





“To keep a machine clean is one of the most important skills of a barista. It is the first step to making good coffee.”

- Miki Suzuki, Three-Time Japan Barista Champion

To someone who has never attended a coffee competition, the concept may seem obscure. But get to know the competitors themselves - especially those performing at the highest levels of national and international competitions - and one can't help but be drawn to their charismatic personalities as well as the combination of knowledge, skills and passion that embodies much of what makes the coffee community so vibrant and unique.

In 2015, the Urnex Ambassador Program was established to support coffee professionals in their competitive and professional pursuits, and to collaboratively raise awareness of the crucial role that clean equipment plays in delivering championship quality coffee beverages. The individuals who have participated in this program have exemplified many of the best traits within the coffee industry: the dedication to become the best at their craft, a devotion to and respect for all stages of the bean-to-cup journey and an entrepreneurial spirit that has led many to open their own cafes and start their own businesses. This year's Ambassadors hail from all corners of the globe: from Puebla, Mexico, to Cape Town, South Africa; Florence, Italy to Tokyo. The participants bring a robust and diverse set of backgrounds and perspectives, not only as a result of their geographic differences, but also stemming from their roots both in and out of the coffee industry.

On the following pages, we are excited to share the knowledge and expertise of our team of national and world coffee champions on a wide range of subjects: from pulling the perfect shot of espresso, to exploring local coffee cultures around the world, and experiencing an exclusive Panamanian Gesha. We have tremendous admiration for our Ambassadors, and wish that fellow coffee professionals and enthusiasts are also inspired by their devotion and talent in creating a seemingly simple, yet complex pleasure that we enjoy every day. The Urnex Ambassadors are more than baristas or champions of coffee competition; they are industry experts and trend-setters who push the boundaries of their own abilities and raise the bar for excellence within the global coffee community.

Urnex Ambassadors



NISAN AĞCA
Turkey

Nisan has been the Turkish Barista Champion for two consecutive years, and took second place in Turkey's Brewers Cup in 2017. He is an independent barista who runs his own coffee consulting firm. Nisan has been an Urnex Ambassador since the program's inception in 2015.



LUIS FERIA
Mexico

Luis finished in third place at the Mexico Barista Championships in 2013 & 2015 before winning the competition in 2017. He was coached in his winning effort by the former Colombian Barista Champion, and his mother-in-law, Blanca Bernal. Luis owns the MAS Café espresso boutique and roastery in Puebla, Mexico.



FRANCESCO MASCIULLO
Italy

Francesco is the head barista at Ditta Artigianale, which was founded by three-time Italian Barista champion Francesco Sanapo, Francesco's mentor during his competition training. Prior to winning the Italian Championship in 2017, Francesco placed third in both 2015 and 2016.

“The first time I drank a specialty coffee directly on a coffee plantation, its complexity seemed wonderful. When I saw the hard work of the producers, I realized that coffee would be my life.”

- Luis Feria



STEVEN MOLONEY
Sweden

Steven is the 2016 and 2017 Swedish Barista Champion. He is also the founder of The Barista League, which creates events and competitions for baristas that break down barriers to participation and foster connections within the coffee industry.



CHLOE NATRASS
Germany

An Australian expat, Chloe won the German Barista Championship in 2017. She is an independent barista in Berlin and has also worked with local coffee institutions such as The Barn and 5 Elephant both teaching master classes and as a consultant. Chloe is also the 2016 and 2017 German AeroPress Champion.



BEN PUT
Canada

Ben is a four-time Canadian Barista Champion (2013-2015, 2017), and took third place in both the 2015 and 2016 World Barista Championships. He is also the owner of Monogram Coffee based in Calgary.



“I decided to compete for the first time, honestly for fun. I wanted to feel the emotions. After the first time, I placed third and thought that I wasn't that bad as a barista. So I did it again, and I was third again. This year, finally, I won!”

- Francesco Masciullo, 2017 Italian Barista Champion

Urnex Ambassadors



KYLE RAMAGE
United States

Kyle, the 2017 U.S. Barista Champion, has competed across four seasons of U.S. Barista Competitions and three seasons in the U.S. Brewers Cup. This year he was coached by the 2016 U.S. Barista Champion, Lem Butler. The pair have recently begun a new roasting and retail venture called Black & White Coffee.



MIKI SUZUKI
Japan

Miki is a three-time Japan Barista Champion, and twice has been a World Barista Championship finalist, in 2011 and 2012. She is a barista as well as Sales Planning Director at Maruyama Coffee, the employer of six of the last eight Japan Barista Champions.



NIALL WYNN
Ireland

The 2017 Irish Barista Champion, Niall is the owner of Proper Order Coffee, which was voted Best Coffee in Dublin just five months after the shop's opening. After first working as a school teacher, Niall found his niche in coffee by applying his chemistry studies to his work as a barista.

"I really enjoy the time when I develop my coffee for competition, find the best way to roast and also see how to introduce it to my customers in an easy way."

-Jeremy Zhang



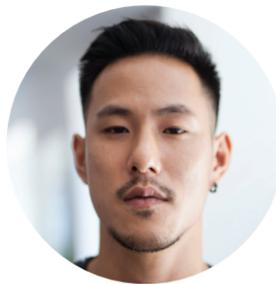
JEREMY ZHANG
China

Jeremy has been crowned China Barista Champion in both 2014 and 2016. With a background in business, Jeremy runs the Uni Uni Roasters and Bakery in his hometown of Nanjing and The Sense café in Chengdu.



WINSTON THOMAS
South Africa

A civil engineer by training, Winston is the lead barista, head trainer and wholesale representative for Origin Coffee Roasters in Cape Town. Winston won this year's South Africa Barista Championship in only his second year of competition, and is also the 2016 South Africa AeroPress Champion.



CHAD WANG
Taiwan

In just his second year competing, Chad followed up his third place finish in the 2016 World Brewers Cup competition by winning the 2017 competition this June in Budapest. Chad's world championship-winning coffee was a natural-processed Geisha from Ninety Plus Coffee in Panama. Chad currently works as a brewing instructor for JascOFFE China.

Photo by Zhou Shi Xiong



"Nothing had held my attention in the way that coffee had... coffee just worked for me. It is hard to explain how the amount of madness and intense focus works for me, but it does."

-Kyle Ramage, 2017 U.S. Barista Champion, on choosing a career in coffee

6 Essential Elements of Good Coffee Brewing

At first glance, it might appear that selecting an exceptional coffee from an exotic origin is all it takes to brew a good cup of coffee. But the process of transforming a simple bean into a delicious coffee beverage is a complex interaction of many factors.

There are six essential elements of good coffee brewing that allow baristas to bring out the best characteristics of a roasted coffee. By applying the basic principles of the scientific method, coffee lovers can experiment with these elements to discover the infinite variations of coffee.

These six elements were introduced by Ted Lingle, one of the founders of the Specialty Coffee Association of America, based on the initial work of Dr. E.E. Lockhart of the Coffee Brewing Institute and Michael Sivetz's book, *Coffee Technology*. Based on their research, and along with the insights and expertise of three National Barista Champions and Urnex Ambassadors – Steven Moloney of Sweden, Niall Wynn of Ireland, and Winston Thomas of South Africa – we explore these essential elements of brewing good coffee.

Coffee-to-Water Ratio

Finding the right balance of coffee grounds and water affects both the strength and extraction of coffee. Shifting the balance in either direction can have a significant impact on the finished brew.

The Specialty Coffee Association's golden ratio of water-to-coffee is 18:1, which converts to a standard of 55 grams of coffee per 1000 milliliters of water.

The most delicious range of flavors occur when the coffee makes up 1.0% and 1.5% of the mass of beverage, and the water is between 98.5% and 99.0%. Coffee concentration of below 1.0% is considered too weak, and concentration of more than 1.5% is considered too strong.

With coffee extraction, the widely accepted range is between 18% and 22% of the coffee mass. An under-extracted coffee (below 18%) will create flavors that are grassy to peanut-like. An over-extracted coffee (above 22%) will result in bitter and astringent flavors.

2016 and 2017 Swedish Barista Champion Steven Moloney likes to compare coffee strength and extraction to mixing water and sugar – a cup of water will be sweeter (strong) when more sugar is added, but not all of the sugar will dissolve (low extraction). Conversely, a small amount of sugar will make a less sweet (weak) drink, but will more fully dissolve (high extraction) in the water.

Grind Size

For a balanced extraction of coffee to occur, the grind size of your coffee particle should be matched to the brewing method and type of equipment used. And the size of the grind must correspond with the brew time.

The general rule of thumb is that larger particles are matched with longer brewing times, and smaller particles are paired with shorter brewing times. This is because larger particles have less surface area and release flavor more slowly, and smaller particles have more surface area and release flavors more quickly. For example, cold brew requires an extra coarse grind size, drip methods use medium to medium-coarse particles, and espresso calls for a fine grind.

South Africa Barista Champion Winston Thomas uses a standard grind size guideline to match to a given brewing method, and then makes adjustments to get the most out of that particular coffee.

“My personal preference is to begin with a coarser grind setting and adjust finer until I am happy,” Winston said. “This gives me the full spectrum of a coffee.”

Brewing Method

From immersion to pour over, hybrid to batch, there are many means to transforming a coffee bean into a coffee beverage. And the method of brewing is integral in shaping the taste and body of a coffee. The equipment's design uses one of six methods to extract the coffee:

- **Steeping:** Coffee grounds are mixed with hot water for a length of time, and then separated from the extract or brew without using a filter.
Brew method: Cupping
- **Decoction:** This method uses extreme turbulence caused by near-boiling water to completely extract the coffee.
Brew method: Turkish Coffee
- **Percolation:** Coffee grounds are placed in a container that acts as a brewing chamber and means of separating the grounds from the beverage. A pump then moves the hot water to and through the grounds repeatedly.
Brew method: Electric Percolator
- **Drip filtration:** Hot water flows through the coffee grounds, and the extract drips into a container below. Here, the chamber's shape and type of filter play important roles in the finished brew.
Brew method: Chemex
- **Vacuum filtration:** This method uses a two-chamber device, in which hot water is forced by steam from the lower to upper chamber, which contains the coffee. When heat is removed, steam condenses in the lower chamber, which creates a vacuum and pulls the coffee through the filter and into the lower chamber.
Brew method: Siphon
- **Pressurized infusion:** Coffee from this method has a very high concentration of solubles. Using a fast brewing time and extremely fine particles, pressurized water is forced through coffee grounds.
Brew method: Moka Pot

When choosing a brew method, Irish Barista Champion Niall Wynn will consider the origin and process of the coffee. When using the drip filtration method, for example, he prefers using fully-washed coffees. But he is a proponent of using any means necessary to get the best result.

“When you get consistent results, that's when you start to experiment,” Niall said. “As long as the results are delicious, that justifies the process.”

Proper Brewing Technique

There are three main variables controlled by the brewing equipment:

- **Water contact time:** It takes time for coffee particles to absorb the water, for the water to dissolve and extract the soluble material in the particle, and for the dissolved material to mix into the beverage. The ideal brewing time will contribute to optimal extraction and taste.
- **Water temperature:** The standard water temperature for brewing is between 195 and 205 degrees Fahrenheit, or 92 and 96 degrees Celsius. Water in this temperature range allows proper extraction of the coffee within a reasonable time.
- **Turbulence:** This is the process of the water mixing and passing through the coffee grounds. Sufficient turbulence is necessary to wet the coffee particles, allowing water to flow uniformly through them so the soluble material can dissolve. The three factors that control turbulence are force, frequency and duration.

To improve the result of your brewing technique, Niall encourages baristas to follow the guiding principles of the scientific method.

“The trick behind any good brewing technique is to change one variable at a time and see how it affects the result,” Niall said. “If it’s good, keep the change you’ve made, but if not, go back to your original recipe.”

Good Water Quality

Water makes up nearly 99% of a cup of coffee, so it’s no surprise that good quality water is necessary for good coffee. Water should be free of odor or taste and without visible impurities. But more than the taste of the water, factors such as mineral composition, pH level and amount of total dissolved solids (TDS) will affect how the coffee extracts and how the different flavor components of

the coffee manifest themselves in the cup.

Water that is very soft or hard doesn’t make for a great cup of coffee, but can be treated before being used for brewing. Water quality often depends on your location. As a resident of Sweden, Steven usually gets excellent water straight out of the tap.

“For those not so lucky, you want to make sure the water is first as clean and fresh as possible,” Steven said. “Then you will want to run through a filter at the very least to remove limescale. This is not only important for the taste of your coffee, but also for the longevity of your coffee equipment.”

Regular descaling with a product such as Dezcal will help to remove limescale build-up from electric kettles and filter coffee machines.

A Filter

Without filters, you would end up with a mouthful of grinds with each sip of your coffee. Filters provide clarity to a coffee by separating the flavorful extracts from the insoluble materials, and are an important factor in determining the body of a coffee.

Filters fall into four general categories:

- **Perforated metal plates:** These plates have holes that allow extract to leave the brewing chamber, but it enables most fine particles to pass through as well, making for a murkier beverage.
- **Woven wire screens:** These screens have smaller holes compared to the metal plates and provide slightly better beverage clarity than perforated metal plates.
- **Cloth:** Cloth filters that are stored in cold water can provide high beverage clarity by filtering out very fine particles.
- **Paper:** This yields the clearest coffee beverage. It is not the sturdiest material, but it should be strong enough to support

the flow of the beverage. It should also not transfer any tastes to the brew itself.

Winston doesn’t believe there is a correct filter for brewing, only preference. The filter he chooses often depends on the person he is brewing for.

“I prefer a metal filter or cloth filter in the morning,” Winston said. “I like to start my day with coffee with a heavier body and mouthfeel. As the day progresses I would switch over to a paper filter for more focus on acidity and a lighter body.”

From Bean to Beverage

For any artistic endeavor, having a firm grasp of the fundamentals is necessary to creating a masterpiece. And the process of brewing coffee is a unique combination of art and science, making the building blocks that much more vital. Once you have an understanding of these six essential elements of good brewing, you can successfully transform a handful of beans into a delicious coffee beverage.

1

NUMBER OF COFFEES TASTED

by Steven Moloney prior to selecting his coffee for the Swedish National Barista Championship

150

NUMBER OF COFFEES TASTED

by Chad Wang prior to selecting his coffee for the Taiwan Brewers Cup Championship



“The first product that for sure we need is Cafiza, because you can’t make delicious espresso or cappuccino with a dirty machine. Most of the baristas in Italy don’t think like this unfortunately. Well, not me! I actually thank Urnex! Cleaning the machine is the beginning for me – then comes the time to experiment with extraction.”

Francesco Masciullo, 2017 Italian Barista Champion

How a Café Selects its Coffee

Monogram Coffee is a café that is punching well above its weight. The two-year old company has just two locations and sells a relatively small amount - 25,000 pounds - of coffee per year. But its reputation as a top coffee spot has grown well beyond its Calgary, Canada roots, in big part thanks to Ben Put, one of the shop's three owners, as well as four-time Canadian Barista Champion.

Monogram has just begun to expand its business into coffee roasting, and plans to launch a wholesale business. But as a relatively small operation currently, Monogram relies on the assistance of partners to acquire its range of coffees.

We talked with Ben about his strategies for sourcing coffee as well as new trends he's looking to incorporate within the café.

Sourcing Coffee

Monogram is careful in determining which coffees make it into the shop. Ben and his co-owners, Justin Eyford and Jeremy Ho, prefer to work with the handful of importers that have a refined understanding of what Monogram looks for in a coffee. Ben is also open to receiving cold-calls from importers, because he doesn't want to miss out on a potentially exceptional coffee. But with strict standards, the shop could find itself with 20 samples, none of which match their criteria.

This has led Monogram to establish a few rules of thumb for choosing coffees for the shop. The first is selecting a coffee that can be brewed well for a specific method. Many cafes will often purchase coffees and attempt to use the roasting process to fit the coffee to the brew method. But Monogram

re-engineers the process, and selects a coffee that they envision specifically as beans for filter coffee or espresso.

The shop also buys coffees based on their shelf lives. He said one of his toughest challenges is purchasing coffee that maintains its character and quality in the time before it arrives at the cafe. To slow the effects of aging, he makes sure that he purchases coffee in hermetically-sealed storage bags, and controls the temperature of the roasting as much as possible.



Monogram also seeks out roasters who freeze their beans. Roasters that freeze their green coffee, like George Howell and Calgary-based Phil & Sebastian, aren't affected by seasonality and are able to offer their consumers a wide range of coffees throughout the year. And with freezing, roasters can focus all their energy on making the most flavorful coffee without any concerns over the coffee's longevity.

Monogram's final buying criteria is selecting coffee that its customers can appreciate, which is quite different from Ben's approach when selecting coffee for competitions.

"It's tempting to buy the most exciting, crazy coffees," Ben said. "But if you have

customers that want something more approachable, it's nice to have a raw product that's approachable rather than take something complex and weird and make it approachable for roasting."

Coffee Taste Preferences

Most baristas or roasters wouldn't pass up the opportunity to enjoy a lively debate around the cupping table about whether a coffee has notes of nectarines or peaches.

But Ben's philosophy in tasting and selecting coffee isn't necessarily focused on the positives of a coffee. He cares about a coffee's tasting notes, but more important is figuring out what's wrong with a coffee, and how to make it better. Ben tries to address issues with roasting or age, or an excess of acidity. And when tasting a coffee, he likes to make sure that the coffee is perfectly balanced before worrying about distinct flavors.

"If you get to the point where you can be arguing about that type of positive, then a lot has gone correctly," Ben said. "It's maybe a more pessimistic approach than other ways of dialing, but so far it's working."

The company's latest pursuit has been naturally-processed coffees. Ben thinks they're an excellent introduction for customers new to specialty coffee, but it is difficult to find examples of naturally-processed coffees that are dried and processed to a high standard.

Along with fellow Urnex Ambassadors Chad Wang and Jeremy Zhang, Ben has worked with Ninety Plus Coffee in Panama, famous for its Gesha coffees. He's excited about the experimentation that Ninety Plus has done with naturally-processed coffees; the options of flavors extracted seem endless.

"From one farm, you will taste several different expressions of naturally-processed coffees," Ben said. "That makes me very hopeful for what processing can do. I think we're right on the cusp of what is capable through process."



Business Philosophy

The most important value to Monogram is trusting the vendors that the shop works with. Monogram pays top dollar for their coffee and has to trust that all businesses throughout its coffee supply chain are paying fair prices.

One of Monogram's strongest partnerships is with Edmonton-based roaster Transcend Coffee. Transcend provides roasted coffee for Monogram to sell and brand as its own. A departure from the typical roaster-café relationship, Ben said it's been successful because of the communication and trans-

parency the two have had when discussing the results of each batch of coffee roasted.

With its wholesale expansion on the horizon, Monogram's attention to detail and honest business values will be indispensable to helping the company achieve the next level of success.



5 Tips to Elevate Your Coffee Grinder Skills

A grinder is one of the most important pieces of equipment in brewing a great cup of coffee.

A coffee's distinct flavor notes are brought to life when the beans are ground as precisely and evenly as possible. And the way a coffee grinder is operated and maintained can have a huge impact on your grind consistency, and therefore the quality of your coffee.

Here are five essential tips to get the most out of your coffee grinder and brew better tasting coffee.

1

Match the Grind Size to the Brewing Method

Grind size is one of three core factors that determines extraction yield in coffee, in addition to temperature and brew time. The size of the coffee grind corresponds to the length of time for extraction using a particular brewing method. And the right grind size for the brewing method allows coffee brewers to bring out the best flavors of a coffee. For espresso, a fine grind is essential, while drip coffee is best made with medium ground beans. For cold brew, grind extra course.



2

Dial in Your Grinder

It's crucial to modify the coffee grinder settings to produce the right grind size for your brewing method. All grinders have their own subtle idiosyncrasies, so it could take considerable time (and coffee) to determine the proper grind setting on your machine.

There are several factors that affect which

grind setting to begin with – the grinder itself, the coffee beans, and even the temperature and humidity of the air. Besides starting with the recommended factory setting, there's no right or wrong place to begin with dialing in a grinder – just pick a grind setting, and make appropriate changes from there.

Your palate can be a valuable tool to discern whether you've correctly dialed in your coffee grinder. If your coffee tastes sour, make the grind finer. And if the coffee tastes bitter,

make the grind coarser. Grind size will also affect the body (sometimes called “mouth-feel”) of your brew, so use your palate to make observations and adjust the grind in the direction of your desired drink texture.

Once you adjust your grind setting, make sure to purge the leftover grounds before using a new coffee or making a new type of coffee beverage.

3

Clean Your Coffee Grinder

Coffee beans are a perishable and oily substance, and over time, coffee oils accumulate inside a grinder and form a residue that will turn rancid. If left alone, that residue will degrade the quality and flavor of each subsequent brew. And fine coffee grounds can be easily lodged in hard-to-reach crevasses of the grinder, which can lead to decreased performance or machine malfunction.

Foremost experts on the subject say that a clean coffee grinder produces better tasting brews. Kyle Ramage, the 2017 U.S. Barista Champion, previously worked for grinder manufacturer Mahlkonig and recommends cleaning with Urnex's Grindz Grinder Cleaner.

“Grindz works really well for our espresso grinders,” Kyle said. “In the world of precision grinders, the cleaner the grinder, the

more consistent the grinder.”

Cleaning your grinder with Grindz is an easy way to remove stale coffee residue and odors from the internal burrs and extend the life of your machine. There's no need to disassemble the machine to clean with Grindz. Simply add one cap full of Grindz into the hopper, and grind them through the machine, as you would with coffee beans. This gently dislodges coffee particles while also absorbing coffee oil residue.

4

Keep Your Grinder Dry

Like any electrical appliance, a coffee grinder should not get wet. Moisture can build up in the machine, which causes the grounds to easily stick to the grinder, and they won't flow as easily through it.

Moisture shouldn't come near the burrs and grind chamber, especially if your grinder has steel burrs. Rust or corrosion can build up near the moving parts or the motor, which will reduce the overall performance of the grinder.

5

Fresh, High Quality Beans

It's nearly impossible to brew a quality cup of coffee without beginning with quality beans. But each roast will have different results with

different grinders. No two coffees will use the exact same grinder settings for ideal extraction, which is why it's necessary to dial in your grinder for each new batch of coffee used.

But for all roasts, fresh coffee is key. Coffee should ideally be used about four days after the roast date, and used up within 10-12 days. As that time passes, the beans become less fresh, and grinder settings might need to be tweaked.

By following these five coffee grinder tips, you'll be well on your way to operating your grinder like a pro and brewing a better tasting cup of coffee.

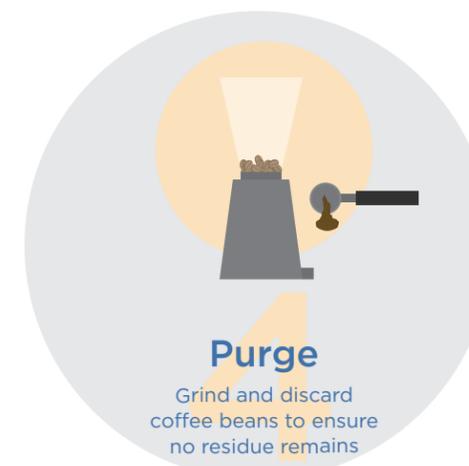


“Since using Grindz, we rarely have to take the grinder apart, which saves a lot of time.”

-Ben Put, Four-time Canadian Barista Champion and owner of Monogram Coffee in Calgary, Canada

GRINDZ

Grindz is the world's first product for cleaning coffee grinders. Simply simply run the product through the machine, like coffee beans, to effectively remove coffee and odors from the internal burrs.



Coffee Around the World

What's unique about coffee culture in your country?

Canada

"Canadian coffee is still dominated by chains ... This means that there is a smaller amount of market share for specialty shops, but it also means that there is still a lot of excitement around good coffee because it is still fairly new to many parts of Canada."

– Ben Put

Sweden

"The culture here is very focused on brewed coffee and very much on the fika phenomenon. So instead of an early coffee on the way to work it is more common with a late afternoon coffee, cake and social catch up with friends."

– Steven Moloney

Germany

"Since 1989 when the wall fell, Berlin and Germany has been rebuilding itself. The speed at which specialty coffee was brought in was slow to say the least. But since the 2000s we've seen a surge in cafes and roasters, and although it might be still small in comparison to its neighbors, we definitely have the quality to back it up."

– Chloe Natrass

Japan

"The Japanese coffee culture has diversity. All generations love to drink coffee. We have so many different styles and philosophies. For example, "kissaten" coffee shop style, small independent roasters, coffee chain shops and "third wave" shops. They respect each other and work together to create coffee culture."

– Miki Suzuki

Ireland

"There's an interesting culture in Dublin now about baristas doing the job really well, working quietly in a very Irish manner, and when the customer is engaged, that's when we start to talk about what we do a little bit more. So it's less of a one-way talk and more of a conversation. In general it's been initiated by the customer rather than the barista."

– Niall Wynn

Turkey

"In Europe, after 3-4 pm, you do not drink coffee mostly. But in Turkey, we mostly drink coffee after 3-4 pm till late at night."

– Nisan Agca

China

"Building up from the ground! We don't have many coffee drinkers in China. It's both a challenge and an opportunity because we can introduce specialty coffee from the very beginning."

– Jeremy Zhang

United States

"We are a really big country and what most people would call the birthplace of specialty. That leads to an incredibly rich expression of coffee quality and since our country is so massive, distinct cultures evolve around those different expressions."

– Kyle Ramage

Italy

"In Italy, we have a true love for coffee. Now it is just our mission to talk again about the quality. This is a huge combination: love and quality. In Italy, we love the product and the culture, and we desire the coffee to improve in the best way."

– Francesco Masciullo

Mexico

"Mexico has a perfect climate for the planting of coffee and, due to its very fertile soil, a great variety of coffee can be planted. That is why we have many varieties with an extraordinary quality."

– Luis Feria

Taiwan

"Not many people know that Taiwan is also a coffee producing country. The main reason is because Taiwan produces only a very small quantity, not enough for export."

– Chad Wang

South Africa

"The coffee culture in South Africa is unique because of its infancy and its small size. The coffee professionals in South Africa are like a small family and together we try to educate the masses. In my opinion our culture is a hybrid of western third wave and traditional African culture because of our diversity."

– Winston Thomas



Which Kind of Milk Should You Choose?

There are fewer culinary duos more dynamic than coffee and milk. The balancing of flavors, the added nutritional benefit, or even the entrancing visual of coffee and milk blending together should be enough to convince any skeptic of the coffee-milk matrimony.

Milk quality is often an overlooked aspect of creating a delicious coffee concoction. But for lattes, cappuccinos and a range of other dairy-infused coffee beverages, milk makes up more than half of the drink. There are many more factors to consider than just whether or not the milk is past its use-by date. Where milk comes from, its chemical content, flavor and texture all matter for the quality of a coffee beverage.

Take it from a barista champ. Lem Butler, the 2016 U.S. Barista Champion and Urnex Ambassador, intimately understands the importance of sourcing the highest quality milk available to use with a world-class coffee. Before competing in the 2016 World Barista Championship in Dublin, Ireland, he sought the recommendation of Colin Harmon, the 2009 Irish Barista Champion, to seek out the best local and organic milks Ireland had to offer.

“Finding the right milk is crucial for competition,” Lem said. “I personally look for a milk that best promotes what I enjoy in coffee: sweetness. And the coffee has to highlight what I find delicious in steamed milk, also sweetness. Sweet and creamy has a great flavor balance with coffee.”

The Science of Milk

Whether or not certain types of milks are compatible with coffee depends almost entirely on the milk’s molecular makeup. Not a chemistry buff? Just look for the two essential elements in milk: fat and protein content. An important part of milk’s chemistry is a

complex combination of fats, called milk fat globules. These globules act as emulsifiers to keep the individual globules from coalescing, as well as to protect them from degradation or oxidation by the enzymes in the fluid portion of the milk. Milk fat globules coat the tongue and inhibit the taste of the coffee, which leads to less bitterness and less acidity compared to a black coffee. This makes milk a perfect complement to a rich, sweet and creamy drink, but a less pleasing addition to a fruity drink.

Another piece of the milk puzzle is two kinds of proteins: whey and casein proteins. The level of protein in cow’s milk is essential in creating tiny bubbles, or microfoam, during heating. And it’s the merging of the milk proteins with coffee globules that highlight the favorable taste characteristics in lattes and cappuccinos. This reaction generates an even better taste when the coffee is hot.

Whole, Reduced or Skim

A general rule of thumb in choosing your milk: the more fat that exists in the milk, the richer and creamier it will taste. Which makes whole milk the go-to option for most coffee bars. At about 3-4% fat content, it achieves an ideal balance of taste and texture when mixed with coffee. Whole milk is the barista’s default choice when the consumer doesn’t specify their milk preference.

Reduced-fat milks, like 1% or 2%, lose some of the sweetness and body gained compared to using whole milk. While not a bad option to cut down on fat and calories, a latte or

cappuccino made with reduced-fat milk will feel a bit weak and watery in the cup.

Skim milk, which contains little to no fat at all, actually retains some sweetness compared to reduced-fat milk. Because of its even lighter body, it doesn’t add much density to a brewed coffee. But steamed, skim milk creates a drier and denser head of foam, and allows an espresso’s flavor to cut through clearly. On the opposite end of the spectrum, creams can add a hefty dose of body to a coffee. Ranging from 12% fat in half-and-half, to 38% in a heavy cream, most creams are best suited for small dashes in a brewed coffee, especially in a dark roast. But used as the main ingredient in a latte is akin to eating your morning bowl of cereal with ice cream.

Selecting the right milk for your coffee is all about the balance you prefer, according to 2017 U.S. Barista Champion, Kyle Ramage. Black coffee has a naturally high acidity level (a pH level of about 4.5), so milk can be used to lower the overall bitterness of coffee.

Kyle coached Lem during his championship season last year, and said he’ll explore local milk options, like Lem did in 2016, for the World Barista Championship this November in Seoul, South Korea.

“Milk is really tough because it can be too sweet and too fatty to the point it covers up the coffee,” Kyle said. “At the U.S. Barista Championship in Seattle, there were a ton of great milks, and we ended up using Sunshine which had the best balance for my coffee. We hope to find that kind of milk at the WBC in

South Korea, one that truly helps the coffee.”

Non-Dairy Milk

When perusing the refrigerated aisle in the grocery store, a shopper’s eye might be drawn to some of the newer, unconventional milk options like soy, rice or coconut milk. But these lower calorie, non-dairy milks don’t have the chemical makeup to create the same taste sensation as animal-based milks. Because these alternative milks contain more water and fewer fats and proteins, its thinner complexion doesn’t have the same effect as animal-based milk to offer a rich, creamy texture when combined with coffee.

However, if you find yourself lured in by the exotic-sounding non-dairy alternatives, here are some of your best bets:

Almond milk: it’s a bit light in both body and flavor, but does have a distinctly nutty taste.

Soy milk: with a pronounced soy aftertaste, it’s thicker and sweeter than almond milk.

Rice milk: most comparable to skim milk, its thinner body makes for a somewhat flimsy latte.

Coconut milk: it is mildly nutty, but has a slightly sour aftertaste.

Cleaning Challenges and Solutions

No matter the fat content or origin of your milk, using a dairy cleaner is vital in making safe and delicious coffee beverages. Milk is one of the best sources of nutrition found in food, making it a common breeding ground for unwanted bacteria if allowed to develop on coffee equipment.

For this reason, you might think twice about drinking milk that has been left outside a refrigerator for a couple of hours. Bacteria such as salmonella, listeria and E. coli can develop when left out because room temperature environments encourage the growth of different types of bacteria. The longer milk is left out, the longer bacteria have to multiply and grow. Now think about the unseen milk residue that

has been sitting inside of your coffee equipment. The milk for your latte could be passing through and making contact with old milk in the steam wand, valves and tubes. No level of latte art skills can compensate for rancid milk.

Milk is also one of the trickier substances to clean. Different kinds of coffee equipment have different reactions to cleaner, even when cleaning the same milk. And because milk residue consists of fats, proteins and minerals, it requires a combination of chemicals to completely eliminate it. Alkaline agents effectively break down milk fat and protein, but they do not dissolve minerals. On the other hand, acid agents and surfactants can dissolve minerals as well as protein.

That’s why we’ve developed multiple forms of our Rinza dairy cleaner. Rinza easily removes milk residue and buildup in steam wands, valves and tubes, and can be used on automatic milk frothers, manual steam wands, traditional and super automatic espresso machines.

Rinza tablets are formulated with cationic surfactants for superior cleaning effectiveness, and are 100% soluble in water.

Rinza liquid effectively breaks down milk protein and is ideally formulated for use in auto frothers. Rinza liquid can also be used to soak steam wands and clean steel frothing pitchers.



Dairy-Based Coffee Drinks



30 ml of Espresso
150 ml of Steamed Milk



60 ml of Espresso
60 ml of Steamed Milk
60 ml of Foamed Milk



60 ml of Espresso
120 ml of Steamed Milk



30 ml of Espresso
Dash of Foamed Milk

All About Crema

Crema is the first thing we see before drinking an espresso. Its texture is beautiful, emulsified and often features swirling colors of light gold and deep caramel.



As the saying goes, “we eat with our eyes.” But when it comes to espresso crema, specialty coffee professionals understand that “pretty” doesn’t necessarily mean “delicious”. At the World Barista Championship, the judges’ sensory scoresheet reflects this. Crema is only evaluated based on whether it is present or not, with a simple “yes/no”. Other categories like sweetness, acidity, bitterness, weight, texture and finish are marked from low to high.

What is Crema?

When ground coffee comes into contact with hot water, microbubbles of carbon dioxide (CO2) are released. This happens whether your coffee is prepared as a pour over or as an espresso. With espresso, pressurized hot water is forced through finely ground coffee creating both crema and liquid. The espresso crema is comprised of microbubbles of CO2 gas that are suspended in water. The bubbles attach to the natural oils and fats present in coffee, then rise to the top of the beverage. The end result is a recognizable “Guinness” effect.

We spoke to Steven Moloney, 2016 and 2017 Swedish Barista Champion, to better understand espresso crema and whether or not its visual cues actually translate into a better tasting coffee.

Urnex: When choosing a coffee to serve as espresso, where do you begin?

Steven: As a barista on bar, I don’t usually get to choose the coffee. It is more about working with the coffee you get. As a competitor, I prefer to look for coffees that have a really good structure and a thick texture that will hold up well when brewed as espresso. The lighter, more delicate coffees tend to be harder to work with as espresso.

Urnex: When you dial in a coffee as espresso, is evaluating crema part of that process?

Steven: Crema can be an indicator of roast degree or freshness, but it doesn’t have any direct correlation to how good the espresso will taste. When I train baristas and personally, I work through a process: I first decide on the dose, then test out different volumes of espresso, and then finally make final adjustments with the grind size. I

am always looking for 1) balance, 2) texture and 3) good and transparent flavours in that order.

Urnex: Does a beautiful crema mean that the coffee will taste great?

Steven: Nope! Roast level and freshness will impact how the coffee extracts and tastes. For example, you can roast a bad coffee to a dark roast degree and get a beautiful, thick, dense crema - and the espresso will still taste bad. Crema can be nice to look at, but it’s important to just concentrate on if the espresso is balanced. Notice how the different tastes work together. What does it feel like in your mouth (could you compare it to cream, skim milk, buttery sauce or dry black tea)? Are there any obvious flavours that jump out at you?

Urnex: Any tips for ordering espresso at a café?

Steven: Every now and again you get a crazy good espresso that can only really work as espresso (and not as a filter coffee). So maybe just listen to your barista when they say, “You really, really need to taste this!”

Grounds for Debate

We asked our panel of experts to weigh in on the industry’s most pressing topics



STEVEN MOLONEY



CHLOE NATRASS



JEREMY ZHANG



MIKI SUZUKI



LUIS FERIA

Almond or Soy?	Almond	Neither	Soy	Soy	Soy
Colombia or Ethiopia?	Ethiopia	Colombia	Ethiopia	Ethiopia	Colombia
SL-28 or Gesha?	SL-28	SL-28	Gesha	Gesha	Gesha
Vinyl or Digital?	Digital	Vinyl	Vinyl	Digital	Digital
Iced Coffee or Cold Brew?	Iced Coffee	Iced Coffee	Iced Coffee	Cold Brew	Cold Brew
Single Origin or Blend?	Single	Single	Blend	Single	Single
Tattoos or Beards?	Tattoos	Tattoos	Beards	Beards	Beards
For Here or Takeaway?	For Here	For Here	For Here	For Here	For Here

Espresso Cocktails & Homemade Simple Syrup

Not everyone has access to ninety-plus graded coffee or a national champion barista pulling espresso shots just down the street from their home or office. But with equal parts discipline and creativity, one can turn an everyday espresso into a sophisticated coffee cocktail. We learn a few tips and tricks from Chloe Natrass, 2017 German Barista Champion.



When she isn't working on a special project with notable coffee businesses like The Barn or 5 Elephant, Chloe is preparing for competition. Her preparation aligns directly with the three types of drinks she will make on stage - dialing in her coffee to produce the sweetest espresso, combining that espresso with the perfect ratio of milk, and of course, designing a delicious and memorable signature drink. The signature drink, sometimes called a "sig-bev" or "siggie" for short, is the portion of a routine where a barista competitor can truly show off their knowledge of seasonality.

In order to receive high marks from judges, the signature drink must be well-articulated, introduced and prepared. It must be appealing in its presentation, functional and include creativity and synergy with the coffee. The taste must be balanced and the flavor descriptors must be accurate. Much like the milk beverage, it is also important that the espresso is not lost amidst the other ingredients. And of course, an excellent signature beverage always begins with an amazing coffee brewed as espresso.

"As a coffee expert," Chloe explains, "my goal is to showcase the hard work of the producers, the talent of the roasters and my own personal skillset as the barista. A signature beverage is like a coffee cocktail. It helps to have a simple recipe that you can use for a starting place. From there, you can add and subtract ingredients and just experiment. Much like dialing in a coffee, you dial in with the ingredients to reach the perfect balance of complex and pleasant flavors without completely overshadowing what makes the coffee special."

Chloe's Coffee Cocktail Base

- 2.5 oz. espresso, freshly brewed
- Tablespoon unrefined cane sugar
- 1 cocktail shaker
- Ice

Combine all ingredients in a cocktail shaker with ice. Shake well and serve.

"This is a great recipe for a house espresso blend, something that is forward with flavors of dark chocolate and nuts," Chloe says. "But when a really special single origin coffee stands out, it can be fun to substitute the tablespoon of unrefined cane sugar for a simple syrup flavored with a natural ingredient like ginger or rose petals."

As more and more consumers learn about barista competitions and the signature beverage round of the presentation, they are interested in experiencing a coffee cocktail that incorporates an unexpected flavor. The flavor you choose depends on the coffee, the roast level and the region where it comes from. Chloe continues:

"If using an espresso made from a light roast Central American coffee, try substituting plain sugar for a lemon simple syrup. It will elevate the citrus notes known to be present in specialty coffees from this region.

"If using an espresso made from a medium roast Ethiopian coffee, try substituting plain sugar for a lavender simple syrup. This will enhance the floral notes that are present in specialty coffees from this part of the world.

"And don't be afraid to make mistakes! That is just part of the fun.

"For something truly experimental, try creating a simple syrup with a spice or herb, like cinnamon or rosemary. But no matter what, do not add milk or any milk alternative to this recipe! Instead of considering this a limitation, think of this as a fun boundary to work within. The true challenge for the competitive barista is to showcase a coffee as espresso without losing it among the additional ingredients, and this recipe is a good exercise and good practice."

Instructions

Simple syrup is equal parts water and sugar. Start with ½ cup sugar and ½ cup water. This will produce just under four ounces of simple syrup. Heat until combined. When

it starts to simmer, remove the mixture immediately from the heat source. It should be completely clear (not cloudy or turning brown). Now add your seasonal ingredient. Stir into mixture and then cover. Allow it to steep. When it is completely cool, remove the seasonal ingredient.

Pro Tip #1

Make multiple types of flavored syrups at a single time. We quadrupled our recipe (2 cups sugar: 2 cups water) to make four syrups: cinnamon, lemon, ginger and mint. Remove the simple syrup from the heat and immediately pour into mason jars. Submerge the seasonal ingredient in the syrup, cover tightly and allow to cool.

When making multiple flavored simple syrups at a time, we like four ounce mason jars. But as long as the ingredient is fully submerged in the simple syrup, any container is fine. Flavored simple syrups should be used within a week or two.

Pro Tip #2

Keep the simple syrup in an airtight container and refrigerate until you are ready to use it.

Here are some other ideas for seasonal ingredients that you can combine to create your own flavored simple syrup. Be creative!



- | | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| vanilla beans | rosemary |
| cinnamon sticks | pomegranate |
| dried chiles | orange |
| basil | almonds |
| lemon | lavender |
| ginger | rose petals |

Turkish Coffee

In the traditional Turkish style, coffee is prepared by boiling finely ground beans and water twice in succession. It is heated in a small pot that is lined with silver, has a long handle and is typically made from brass or copper. The name for this pot varies in different parts of the world, but it is most commonly called an “ibrik” or “cezve”. The ibrik itself is an important part of the Turkish coffee experience.



Like the beverage itself, the history of Turkish coffee is rich. The city of Istanbul was one of the first to establish coffee houses as early as the 15th Century. With coffee houses came coffee professionals, and a very specific style of preparation was developed. What is now known as Turkish coffee is a full immersion brew method that is served without any filtering.

Two-time Turkish Barista Champion, Nisan Agca, shares with us his take on how to make the perfect cup of Turkish Coffee.

Urnex: Can you use any coffee to make Turkish coffee? What do you recommend?

Nisan: Yes, you can! I prefer African coffees, specifically natural processed Ethiopian coffees.

Urnex: What about grind size? Any special instructions?

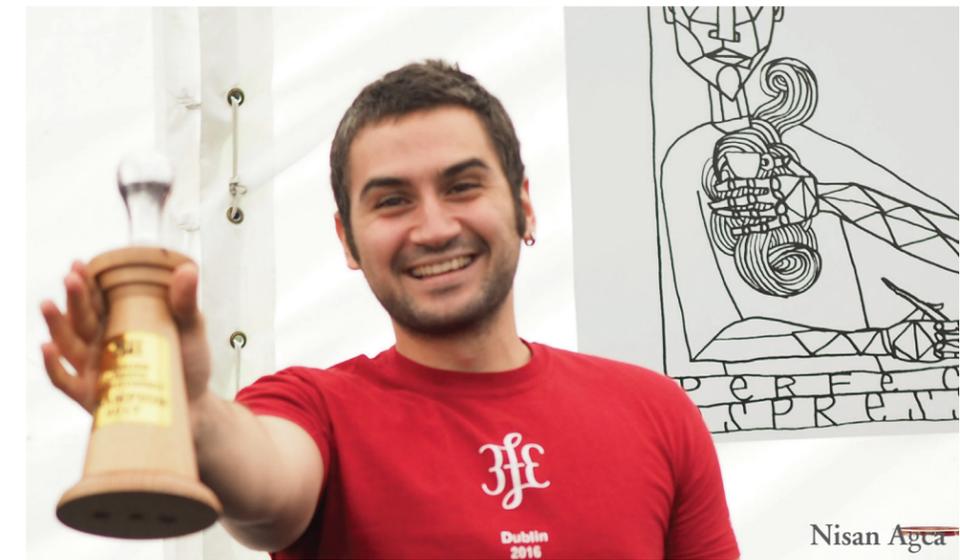
Nisan: You need a very fine grind. Like powder. So much finer than espresso. When you touch the grounds, you shouldn't feel anything scratchy at all.

Urnex: Is there a certain kind of coffee cup that is used to serve Turkish coffee?

Nisan: It should be a thin walled cup, unlike espresso. And to have a better experience we use a wide bottom cup, like a reverse tulip. Since you drink Turkish coffee with the ground, this allows the particles to settle down and you won't have many particles in your mouth!

Urnex: We know that this style of coffee brewing creates a unique type of crema. What is special about it?

Nisan: It is more like foam than crema. It is special because it is a big visual sign that your grind size and brewing technique is okay.



Nisan's Turkish Coffee Recipe

Ingredients and Equipment:

- Ibrik (also called “Cezve”)
- Whole Bean Coffee
- Grinder
- Small Cup
- Water
- Heat Source
- Sugar (optional)
- Spice, such as Cardamom (optional)

Choose a coffee

Some supermarkets sell product that is pre-ground, marketed as Turkish coffee and usually robusta. Do not be fooled! In fact, any coffee can be brewed using this unfiltered total immersion method.

Grind it super fine

The grind should be so fine that it will fill the spaces in your fingerprint. Turkish coffee is like the ultimate “cowboy coffee,” which is just coffee and water boiled together. However it is the ultra fine powdery grind that makes the Turkish coffee experience unlike any other you might find on the dusty trail.

Fill your cups with water, then transfer it to your ibrik

There is another element of Turkish coffee, apart from the superfine grind, that makes

Turkish coffee so unique: style of service. When the coffee cup is filled with water and then that water is transferred to the ibrik, the person preparing the coffee ceremoniously acknowledges the number of people that will be served.

Boil the coffee twice

Place the ibrik over medium heat. As the coffee warms, a dark foam will start to build at the surface. At this point, remove the ibrik from the heat source. Use a teaspoon to transfer some of the foam into the serving cups, then return the ibrik to the heat source. Once the coffee begins to boil, remove the ibrik from the heat source and pour half of the coffee into the cups. Return the ibrik to the heat source for the final time, for 15-20 seconds, or until it reaches a boil again. When ready, pour the remaining coffee into the cups, filling to the rim of the glass.

Serve with a glass of water... and enjoy!

Turkish coffee is always served with a glass of water to cleanse the palate. Often it is also served with some kind of very small pastry or sweet treat.

Tasting a Gesha

With World Brewers Cup
Champion Chad Wang

In the world of specialty coffee, some coffees are more special than others. With the industry expanding and gaining interest, it seems that more consumers are eager to taste something different from the average “cup of joe.” The Gesha variety of coffee is one that delivers a truly exceptional experience, but it is rare, expensive and can be difficult to source.

If you are fortunate enough to source this coffee, which originates from Ethiopia but has gained its reputation among the highest elevation farms in Panama, you should certainly give it a try. However, a word to the wise: with an expensive coffee like a Gesha, a little planning can go a long way.

To learn how best to experience and brew a Gesha, we connected with 2017 World Brewers Cup Champion, Chad Wang. With formal culinary training at Le Cordon Bleu in London, four origin trips completed and countless hours training and preparing for international coffee competitions, Chad is ideally qualified to identify a stand-out coffee and recommend the preparation and tasting methods that will amplify the coffee’s exquisite qualities.

The Coffee

Origin: Panama
Variety: Gesha
Roast Level: 70-87

Recommended Brew Methods

1. Pour Over
2. Infusion
3. Combination of both

For the pour over method, we have a ceramic Hario V60 on hand. This is also the same brew method used by Chad in his



world title-winning presentation. For the infusion method, we have a French Press. No surprise as this is a very accessible immersion brew method. For a method that combines both pour over and infusion, we chose another approachable manual brewer, the Clever Dripper.

Water

A brewed cup of coffee is 98% water, which means this ingredient is just as important as the coffee itself. Barista competitors like Chad will choose water with certain PH and TDS levels.

A NOTE ABOUT ROAST LEVELS

Developed by the Agtron Corporation (Reno, NV), the agtron scale is the most commonly used reference scale for roast color classification. The scale ranges from 25-95 and is the measure of light reflected of roasted coffee – measured in either ground of whole bean form. The higher the number, the lighter the coffee is. In Chad’s recommendation, the roast level is 70 whole bean and 87 ground.

AGTRON ROAST CLASSIFICATION

Agtron Description	Agtron Number
Very Light	95
Light	85
Moderately Light	75
Light Medium	65
Medium	55
Moderately Dark	45
Dark	35
Very Dark	25

Brew Method	Pour Over	Infusion	Combination
Grind Size (micron)	400	600	500
Brew Time (minute)	1:50-2:00	2:30	2:00-2:15

Chad recommends a water temperature of 92° C / 198° F for each of these three brew methods.

Grind Size and Brew Time

The higher the number on the micron scale, the larger the grind size. For pour over, Chad recommends a grind size of 400 microns. For the infusion method, Chad recommends a grind size of 600 microns. His grind size recommendation for the brew method that combines both is 500 microns. Remember that more exposed surface area (fine sugar) means a faster rate of extraction, or more soluble solids dissolved in less time. Chad’s recommendation at 400, 600 and 500 microns are well below the Gold Cup standard for automatic drip brewers (845 microns), and so his recommended brew time is shorter as well. The chart above illustrates Chad’s advice for grind size and brew time depending upon the selected brew method.

As a general rule, if the coffee grind is too coarse, then the extraction rate will be low and the coffee will taste weak and underdeveloped. If the coffee grind is too fine, the extraction rate will be high and the coffee taste will be strong and bitter. However, optimal extraction (regardless of brew method) is always a function of:

1. Grind size
2. Grind uniformity
3. Exposure time to hot water
4. Amount of coffee and water used in brewing (a.k.a. the brew ratio or recipe)

We borrowed the brew recipe that Chad used to win the world title. For all three brew methods (V60, French Press and Clever Dripper) we used 15 g of ground coffee and 250 ml water with a thirty second

bloom at the start of brewing. For the V60, water should be drawn at 2 minutes. For the French Press, water should be drawn down at 2:30 and for the Clever Dripper, somewhere between 2:00 and 2:15.

Flavor Profiles

Through proper harvesting, natural processing and light roasting, a Gesha variety coffee from Panama can produce stone and melon fruit sweetness with floral notes, especially just after brewing, when it is hot. The coffee will become even sweeter as it cools. Look for butterscotch transforming into deep caramel as well as citric and malic acids turning to a ripe mango-like sweetness.

For this brewing exercise, Chad provided his recommendations and we then used that information as our starting parameters. Our goal was to experience the flavors that we know to expect from a naturally processed Gesha variety from Panama. However, the lessons learned here can be applied to coffees of many origins, varieties, processing types and roast levels.

Thanks to Chad’s guidance and expertise, we can do better than brew one amazing cup of coffee. We can use this information and process to produce a consistently tasty result over many brews.



What is the reaction you receive when you tell someone outside the coffee community that you are a champion barista competitor?

“I guess it’s mixed. Some people think it’s really interesting and respect the hard work put in. Others think it’s not a career and they make better coffee at home. These people are my favorite, it’s a chance to get my persuasion on. I dare you to walk away from that conversation feeling the same. I think that’s part of the job.”

- **Chloe Natrass**

2017 German Barista Champion



“There’s competitions for coffee? Seriously?” This is the typical response, followed by questions on my latte art abilities.”

- **Winston Thomas**

2017 South Africa Barista Champion

Café Owner Roundtable

Today's market for coffee shops and roasters is ultra-competitive. Businesses large and small are springing up across the globe as demand for coffee beverages continues to grow. But Luis Feria, Niall Wynn, Kyle Ramage, Jeremy Zhang and Ben Put are no strangers to competition. Each of these individuals holds the title of National Barista Champion for his home nation.

Being "the champ" can serve as an advantage in more ways than one: it can be a boon for business by helping to attract investors as well as increase a café's visibility to the general public. But owning and operating a café can also influence one's approach to barista competitions, from selecting coffee to serving panels of judges.

To learn more on the intersection of the café business and coffee competitions, we've asked Kyle, Ben, Luis, Niall and Jeremy for their unique perspectives on this subject.

The Owners

Kyle Ramage
Black & White Coffee
Wake Forest, North Carolina, United States

Ben Put
Monogram Coffee
Calgary, Canada

Luis Feria
Mas Café
Puebla, Mexico

Niall Wynn
Proper Order Coffee
Dublin, Ireland

Jeremy Zhang
Uni Uni
Nanjing, China



Uni Uni in Nanjing China

Urnex: Tell us about the path that led you to owning a business.

Luis: While working for a big coffee supply company, I got the idea of having my own business. I was always interested in learning more about coffee, and roasting coffee myself was the absolute best way to learn.

Jeremy: For 12 years I lived in Melbourne and at that time specialty coffee stores were booming. When I moved back to China, my dream became a reality and a new milestone of my career. To have my own coffee shop in a brand new market is challenging and rewarding.

Ben: My interests have always been firmly rooted in the coffee itself, rather than the business side of operating a café. I also knew that if I wanted to continue working in coffee, owning a café was the next step. So, I found two partners that had the strengths and talents that I lacked. I had no idea how much I would enjoy all the aspects of the café industry.

Kyle: At first I resisted the idea, but owning a café is such a great way to interact with the community and to express with great control, your view on coffee and how it could (and should) be served.

Niall: Fifty percent of all coffee shop owners in Dublin probably worked for Coffee Angel at one time, and I am one of them.

Before that, I was a school teacher. My background as a teacher made me quite strong as a coffee educator and I also enjoy implementing systems and procedures in the shop and on the bar. My approach to making changes in a business is rather grassroots and pretty quickly, I realized that if I wanted to continue to work in this style, the only way to do that was to have my own shop.

Urnex: So not every café is owned by a barista champion...

Kyle: It gives you near instant credibility when people walk in and see the trophies. It helps to have titles from my business partner, and 2016 Urnex Ambassador, Lem Butler, on the wall. He won the 2016 United States Barista Championship and finished fourth place in the 2016 World Barista Championship.

Jeremy: I focused more on the content of being a barista champion rather than the reputation that being barista champion has gained. That's why there are no trophies in our shops. Instead, we share all our competition knowledge with all our baristas. It was also a great time to reevaluate the way we make coffee at the shop.

Luis: The competitions have helped me become more professional. And the recognition of being champion helps to sell more coffee.

Niall: When I started the job, I was an introvert and shied away from serving customers just because it was so new to me. I think competitions helped me with that – when you're confident in talking and presenting to people on stage in such a high pressure situation. So chatting to a customer who comes into the shop every day comes a whole lot easier.

Ben: Competing introduces you to so many different baristas, cafés and perspectives in coffee. Seeing all the different approaches has definitely had an impact on our cafés, our coffee and the philosophy of our brand. I have learned so many things from competing that I have applied the café, but one of the biggest has been having an outward and forward looking perspective.

Urnex: What piece of technology or equipment has helped to improve your operation?

Kyle: We have a Loring Coffee Roaster, and it gives us the power and control to express coffees in so many different ways. That thing is amazing.

Ben: We just started roasting at Monogram, and the IKAWA sample roaster has been a huge part of the launch. I use the roaster to roast samples, but I have also used

it to roast for competitions. The ability to share profiles through text or email, the ease of use and the repeatability has been a real game-changer. Plus, I can roast in our kitchen!

Jeremy: Funnels for the EG-1 Electric Grinder. If we catch coffee directly into the group head without the funnels, it collects in a mountain shape. No matter how long you groom it, the density distribution is never even. Which forces the water to flow through the edge of the basket. But using coffee funnels can redistribute the density of dose, and enables even extraction. It is a standard method of dosing in our coffee shop.

Luis: I own a roasting business, and having an espresso machine at our facility is very important because this way we can taste the final result that is an espresso.

Niall: We have an awesome espresso machine, the La Marzocco Linea PB, and it has scales built into the drip tray. It does a much better job than I, or any barista I know, could do in making sure things are accurate. But at the end of the day, if it's not well-maintained or cleaned regularly, it won't matter. You can have all the fancy equipment in the world, but unless it's

clean, your espresso is just going to taste bad.

Urnex: If you could go back in time, what advice would you give yourself about your plans to open a café?

Jeremy: Be patient and never stop learning.

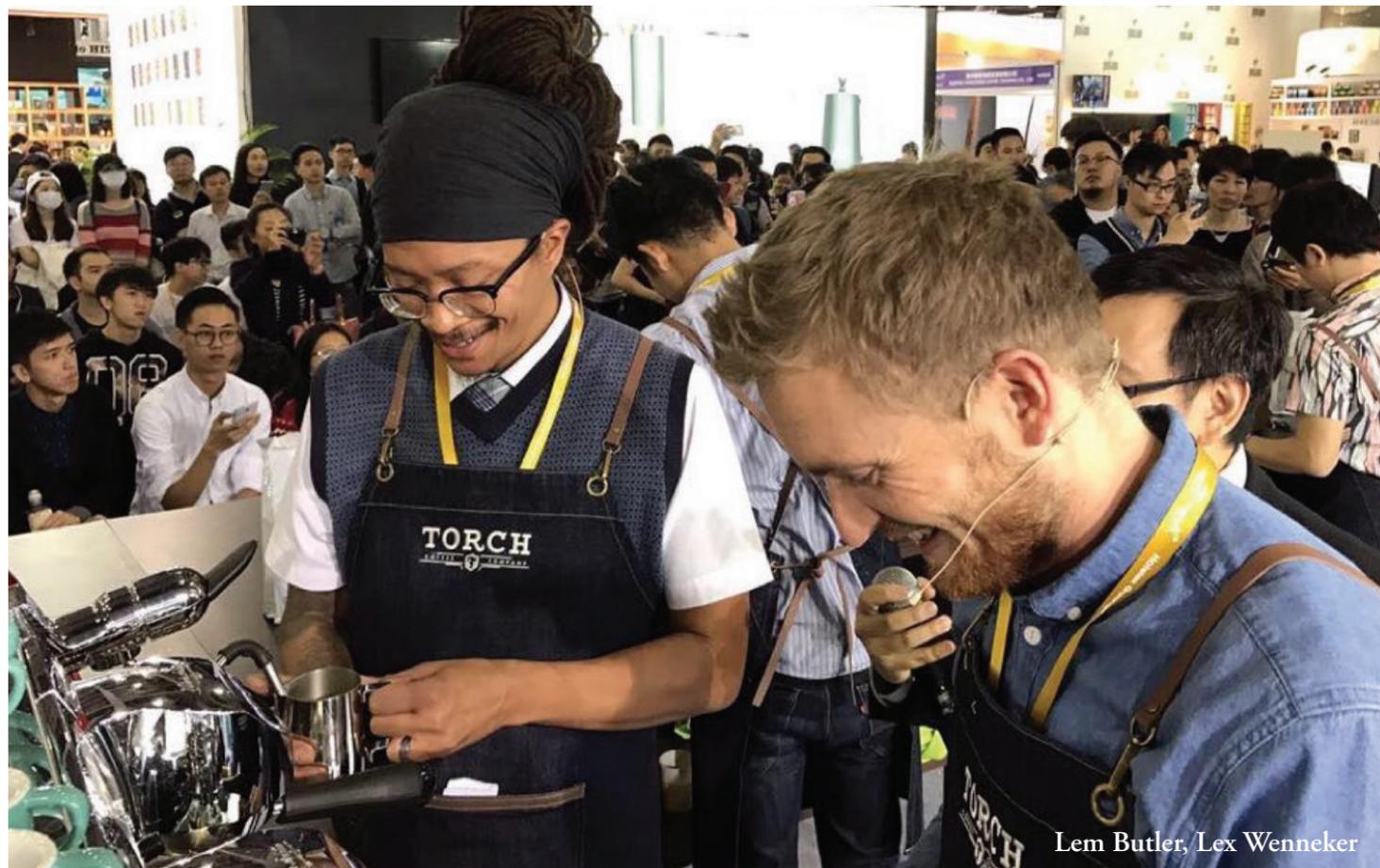
Ben: Not to stress so much and to empower people earlier. Stress only made me feel more tired and hesitant to do the things I needed to do. People might come to your café once because you won some competition, but they will only keep coming back if the staff that serves them every day is well trained and motivated. You can be the best barista in the world, but if you haven't built or invested in a team, none of it matters.

Niall: I guess I would have started looking for help a little bit sooner. I knew for a while that I wanted to do a coffee shop, but I stubbornly went it alone. I've always been amazed that within the specialty community, people are always so willing to help and support an idea they think is a good one.

Luis: I would have liked to have taken more courses in coffee roasting, but have learned along the way. And everything has gone very well.



Niall Wynn



Lem Butler, Lex Weneker

Where Are They Now?

We check in with three of last year's Urnex Ambassadors to find out how they've spent the past year.

Lem Butler

2016 US Barista Champion

Lem has had little down-time since winning the U.S. Barista Championship in April 2016. He traveled to Panama to source coffee for his routine at the World Barista Championship (WBC) in Dublin, where he placed 4th overall. Following the WBC, Lem balanced his role as a trainer at renowned roaster, Counter Culture Coffee, with an extensive international travel schedule, including trips to Brazil, China, Japan and Ethiopia. But Lem's biggest adventures awaited him back home. In August 2017, Lem joined friend and 2017 U.S. Barista Champion, Kyle Ramage, to open Black and White Coffee Roasters, a café and roastery in Wake Forest, North Carolina. Lem and his wife are also preparing for the addition of their third child in early 2018.

Charlotte Malaval

2015 & 2016 French Barista Champion

Like Lem, Charlotte has travelled quite a bit recently. Following her 5th place finish at the 2016 WBC in Dublin, Charlotte accepted a position as a green coffee buyer at Toby's Estate, and moved from her home in France to Australia. In early 2017, Charlotte traveled to China as part of the WBC All-Star Team that featured fellow 2016 WBC finalists – and Urnex Ambassadors – Ben Put, Lex Weneker, Yoshikazu Iwase, Berg Wu and Lem Butler – and at the end of the summer spent three weeks visiting coffee farms in Brazil. Charlotte is greatly enjoying her role at Toby's, particularly her work addressing the challenges of making high quality coffees accessible to the masses as well as sharing the values and stories of coffee producers with a broader audience.

Lex Weneker

2015 & 2016 Dutch Barista Champion

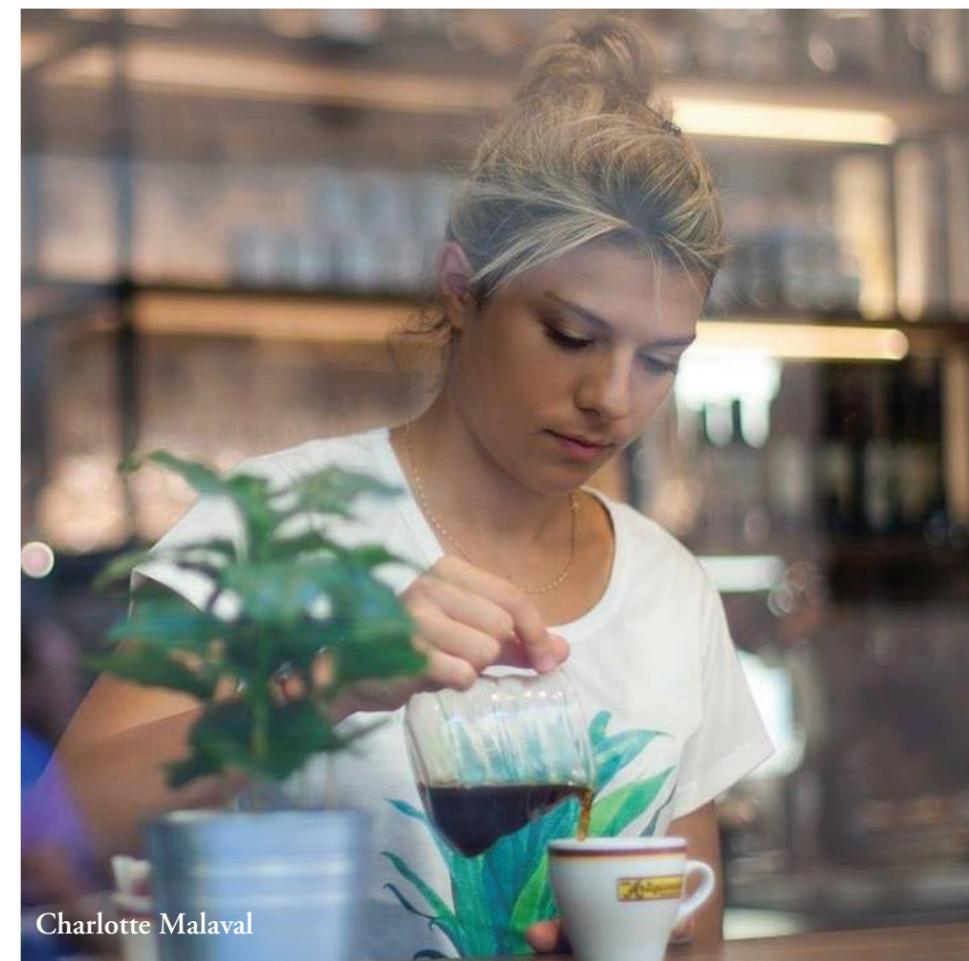
Lex, a two-time barista champ from the Netherlands, placed 6th at the 2016 World Barista Championship. Over the past year, Lex has volunteered his time judging at national coffee competitions, a task that Lex says is actually even more challenging than competing! He has also opened a wholesale roastery in his home town of Amsterdam called Friedhats Coffee. Although Lex did not compete in 2017, he will be back on the circuit in 2018, with hopes of making and winning the World Barista Championship, which will take place in Amsterdam.



Lex Weneker



Lem Butler



Charlotte Malaval



"You can have all the fancy equipment in the world, but unless it's clean, your espresso is just going to taste bad."

-Niall Wynn, 2017 Irish Barista Champion

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