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**NO HOLIDAY NECESSARY: MERCI FINEST ASSORTMENT OF
EUROPEAN CHOCOLATES MAKES IT EASY TO OFFER A
THOUGHTFUL THANK YOU *EVERYDAY***

STORCK introduces its premium European boxed chocolates to the U.S.

CHICAGO, Ill. – Saying thank you and showing affection for no special reason are two of the top four reasons Americans purchase gift chocolate, according to the 2005 Mintel Premium Chocolate Report. In addition, 60 percent of gift-giving spending occurs over the course of the year, versus holidays, according to the 2004 Unity Marketing report on gifting.

Considered one of Europe's top gift-giving chocolates, **merci** Finest Assortment of European Chocolates was officially introduced to the United States in 2005 by parent company, STORCK USA, LP. Available at top retail outlets nationwide, merci is packaged in a sophisticated, slim white, red, and gold presentation box that makes it an ideal gift-giving item. Each box includes 20 pieces of premium, individually wrapped chocolates in seven delicious flavor varieties.

"Our name literally means 'thank you,' which makes merci one of the sweetest ways you can show appreciation – and it's as rewarding to give as it is to receive," said Kelly Cook, associate marketing manager for the Chicago STORCK, USA headquarters.

merci also answers consumers' current demands for quality products that are reasonably priced. (*Nextpert Megatrends Report for 2006*) Made with the finest selection of ingredients available, the premium rich chocolate rivals more expensive boxed chocolates. Consumer studies testify to the quality, with the majority of taste-testers expecting to pay two times its \$5.99 suggested retail price.

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With American tastes in mind, the U.S. version of merci features more milk chocolate varieties than the European combinations. The creamy, melt-in-your mouth flavors include: hazelnut-almond, hazelnut-creme, praline-creme and solid milk chocolate varieties, and dark cream, coffee and cream, and dark mousse dark chocolate varieties.

merci was first introduced in Germany in 1965 where it quickly became the country's most recognized gift-giving chocolate. Today, merci is available in more than 90 countries.

Product Information—Quick Facts

- Packaging: 8.8-ounce boxes; 14.1-ounce boxes are available during the holidays, November - December
- Suggested retail price: \$5.99 for the 8.8-ounce box, and \$9.99 for the 14.1-ounce special holiday box
- Flavors: 20 pieces in seven flavor varieties: hazelnut-almond, hazelnut-creme and praline-creme milk chocolate and solid milk chocolate varieties, and dark cream, coffee and cream, and dark mousse dark chocolate varieties
- Special holiday boxes include 32 pieces in eight flavor varieties
- Top retail outlets: Target, Walgreens, CVS, Wal-Mart Supercenters, Kroger, Fred Meyer, Fry's Food, Smith's Food & Drug, Meijer, Roundy's, Save-a-lot, Bi-Mart, Duane Reade, Giant Eagle, and Hannaford

About STORCK

For more than 100 years, STORCK, a family-owned company based in Berlin, Germany, has created confections that delight consumers worldwide. STORCK introduced the first branded candy in Germany with RIESEN[®], and since then has introduced 11 additional brands to more than 90 countries, including Werther's Original[®] Hard Candies, Werther's Original[®] Chewy Caramels, Werther's Original[®] Caramel Chocolate, Toffifay[®], and Mamba[®]. STORCK brands are sold in leading US outlets, including Target, CVS, Walgreens, Safeway, Albertsons, Kroger and Wal-Mart. STORCK's U.S. headquarters is in Chicago, Ill. For more information, visit storck.us

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