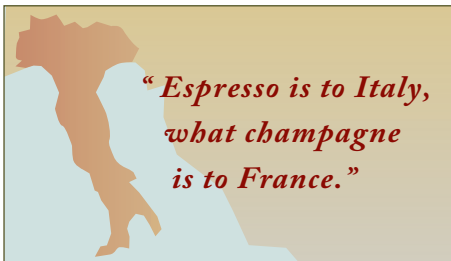


THE ART OF ESPRESSO



The term “espresso” refers to coffee brewed by forcing hot water through very finely ground coffee. The precursors of today’s modern espresso machines date back to Europe in the early 1900s. In 1901, a patent for an espresso machine was granted to Luigi Bezzera in Rome, Italy. In France in 1902, a patent was issued to Desiderio Pavoni for his *Ideale* machine, which featured a steam relief valve. Further technological advances in espresso machines have transformed espresso coffee into the expertly prepared, versatile beverage we know today.

Making Great Espresso: Science Plus Art

Espresso coffee is characterized by its thick consistency, its high concentration of dissolved solids, and its top layer of dense foam, or *crema*, a feature especially prized by espresso lovers.

Skilled and careful blending, roasting, and grinding are the first steps towards a great cup of espresso. The final step, the unique pressurized brewing process of the espresso machine, is something of an art – the art of the barista.

The barista

A “barista” is a professional espresso machine operator. (The word means “bartender” in Italian.) In Italy and other parts of Europe, a job as a barista is considered a career position, often with skills and training passed down from generation to generation.

A delicate balance

Properly prepared espresso has all elements in balance. Ideally, it should be consumed within minutes of its preparation, before its perfect balance of heart, body, and crema declines.

Serving Great Espresso: A Versatile Brew

The shot

A serving of espresso is typically a 1-ounce to 1.5-ounce shot. A shot or two in a small cup, fresh from the espresso machine, is the purist’s way of drinking espresso, especially in Europe.

The small 3-ounce cup that holds a traditional shot of espresso is called a demitasse (from the French *demi*, half, and *tasse*, cup). These cups can be made of ceramic, stainless steel, or glass, although porcelain is usually preferred, the thicker the better to retain the heat of the beverage.

*A classic:
the demitasse
of espresso*



The intense flavor and high concentration of fresh espresso means that it can be used in mixed coffee-based drinks without losing character. Many espresso bars have created variations and innovations by adding syrups, whipped cream, and a variety of spices to their espresso drinks. Two traditional and popular, espresso-based beverages are:

The cappuccino. . .

The cappuccino is made with espresso, a small amount of hot milk, and a thick layer of milky foam that adds texture and keeps the drink hot.

. . . and the Americano

The Americano, or *café Américano*, is prepared by adding hot water to full-strength espresso.

Did you know. . .

- In Italy, ordering a cup of coffee – “un caffè” – means ordering a shot of espresso.
- While espresso is often associated with dark roasts, espresso grinds are also made from light-roasted coffee beans. (See the table on the back page.)

Espresso and Caffeine

Espresso has a reputation as extra-strong coffee – and on a *volume basis*, espresso does contain roughly triple the caffeine of regular brewed coffee.

However, when measured on a *per-serving basis*, a one-ounce shot of espresso, with its 50 mg of caffeine, has only about half the caffeine of a standard six-ounce cup of American-style coffee, which varies in caffeine content from 80 to 130 mg.

Of course, many customers make up the difference by requesting the addition of extra shots of espresso to their drinks.

Espresso and Roasting

The espresso roasting procedure is complex, and espresso can easily be spoiled by over-roasting. The best espressos are prepared with medium to dark beans.

ROASTED BEAN COLOR	ROASTED BEAN SURFACE	AVERAGE BEAN TEMPERATURE (at end of roast)
Light espresso	Dry	435 °F
Medium espresso	Dry	440 °F
Medium dark espresso	Dry with oil spots	445 °F
Dark espresso	Dry with oil patches	448 °F.

The 4 M's of Espresso



- 1. MACINAZIONE**
the correct **grinding** of a coffee blend
- 2. MISCELA**
the coffee **blend**
- 3. MACCHINA**
the espresso **machine**
- 4. MANO**
the skilled **hand** of the barista.

When each factor of the four M's is precisely controlled, the espresso beverage that is produced is the ultimate coffee experience.

—from www.coffeeresearch.com

Espresso Machines – Pull or Pod?

The act of producing a shot of espresso is called “pulling” a shot. The term derives from lever-style espresso machines, which require pulling down a handle attached to a spring-loaded piston, forcing hot water through the coffee at the requisite pressure.

Advances in technology have led to automatic espresso machines, which use pods (individual packets of ground coffee). Boyd Coffee Company offers automatic machines as well as pods of espresso grind, properly dosed and vacuum-sealed, then gas-flushed for freshness. This precision combination guarantees the perfect shot every time.



Italia D'Oro® makes espresso pods for use in both traditional and automatic machines.

NEXT MONTH'S TOPIC: The Mystique of the Grinder

SAVE A TREE—READ THIS NEWSLETTER ONLINE AT WWW.BOYDS.COM



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