision in measurements was something I glanced over, leaving me with having to trim down many tabs in the process of folding all my packaging together. I had to reprint my designs 3 times, due to a small error being uncovered each time, including misalignment of text or graphics missing such as a single stroke – though, as I had to go back into Adobe Illustrator to fix these issues, this gave the opportunity to change any other design aspects I was unhappy with. For example, I initially was using a png for the barcode and nutritional information, which during printing was coming out at a lower quality compared to the rest of my original vector art. Therefore, I made my own barcode and nutritional information in Illustrator.

There are few things I wish I could've improved upon, including taking more time to consider a more creative layout for my triangle packaging, though I believe my idea of having the melting snowy top for the upright triangles connecting to the mountain imagery on my other design was a step in the right direction. In addition to this, I believe the triangle itself brings something new to the shelf, likely attracting a wider market. As a designer, I learned many tricks around packaging, such as the importance of small details and precision in scoring. I've expanded on my own personal aesthetic, and I strayed away from what's expected and took inspiration from something new.

Ultimately, I created 3 different flavours of chocolate, differing from my planned 4. I believe my design resolution successfully meets the parameters of the design brief. I successfully envisioned graphics of natural landscape into my work, while simultaneously using a vibrant and monochromatic colour scheme. I believe in addition to this, the colour scheme reflects the new flavours I created. I ensured the vegan element of my brand was a selling point of my product, as I mention it across both sides on all packages, and directly under my logo, appealing to my target market. I've additionally appealed to my Australian target market by still incorporating elements of common contemporary Western designs, such as my fonts and composition.