

# BUSINESS TODAY



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STAFF PHOTO BY PATRICK WHITTEMORE

**PUFFED:** Harvard professor David Edwards demonstrates Le Whif, a lipstick-shaped chocolate and coffee inhaler, at its Cambridge launch yesterday. Check out a Web video at [bostonherald.com](http://bostonherald.com).

## Get Whif of chocolate, coffee inhaler

By **DONNA GOODISON**

A product billed as the first "breathable food" had its stateside launch yesterday in Cambridge, and its Harvard University creator hopes it's a "hit" with consumers.

Le Whif is fine chocolate and coffee powder encapsulated in a lipstick-shaped inhaler that's puffed for a new way of "eating by breathing," according to Harvard biomedical engineering professor David Edwards.

Edwards and his Paris-based ArtScience Labs used particle engineering to form chocolate and coffee in microscopic sizes, small enough to become airborne, but too large to enter the lungs. Each Le Whif, which retails for about \$2.50, has enough breathable food

for eight puffs or "whifs."

"It's a kind of cigar for breathing chocolate, coffee and possibly other things," Edwards said. "It's a new way of putting foods in our mouths, but in very small quantities so we have taste, but very little caloric content."

The initial product line includes chocolate, raspberry chocolate and mint chocolate, each with 300 milligrams of pure organic chocolate and less than one calorie. Le Whif Coffee has a total caffeine dose equivalent to a shot of espresso.

Conceived as a cultural experiment after a conversation with French Michelin-starred chef Thierry Marx, Le Whif originally was part of an art exhibit. After a prototype went on sale last April, more than 60,000 have been or-

dered online from 40 countries.

Edwards doesn't see Le Whif as a gimmick, but rather another step in the evolution of how chocolate is consumed.

"The whole idea of a gimmick is there's no added value," he said. "Is Le Whif interesting? Yes. Is it good? Yes. Is it going to replace having a chocolate shake or chocolate bar? No. It's just a new way of tasting chocolate."

Le Whif is now available locally at Cardullo's Gourmet Shoppe in Harvard Square. "It's an amazing product, and it just fits our store profile," said Marc Cardullo, the store's marketing director. "It seems like it would be great for people who are true chocoholics and need their fix and don't want to sit there and munch on a bar. They can 'whif.'"

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