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Espresso: The Iconic Coffee Experience

Espresso is at the heart of everything we do in coffee. It's where quality, consistency, and skill come together in the cup. Originating in Italy, espresso has shaped the way we understand coffee — not just as a drink, but as a craft.

A great espresso is all about balance. You should find sweetness first, supported by a gentle acidity, a clean bitterness, and a rich, golden crema on top. It's a small drink, but it carries a lot of intensity and character.

Behind every good espresso, there is control. From the moment we grind the coffee, every step matters, dose, distribution, tamping, extraction time, and temperature. Even small changes can completely affect the final result in the cup.

Espresso might look simple, but it's not. There is no room for shortcuts. Consistency comes from training, repetition, and attention to detail. When everything is done right, those few seconds of extraction turn into a high-quality coffee experience.

By *Davide Enrico*

Our Espresso

Our espresso is built around quality, consistency, and a strong local supply chain, in partnership with Geometry Coffee.

Working with a specialist Irish roaster allows us to combine a consistent flavour profile with a fresh, traceable, and sustainably managed coffee supply.

Freshness & Supply

Coffee is **roasted weekly in Galway**

Delivered within **3–5 days of roasting**

Fully traceable to origin and batch level

This ensures optimal freshness, flavour consistency, and a reduced environmental impact compared to imported roasted coffee.



B L E N D

100% Arabica coffee from Brazil and Guatemala.

Responsibly sourced, fully traceable, and locally roasted in Galway to ensure freshness, consistency, and quality in every cup.

Sustainability

Sustainability is embedded within our coffee supply chain through our partnership with Geometry Coffee.

Coffee is roasted locally in Galway in small batches, reducing food miles and supporting a shorter, more transparent supply chain. This approach ensures greater control over quality while minimising environmental impact.

Geometry Coffee prioritises responsible sourcing, working with trusted partners to ensure traceability and ethical practices at origin. The roasting process is supported in part by solar energy, reflecting a commitment to more sustainable production. In addition, ongoing barista training and controlled preparation methods help reduce product waste and support consistent, efficient use of resources.



Welcome

The GEC Barista Handbook

What will you learn from GEC barista training programme? Not just professional barista skills - but also knowledge that can be shared with your colleagues, in the future.

During your training be sure to observe your peers; you do not just learn when it is your turn but also from watching other mistakes and successes.

It's a great idea to make notes, as you go along. Each section of the handbook has space for you to write down answers to questions, advice from your trainer, and lots more.

There are three key steps on the road to being a GEC barista, and each step has its own section in the handbook:

- 1) **Cleaning**
- 2) **Perfect Espresso**
- 3) **Milk**

Everyone learns in different ways- but we know that with practice and commitment, you can create the perfect coffee, every time.



Cleaning

For a great espresso your handles must be cleaned regularly but your machine needs to remain slightly dirty at all times.





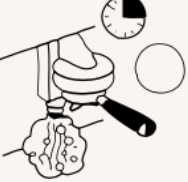


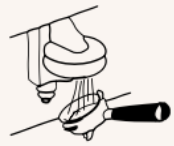


Best Practice

Starting your shift? Wake the machine, then run water from the heads through the empty handles, into your espresso cups, and overflow down the drain. Next, empty water from the boiler. This adds oxygen and keeps your steam pure.

Cleaning every:

- ✓ NOW & THEN: Brush the doser spotlessly clean
- ✓ EVERY 2KG OF COFFE USED: Back flush the head with cleaning solution
- ✓ HOUR: Served lots of customers? Backflush the head with water
- ✓ NIGHT: Soak the handles in light chemical for no more than 20 minutes
- ✓ WEEK: Wash the plastic hopper with hot, soapy water
- ✓ MONTH: Run an espresso cup's amount of white rice through the grinder

Back Flushing

<p>1</p> 	<p>2</p> 	<p>3</p> 	<p>4</p> 
<p>Replace the standard filter basket with a blind (no hole) basket</p>	<p>Use a pinch of backflush detergent in your blind basket</p>	<p>Run the pump at 5x at 15 second intervals with the blind basket in place</p>	<p>Remove the portafilter, run the pump while using a group head brush to remove grime.</p>
<p>5</p> 	<p>6</p> 	<p>7</p> 	<p>8</p> 
<p>Rinse the portafilter and place it back in place, run the machine at 5x 15 second intervals again</p>	<p>Rinse both the portafilter and the brewhead thoroughly to remove any remaining detergent</p>	<p>Switch back to your standard filter basket</p>	<p>Run 2x espresso's through to ensure all detergent has been rinsed out and discard.</p>

Back Flush Timings



Every busy hour



Every 2kg of COFFEE

notes

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Perfect Espresso

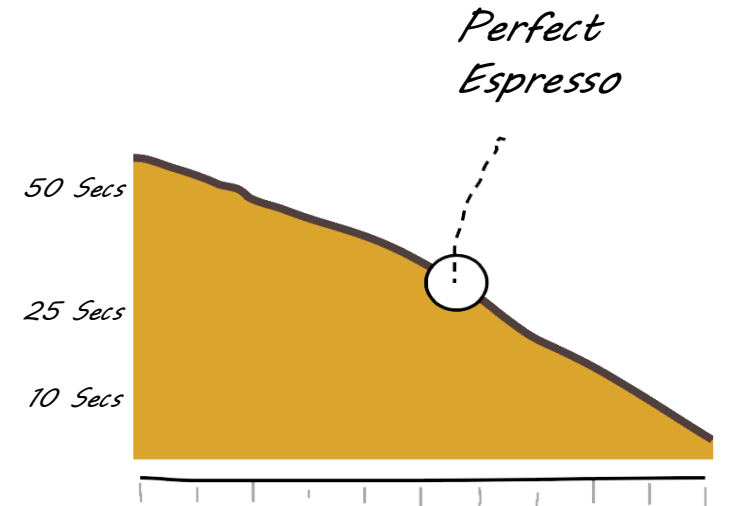
A) Extraction Time

How long does your espresso take to grind? Try timing yourself.

- ❖ Less than 23 seconds? Move the grinder to 'fine' on the right. This brings the blades together, and grinds more like flour.
- ❖ More than 30 seconds? (Or maybe it or doesn't come out at all?) Move the grinder to 'grosso' on the left. This pushes the blades apart, and grinds more like sugar.

Best Practice

Make regular adjustments throughout the day



notes

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Perfect Espresso

B) Step by Step

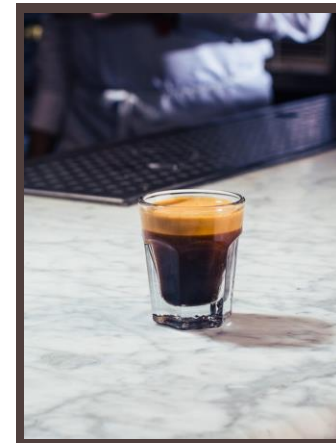
- ✓ Remove the handle, and flush the head
- ✓ Bang out the old coffee, and check the portafilter is clean
- ✓ Pull two full shots into the double handle
- ✓ To spread the coffee powder evenly, tap the sides of the handle - never touch the coffee with your hands, or bang the spouts on the bar
- ✓ Tamp evenly with a slight twist, and even pressure
- ✓ Wipe the portafilter rim, keeping the head clean
- ✓ Stop the water flow from the head, and insert the portafilter
- ✓ Immediately press the button – you have 4 seconds to put pre-heated cups underneath
- ✓ Extract for 25/28 seconds
- ✓ Wrong levels? Start again by adjusting your grinder, and repeat each step that follows

Is your coffee fresh?

Once opened, coffee beans start to lose their optimal flavour after 3 days. Always keep your grinder filled with fresh coffee to maintain quality in every cup.

Best Practice

Always serve your coffee in warm cups



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Perfect Espresso

C) Daily Coffee Standards

Hopper Management

Refresh grinder hopper daily

Do not leave coffee in hopper overnight

Empty and reload with fresh beans each morning

Storage

Store beans in sealed, airtight containers

Keep away from heat, light, and moisture

Label and rotate stock (FIFO)

Freshness Control

Use opened coffee within 3 days

Check roast and opening dates daily

Maintain consistent quality in every cup

Fresh coffee = Better flavour, better consistency, better customer experience



notes

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Milk

- A) Jugs
- B) Frothing
- C) Texturing
- D) Pouring



A) Jugs

A) Step by Step

It takes at least 3 jugs for an efficient coffee service

- 1 A big jug for latte milk
- 2 A medium jug for cappuccino milk
- 3 A jug to move the froth
- 4 Hot Chocolate
- 5 Super-hot Chocolate



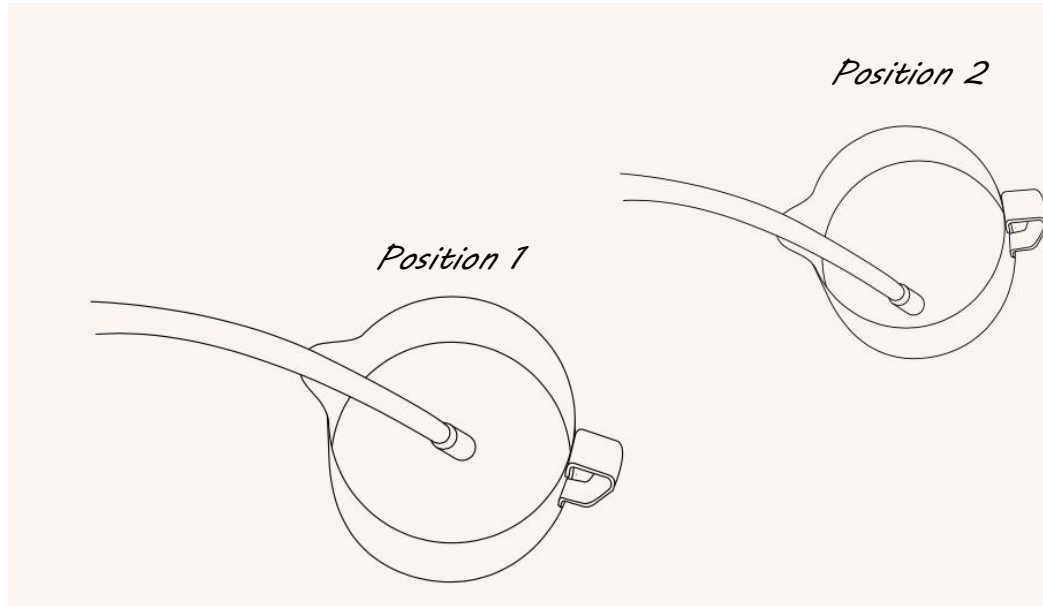
Best Practice

Every time you use your cappuccino jug, save left over milk in the latte jug. You can use this milk for hot chocolate, or Americano's with milk on the side.

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B) Frothing



Safety

- ✓ The milk should never become so hot that it will cause any burns.
- ✓ Monitor the temperature of the milk with a light touch of your hand on the bottom of the jug.

- ✓ Take an empty jug and add cold milk to the spout line. The line helps you judge how much foam is added later
- ✓ Find position one, then move to position two (see diagram)
- ✓ Open your steam wand, and spin the milk
- ✓ Keep the hole open, to suck down big bubbles
- ✓ Keep still, and only move down half a millimeter at a time
- ✓ Once the jug feels warm to touch, stop introducing air, but remain still
- ✓ Spin the milk until it has reached the correct temperature

C) Texturing

Texture the milk at the end of frothing, as you bring it to the final temperature.

Hold the steam nozzle about 1cm into the milk

Spin it carefully, without introducing any air

Now stop, bang the just onto your work surface to burst any big bubbles

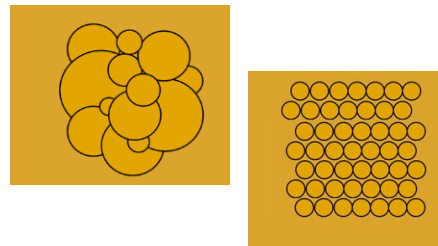
Spin until the milk has a silky sheen

Pour off the top layer to find the consistency of single cream

keep the milk spinning until it is needed

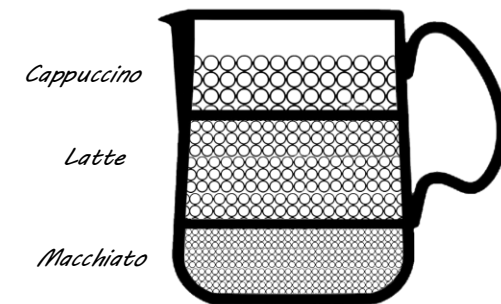
Bubble Configuration

Frothing the milk changes the bubble configuration. You should spin the milk until you achieve a silky sheen.



Best Practice

Clean the steam wand every time you use it. This stops dried milk from building up.



notes

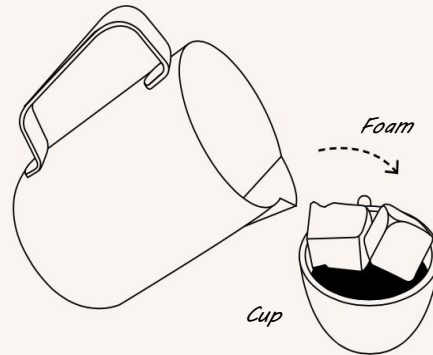
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D) The Ice Cube Method

Important

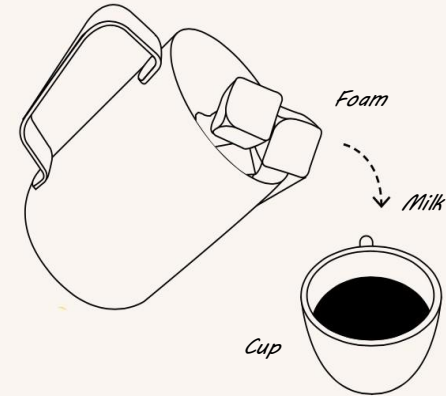
To blend properly, with the coffee, the milk should be as creamy and heavy as possible. If you pour the milk correctly, you won't need a spoon to get the foam out.

Imagine you have a jug of water and ice...



Cappuccino

To pour a cappuccino, tip the front of the jug and let the ice (foam) out



Latte

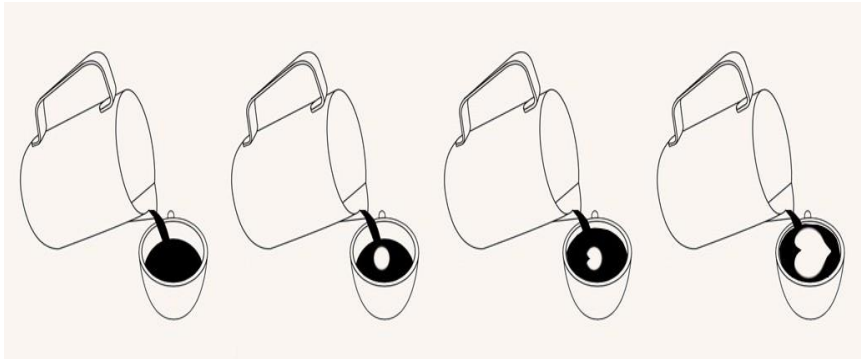
To pour a latte, tip slowly leaving the ice (foam) safely in the jug

notes

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D) Pouring

Cappuccino



Tip the front of the jug, and confidently pour the milk and foam into the middle.

Adjust the jug to keep it centred.

Wait for a white dot to appear and pour into it.

Latte



Carefully pour the milk through the crema, leaving the foam in its jug. Lift the jug halfway up the cup.

Move to the side, to make space to draw o. Drop the front of the jug to let out the foam.

Zig-zag across the width of the cup up to 5 or 6 times.

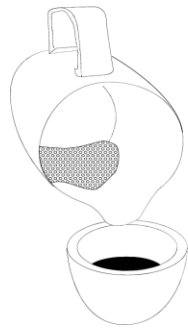
Lift the jug, to cut through the zig-zag and make a 'flower'.

notes

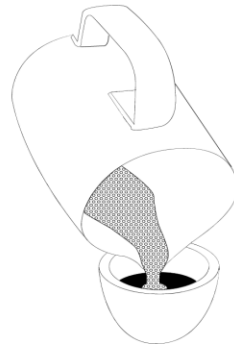
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D) Pouring

Macchiato

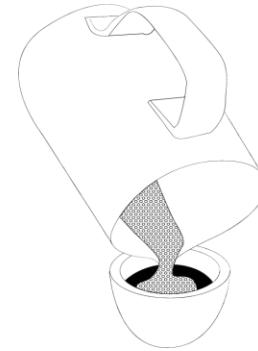


Pour directly into the centre of a perfect, small espresso



Get as close as possible to the crema - without touching it

Keep still, letting the foam pour out on its own



'Connect with the dot', until a small dab of foam sits on the crema

Macchiato milk is the most perfect, creamy milk in the jug - and it likes to hide at the bottom

Very slowly, pour the remaining milk from the side of the jug - the milk will split from the foam. Leave some milk in the jug and spin it, together with the foam, to ensure smooth pouring

notes

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The Coffee Menu

Our Hot Drinks Menu

This menu provides a clear overview of our core coffee and hot beverage offer, including standard recipes and approximate calorie values across different milk options.

Each drink is prepared using **defined specifications**, ensuring consistency in both quality and portion control across all sites.

All drinks are based on **standardised recipes** (coffee dose, milk volume, and preparation method)

Calorie values are calculated based on **controlled ingredient quantities**

Alternative milks (oat, soya, coconut, almond) are fully integrated into the offer

Portion sizes are consistent, supporting both **customer transparency and operational control**

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A GUIDE TO CALORIES IN OUR
HOT DRINKS

MACCHIATO 5ml Milk + Double Espresso	CORTADO 80ml Milk + Double Espresso	FLAT WHITE 200ml Milk + Double Espresso																																																
<table border="0"><thead><tr><th>MILK</th><th>CALORIES</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Dairy Full Fat</td><td>7 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Dairy Semi Skimmed</td><td>6 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Dairy Skimmed</td><td>5 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Oat</td><td>7 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Soya</td><td>6 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Coconut</td><td>5 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Almond</td><td>5 kcal</td></tr></tbody></table>	MILK	CALORIES	Dairy Full Fat	7 kcal	Dairy Semi Skimmed	6 kcal	Dairy Skimmed	5 kcal	Oat	7 kcal	Soya	6 kcal	Coconut	5 kcal	Almond	5 kcal	<table border="0"><thead><tr><th>MILK</th><th>CALORIES</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Dairy Full Fat</td><td>54 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Dairy Semi Skimmed</td><td>41 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Dairy Skimmed</td><td>32 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Oat</td><td>53 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Soya</td><td>37 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Coconut</td><td>30 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Almond</td><td>23 kcal</td></tr></tbody></table>	MILK	CALORIES	Dairy Full Fat	54 kcal	Dairy Semi Skimmed	41 kcal	Dairy Skimmed	32 kcal	Oat	53 kcal	Soya	37 kcal	Coconut	30 kcal	Almond	23 kcal	<table border="0"><thead><tr><th>MILK</th><th>CALORIES</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Dairy Full Fat</td><td>130 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Dairy Semi Skimmed</td><td>98 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Dairy Skimmed</td><td>74 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Oat</td><td>128 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Soya</td><td>88 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Coconut</td><td>70 kcal</td></tr><tr><td>Almond</td><td>52 kcal</td></tr></tbody></table>	MILK	CALORIES	Dairy Full Fat	130 kcal	Dairy Semi Skimmed	98 kcal	Dairy Skimmed	74 kcal	Oat	128 kcal	Soya	88 kcal	Coconut	70 kcal	Almond	52 kcal
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ESPRESSO 20ml Single Espresso - 2 kcal 40ml Single Espresso - 4 kcal	TEA 280ml Black Tea - 0.6 kcal 280ml Herbal Tea - 0.6 kcal	SYRUP SYRUP 30ML Vanilla 102 kcal Hazelnut 94 kcal Caramel 93 kcal Sugar-free Vanilla 4 kcal Sugar-free Hazelnut 5 kcal Sugar-free Caramel 5 kcal																																																

Course Assessment

Course Assessment

Cleaning:

Grinder – white rice every month	/6
Plastic hopper – wash every week	/6
Doser Brush once a week	/6
Handle – clean with cleaning solution every night 20 mins max	/6
Head – water every busy hour/cleaning solution every can	/6

Total /30

Espresso:

Run water while going to grinder	/3
Heat cups for espresso	/3
Check coffee doser – Half full of fresh coffee	/3
One or two clicks?	/3
Tamp and polish	/3
Wipe the handle rim	/3
Attach to group quickly	/3
Press button	/3
Get cups	/3

Total /30

notes

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Course Assessment

Milk:

Blast steam wand	/3
Position one	/3
Position two	/3
Spin and stretch milk	/3
Milk to temperature	/3
Blast steam and wipe	/3
Texture and spin	/3
Spin milk between pours	/3
Cappuccino fast, Latte slow	/3
Macchiato still and patient	/3
Total	/30

Totals:

Cleaning	/30
Espresso	/30
Milk	/30
Bonus (10 Points)	/30

Total /100

Date of Attendance:

Trained by (Print Name):

Course Complete (Signed):

notes

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THANK

YOU

for more information contact

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