

La Specialista

MAESTRO

- COFFEE GUIDE -



Coffee, crafted in science.

Welcome to the world of coffee with La Specialista Maestro, the manual coffee machine that'll transform you into a true coffee expert. La Specialista Maestro grants a perfect balance between the science of coffee and the art of texturing milk, empowering you to master both the coffee and the milk preparation processes. Your advanced coffee trip with La Specialista Maestro has just begun.

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The Coffee plantation

Espresso starts out as a question of botany, fruits and cultivation. The coffee plant is an evergreen shrub that belongs to the Rubiaceae family and thrives in tropical climates.

Its fruits are called berries, drupes or cherries and they are harvested by pickers mostly one by one.

Coffee species

There are two main species of beans cultivated worldwide: *Coffea Canephora* and *Coffea Arabica*. The most common variety of *Coffea Canephora* is Robusta.

If you're drinking a coffee right now, chances are you're drinking one of the two.

Arabica

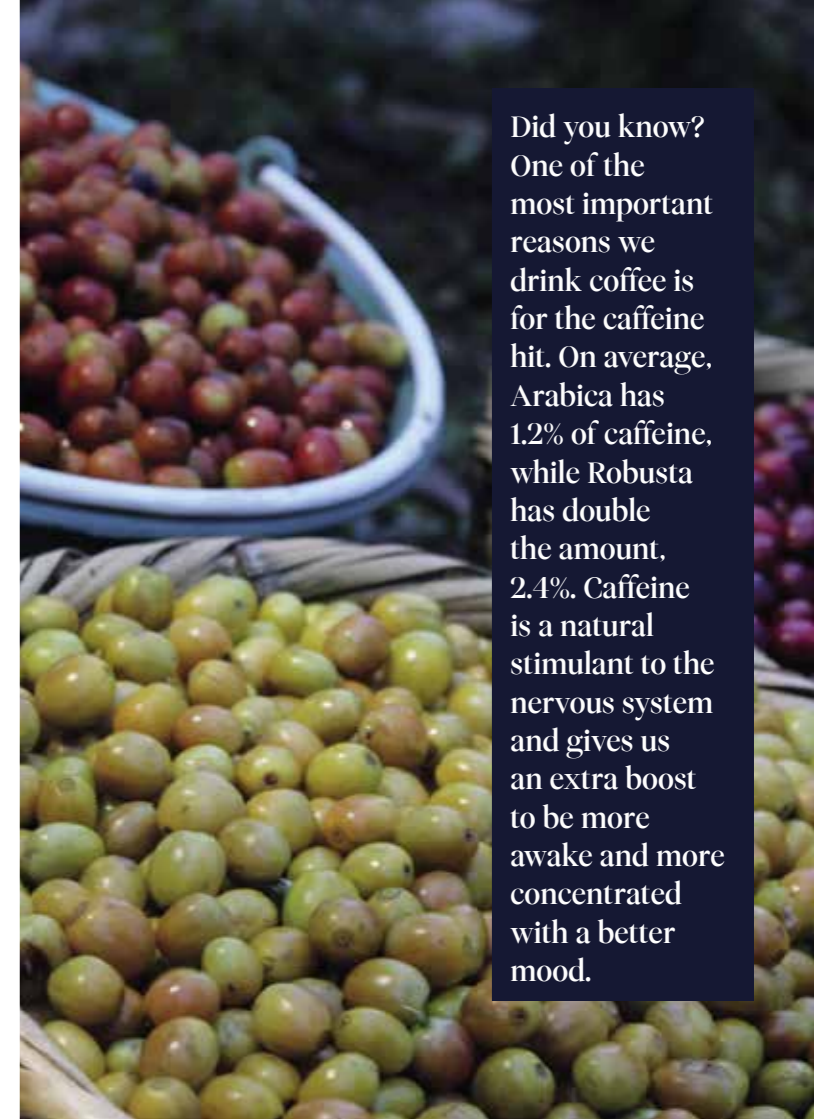
The ideal climate for the Arabica species is a tropical-mountainous one, over 1,000 metres above sea level. Here there's less humidity and rainfall and the temperature range between day and night is greater.

At this altitude the fruit ripens more slowly allowing it to store more sugars, which will be transformed into rich aromas in your cup.

Espresso prepared with high quality Arabica has an intensely pleasant acidity for discerning palates, and produces a clean cup full of aromas, silky body and long aftertaste.

Did you know?

One of the most important reasons we drink coffee is for the caffeine hit. On average, Arabica has 1.2% of caffeine, while Robusta has double the amount, 2.4%. Caffeine is a natural stimulant to the nervous system and gives us an extra boost to be more awake and more concentrated with a better mood.



Robusta

Coffea Canephora, or the Robusta variety, is more resistant to diseases and pests and has a much higher yield. Robusta coffee prefers low-altitude tropical climates with more rainfall, greater humidity and higher temperatures.

It is, therefore, an easier species to grow as it's more resistant and economically more profitable for coffee farmers.

The ripe cherries

Coffee harvesting is the first step to bringing the fully ripe cherries to our cups. It usually occurs just once a year and can last 3-4 months. Harvesting is either manual or mechanical.

Manual picking is done by pickers who select only the ripe fruits one by one.

The mechanical method uses harvesting machines that can only operate on flat surfaces and big plantations, like in Brazil where they work 24 hours a day during harvest season. Mechanical harvesting collects ripe, over ripe and some immature beans that must be selected before processing.



Post harvest processing methods

Once the coffee cherry has been picked, processing must begin as quickly as possible to prevent fruit fermentation. There are three main processing methods: natural, wet and honey or pulped natural.

The natural method is the simplest as it doesn't require any machinery and guarantees excellent coffee bean quality. How does it work? The harvested cherries are sorted and cleaned using water. Then the selected cherries are dried under the sun for 8-12 days.

The wet method uses a depulping machine to separate the bean from the pulp. The beans are left to ferment from 8 to 72 hours, then they are washed in a concrete channel with fresh water. After channelling, the wet beans are left to dry under the sun or in mechanical driers.

The honey method sits between the natural and the wet methods. It's almost entirely practiced by the specialty market and generates unique and more fruity flavours, with a pleasant sweet taste.



Coffee Roasting

The green bean does not release any particular aromatic flavour when it's raw. During the roasting process the beans change colour, increase slightly in volume, and lose weight as thousands of new chemical compounds are created. The darker the roast, the less moisture remains in the bean and the more fragile it becomes.

TIP!

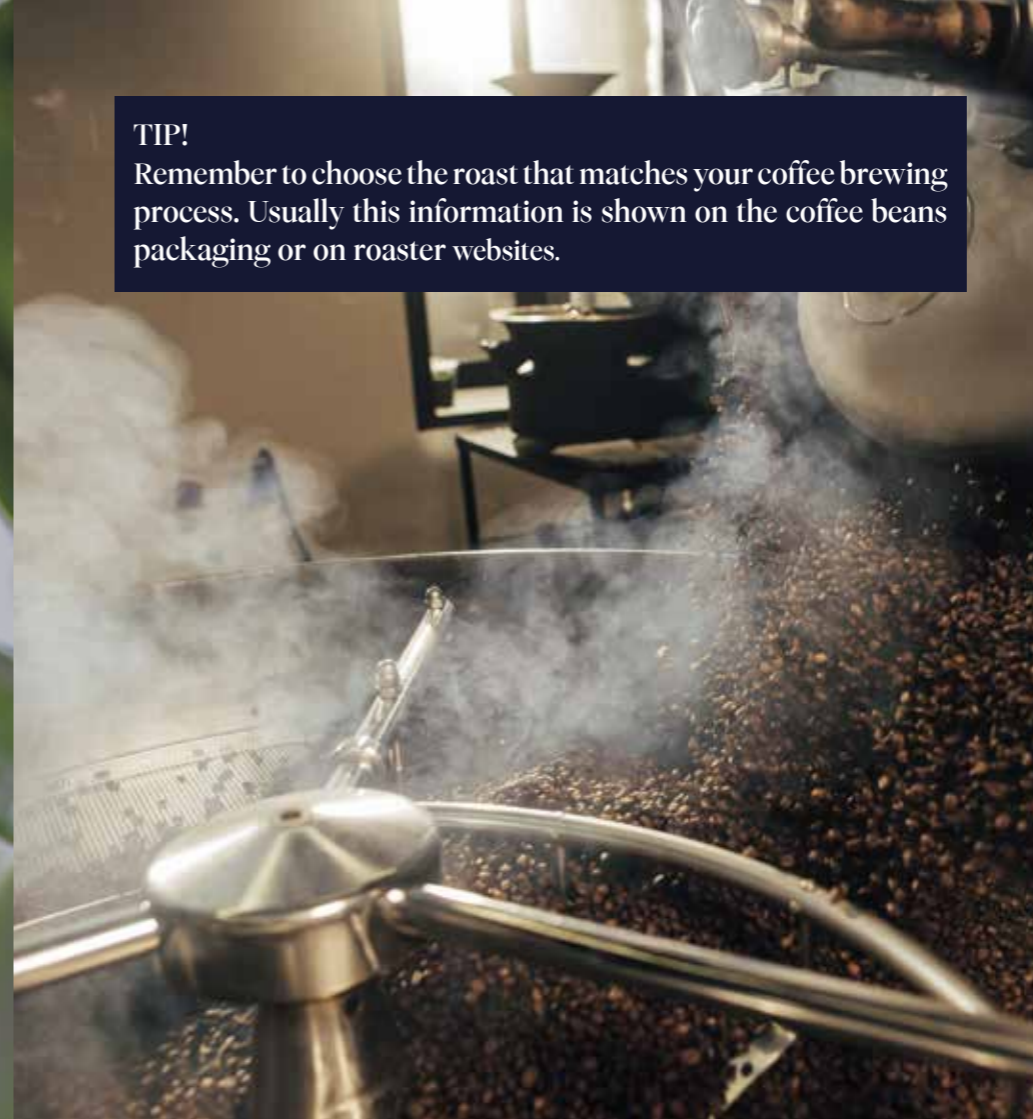
Remember to choose the roast that matches your coffee brewing process. Usually this information is shown on the coffee beans packaging or on roaster websites.

During roasting three main phases happen:

- 1.**The bean loses most of its moisture content, becoming cinnamon in colour.
- 2.**The most important chemical reactions take place, like Maillard and caramelization, and the bean turns brown.
- 3.**The roasting process is interrupted and the bean starts cooling down.

After roasting, the bean is ready for grinding.

With La Specialista Maestro you have all the tools you need to master the coffee preparation process and extract the delicious flavours and the aromas of the beans, ensuring they arrive undamaged into your cup.



Did you know?
The primary enemies of roasted coffee beans are oxygen, high storage temperatures, humidity and direct sunlight. They cause the oxidation of the bean to speed up and produce rancid aromas and flavours.

TIP!

To keep your coffee beans fresh and tasting at their best, only fill the bean container with what you need and store the remainder in a vacuum sealed container in a cool dark place.

Different Roasting levels and why

It's quite easy to understand the quality of your coffee beans. The packaging and roaster websites are the best places to understand their tasting information. This will help you choose beans that are a close match to your preferred palette of flavours.

Did you know?
Each different brewing method has its own ideal roasting profile. Usually a darker roast is for espresso, while a lighter one is for filtered coffee. However, it also depends on tastes: lighter roasting profiles are becoming more and more common.



How to prepare an espresso with La Specialista Maestro

1. Search for information on species and variety: 100% Arabica, single origin, Arabica and Robusta blends.
2. Look for the Coffee Beans Roasting Scale in the “Coffee Toolkit” inside the machine’s packaging and follow the steps.
3. Take a handful of beans out of the coffee beans package.
4. Place them on the colour chip that seems closest to the beans’ colour.



5. Check the roasting level number on the back of the chip: #1 Light Roasted, #2 Medium Roasted, #3 Medium Dark Roasted, #4 Dark Roasted.

Light roasted coffee beans have a complex flavour profile that can be described as bright and acidic. Dark roasted coffee beans have a simpler flavour profile, characterised as bold and robust.

6. Refer to the Settings Table to find the suggested parameters for grinding and infusion temperature.

The pillars of Espresso preparation

GRINDING

Grinding your beans on demand ensures the fresh grind releases the most aroma and the highest quantity of CO₂, helping create a thicker crema on your espresso. It’s important to make sure your grinder is set to the right grinding size: too fine and you’ll get a slow, over-extracted shot that tastes bitter and burnt, too coarse will result in an under-extracted shot that is weak, watery and tastes sour.

Sensor GRINDING TECHNOLOGY

The grinding levels of La Specialista Maestro go from 1 (very fine) to 15 (coarse) and they have been defined in order to produce the perfect-sized powder and the best aroma in your cup depending on the type of coffee beans you have chosen. Each type of coffee bean behaves differently when grinding due to its different densities.

This is why we recommend setting your grinder by following the indications on the Settings Table, available on the following pages of this Coffee Guide.

COFFEE DOSE

La Specialista Maestro offers 2 filter baskets for different dose sizes:

- Single filter basket: for doses up to 12g of coffee. Best for a single espresso or a weaker large coffee.
- Double filter basket: for doses up to 20g of coffee. Best for two cups of coffee, a double shot for a larger cup, stronger single coffee or to use with lighter roasted coffee.

Set the right coffee dose by turning the dose dial in small increments starting at minimum until you have reached the mark inside the filter basket. Refer to the Coffee Dose Graph for a guide to set the dose for your coffee.

Coffee Dose Graph



Smart TAMPING STATION

Tamping consistently with the right amount of pressure is fundamental to obtain perfect extraction results.

The Smart Tamping technology of La Specialista Maestro allows you to reach consistent pressure results on your dose, without having spilling coffee grounds on the machine and on the working area.

After grinding, use the lever on the left side to manually tamp your coffee dose.

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BREWING

When the water hits the ground coffee in the filter, the coffee increases in volume. During this pre-infusion phase it is important that the coffee grounds can accommodate this expansion otherwise there's a risk that under extraction can happen.

Dynamic PREINFUSION

Thanks to the exclusive and new Dynamic pre-infusion, La Specialista Maestro works by automatically adapting the pre-infusion length to the density of the coffee dose to ensure the entire surface of the pod is even and slightly wet for an optimal extraction.

WATER TEMPERATURE

Water temperature is one of the main factors that contribute to the result in your cup.

Each type of coffee might need a dedicated temperature to extract the best flavours. The way in which the water penetrates the coffee dose is fundamental to a perfectly balanced extraction.

For example a lower temperature is preferred for Robusta coffee beans than for Arabica; the same is applicable to beans with a darker roasting colour.

Active TEMPERATURE CONTROL

La Specialista Maestro offers 5 infusion temperature profiles to select, corresponding to a range of temperatures between 90° and 98°C.

The water temperature is precisely controlled throughout the entire brewing process to ensure the ideal temperature stability for the extraction.

To understand what the ideal temperature to brew your coffee is, please refer to the Settings Table.

THE PERFECT ESPRESSO

SETTINGS TABLE



	LIGHT	MEDIUM	MEDIUM DARK	DARK
GRINDING SETTING	5 - 7	6 - 8	6 - 8	7 - 9
INFUSION TEMPERATURE	5 - 4 (-98°C) - (-96°C)	4 - 3 (-96°C) - (-94°C)	3 - 2 (-94°C) - (-92°C)	3 - 2 (-94°C) - (-92°C)
WHICH FILTER SIZE CAN I USE?	BOTH single (x1), double (X2)	BOTH single (x1), double (X2)	BOTH single (x1), double (X2)	BOTH single (x1), double (X2)

SPECIALTY	GRINDING SETTING	WHICH FILTER SIZE CAN I USE?
	5 - 7	DOUBLE (X2)
	INFUSION TEMPERATURE	
	5 (-98°C)	



	LIGHT	MEDIUM	MEDIUM DARK	DARK
GRINDING SETTING	5 - 7	6 - 8	6 - 8	7 - 9
INFUSION TEMPERATURE	4 - 3 (-96°C) - (-94°C)	4 - 3 (-96°C) - (-94°C)	3 - 2 (-94°C) - (-92°C)	2 - 1 (-92°C) - (-90°C)
WHICH FILTER SIZE CAN I USE?	BOTH single (x1), double (X2)	BOTH single (x1), double (X2)	BOTH single (x1), double (X2)	BOTH single (x1), double (X2)

These settings are our best recommendation but the taste in the cup is always your best guide, especially because there are so many variations of beans and blends on offer. Have fun experimenting with the flavours and suggested settings to find your perfect cup.

*This temperature refers to the water inside the thermoblock. This differs from the temperature of the beverage in the cup or the temperature measured when the beverage comes out from the portafilter spouts.

What is Espresso?

Espresso is simple enough: the crema and the dark liquid, in two layers.

On top is the golden thick crema. Crema, acting as a stopper, restrains the volatile aromas contained in the underlying liquid for longer.

The main part of the espresso is the dark liquid that contains dissolved sugars, acids, salts, caffeine and other substances. This is the part that contains most of the delicious, rich flavours and aromas that we love in a great cup of espresso.



CREMA

DARK LIQUID

UNDER EXTRACTED



PERFECT EXTRACTION



OVER EXTRACTED



How to evaluate the characteristics of the crema?

By colour, texture, consistency, elasticity and persistency.

Colour: perfect extraction gives the crema a hazelnut colour.

Under-extraction or old roasted coffee produces a colour that goes from light yellow to pale hazelnut.

Over-extracted coffee or blends with a high percentage of Robusta produces a colour from brown to dark brown.

Texture: is the thickness of bubbles. Arabica light roasted coffee typically produces a fine texture, dark roasted beans and Robusta produce a coarser texture.

Consistency: is the crema's ability to remain compact as if it were whipped cream. Usually the best consistency is obtained by using medium/dark roasted blends of Arabica and Robusta for espresso.

Elasticity: is the principle by which, if you break the crema with a spoon, it stretches back over the coffee.

Persistency: is the ability of the crema to stay over time, until the last drop.

Did you know?
How many cups of coffee you can drink in a day?
The quantity depends on the subjective capability of your body to metabolize the caffeine molecules.
If you want to drink more espresso shots, while avoiding too much caffeine, remember to use 100% Arabica beans and the ristretto recipe – less water used, less caffeine in the drink.

What is Cold Brew?

Cold Brew coffee extraction is a method of brewing coffee with the use of room temperature or cold water.

This feature makes the extraction of the drink unique and very different from methods that use hot water.

Cold Brew uses a longer infusion time instead of heat to extract the properties of the coffee beans, since the low temperature decreases the solvent power of the water.

The traditional method of extracting cold brew calls for a light roast, a coarse grind and a brewing time of up to 18 hours.

Cold brew is very different to iced coffee.

Iced Coffee is traditionally an espresso extracted with heat and made cold afterwards.

The end result of a Cold Brew coffee extraction is a light and refreshing drink, the flavour is smoother, less bitter and less acidic.



Cold Extraction Technology: Cold Brew

De'Longhi has succeeded in replicating the quality of traditional Cold Brew coffee with a new technology – Cold Extraction Technology- which has been implemented on the La Specialista Maestro coffee machine.

De'Longhi Cold Brew coffee has sensory characteristics that are identical to coffee made using traditional cold brew extraction methods, but with the difference that the extraction water is at room temperature and the extraction time is under 5 minutes.

To enjoy Cold Brew coffee made with La Specialista Maestro to the full, we advise adding ice in the glass to cool the drink or placing it in the refrigerator and wait until it reaches 4°C.

Before drinking, always remember to stir well.

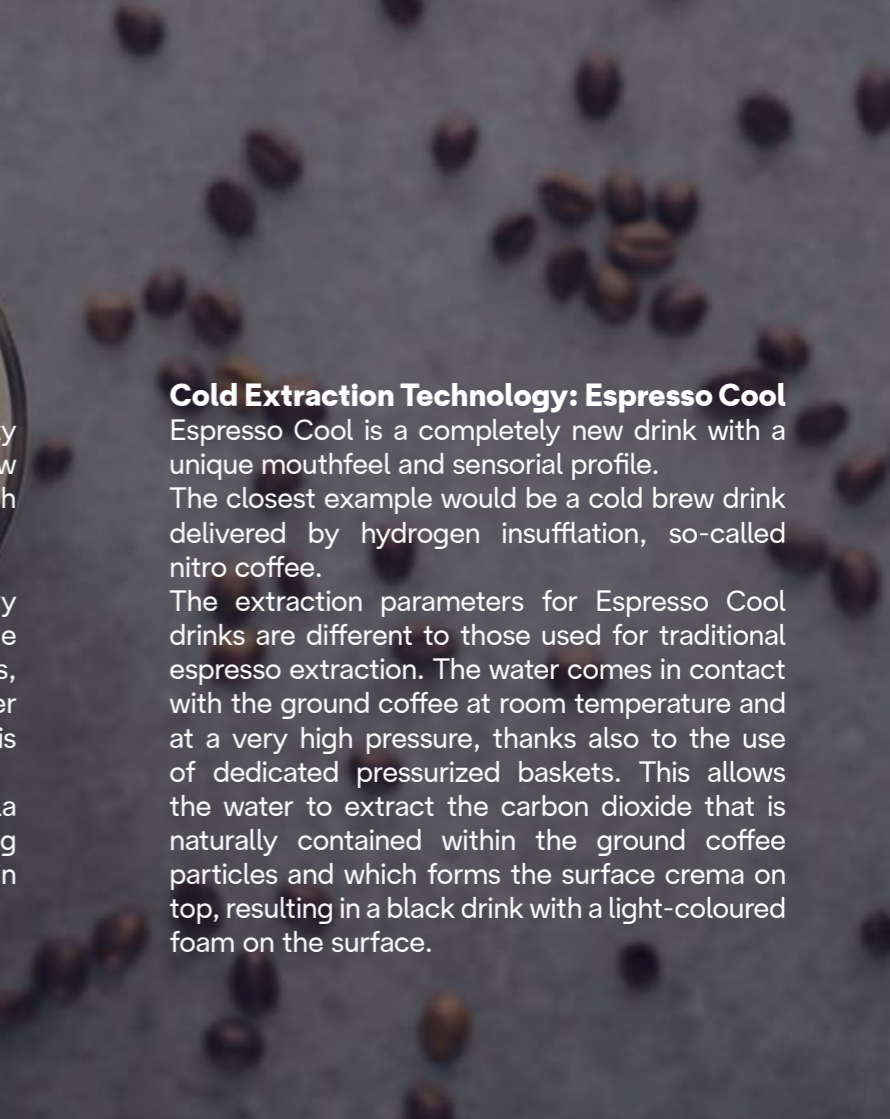


Cold Extraction Technology: Espresso Cool

Espresso Cool is a completely new drink with a unique mouthfeel and sensorial profile.

The closest example would be a cold brew drink delivered by hydrogen insufflation, so-called nitro coffee.

The extraction parameters for Espresso Cool drinks are different to those used for traditional espresso extraction. The water comes in contact with the ground coffee at room temperature and at a very high pressure, thanks also to the use of dedicated pressurized baskets. This allows the water to extract the carbon dioxide that is naturally contained within the ground coffee particles and which forms the surface crema on top, resulting in a black drink with a light-coloured foam on the surface.





Alone, Coffee is pleasure, with Milk it's love

Milk frothing has two purposes: the first is to create a foam by incorporating air in small bubbles, the second is to heat the milk to an ideal temperature of up to 65°C.

Creating creamy, textured hot milk for coffee beverages takes practice to achieve the best results. Dairy is the easiest to stretch or texture as it contains the most natural proteins. Proteins help create the microbubbles that make the milk thick, shiny and creamy to taste, with a long-lasting mouthfeel.

Plant-based drinks

Plant-based drinks are suitable for use in all recipes where cow's milk is used, either at cold temperatures (unfoamed) or at hot temperatures (foamed).

In order to perfectly foam and create a layer of fine, compact, silky bubbles, the right proportion of fat and protein is essential.

This is why the range of plant-based drinks for baristas is fortified with natural ingredients in order to achieve the correct balance of fat and protein for foaming. With the addition of proteins, the right amount of air can be incorporated into the drink to create micro-bubbles, while the addition of the right amount of fat enables a froth similar to that produced using cow's milk.

Before deciding on which milk alternative to use, think about what flavour combination you would like to achieve. Almond drink is very nutty, Oat is sweet and creamy, Soy is somewhere in between, with a creamy nutty flavour. Some alternative drinks pair

better with cold coffee and some are more universally used for both hot and cold beverages. For example, Oat drink is the perfect all-round alternative, providing a thick and creamy taste for both hot or cold beverages. Almond pairs well with a coffee blend that compliments this such as a medium-dark roast or a bold coffee with tasting notes that are chocolaty, nutty or caramel.

The most important thing to remember when using plant-based alternatives is to chill and shake well to ensure all the properties can join together.



Manual Milk frothing



A good microfoam should be velvety, silky smooth, dense with little to no air. Creating microfoam is not an easy task and requires you to put your barista skills to good use!

When preparing the milk, temperature is a crucial element both at the beginning and at the end of the process.

The first thing to do to ensure a correct texturing time is to start with fresh cold milk from the fridge.

The end temperature, too, is critical: when milk exceeds 65-70°C the fats it contains begin to separate, and this leads to a loss of texture but also to a souring of the coffee flavour.



How to create the perfect Latte Art?

Scan the QR code to find out tips and hints.



Quick tips and things to know

Fresh is best: always use cold milk, just out of the fridge, and never reheat it. In fact, cold milk enables the proteins, which are responsible for creating and stabilizing the milk froth, to keep it thick and creamy.

Fill the stainless steel milk jug to about 1/3 full, because when you steam milk it will increase in volume.

When you've finished steaming, swirl the jug and tap gently on a table to remove any unwanted bubbles in the milk.

Clean the steam wand before and after steaming, taking care to purge steam and wipe the wand each time. This ensures the flow is correct and there are no residual milk fat deposits in the way.

When making Latte Art, practice makes perfect. The trick to know the correct temperature is to hold the side of the jug while texturing the milk. Once you cannot hold your hand on the jug for more than three seconds the perfect temperature is reached and it's time to turn off the steam wand. As an alternative, you can use a milk frothing temperature thermometer.



Automatic Milk frothing with LatteCrema Technology

LatteCrema
HOT 

La Specialista Maestro also offers simplicity and convenience thanks to the fully automatic milk frothing.

De'Longhi has devised technology for automatic milk frothing with a single touch thanks to its special LatteCrema carafe. Steam, air and milk are mixed in ideal proportions to create perfect froth delivered directly from the carafe to the cup.

Lattecrema is designed to work flawlessly with all kinds of milk, from dairy variants to plant-based alternatives, mainly soy, oats and almond.

The quality results may differ according to the type or to the specific brand of milk-based drink used.





Coffee is a sensorial experience

TIP!
For a better tasting experience, we recommend pre-heating your cup. Avoid eating very hot and chilly spices or drinking very cold sparkling drinks just before tasting.

The extraction method of espresso allows most of the roasted bean compounds to end up in the cup with an extraordinary aromatic complexity. This makes the espresso a unique sensory experience.

The espresso flavours
Coffee drinks have a natural balanced combination of three tastes: acidity, sweetness and bitterness.

Acidity
A low acidity is pleasurable because it often reminds us of ripened fruits. Too much acidity could lead to an unpleasant perception, caused by excessively light roasting or perhaps even under extraction. You can choose a darker roasting level or change the La

Specialista Maestro setting parameters to correct the under extraction.

Sweetness
Sweetness concerns the sweet, smooth sensation we experience when tasting a coffee. Sweetness is sensed primarily at the tip of the tongue. Arabica is sweeter than Robusta due to its higher sugar content.

Bitterness
High quality coffee has a low bitterness and is characterized by aromas of grapefruit, liquorice, roasted cocoa beans or rhubarb. Robusta variety, dark roasted beans and over extracted coffee produces higher bitterness levels in the drink.

TIP!

Is your espresso shot weak? Check your La Specialista Maestro Settings Table and try to grind the beans finer and/or increase the coffee dose in the filter and/or increase the water temperature.

If you are bothered about it and you want to decrease it change your beans, preferring lighter roasting colours and 100% Arabica. In case of over extraction, change the brewing parameters on the La Specialista Maestro.

The tactile sensations

Espresso produces a thick and intense body and a variety of sensations in the mouth.

Positive mouthfeel characteristics of espresso coffee are smooth, creamy, buttery, velvety, silky; the negative ones are dry and astringent.

Robusta always causes some astringency.

Espresso has the most complex, intense and long aftertaste.

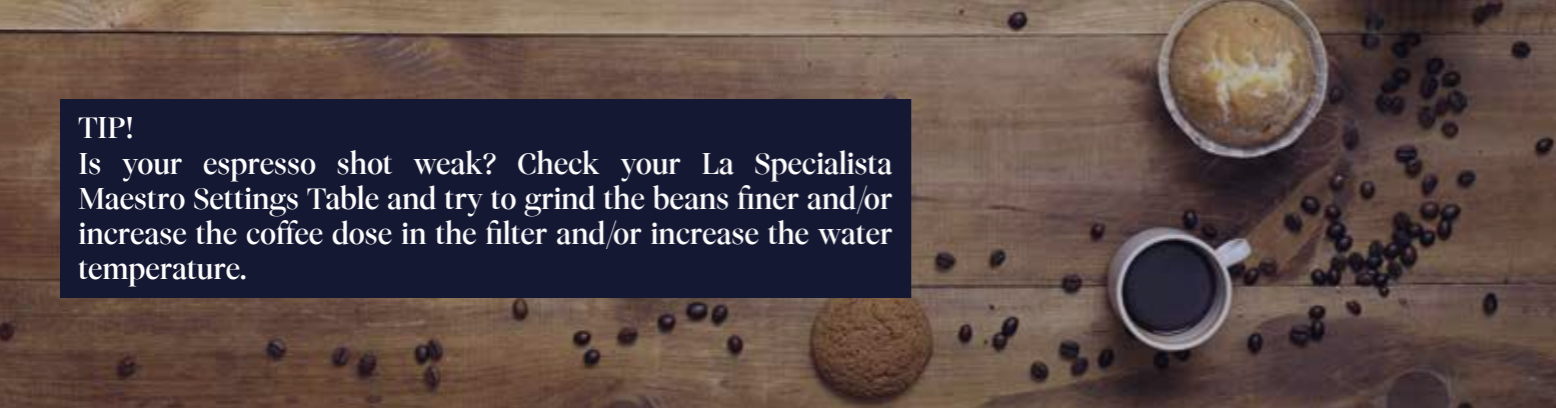
Aftertaste is everything you can perceive in your palate after drinking your coffee.

Coffee is rich in oils that remain attached to your palate for a long time.

Tasting experience, like a coffee expert

Now it's your turn to be a real coffee expert: prepare an espresso with La Specialista Maestro and start smelling it, breaking the crema with a spoon. In order to recognize all the aromas, simply follow the Aroma Wheel, starting from the centre. Are you recognizing positive or negative aromas? If you move toward the edges of the wheel, you are now becoming more of an expert and can now get specific descriptions. This is what the wheel is meant to do, enable anyone to recognize as much of the aroma as possible.

Now let's practice to become a real coffee expert.





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