

# The customer is wrong... again!

The daily press has got itself involved in yet another of those odd spats about baristas who think they know better than customers. In this case, a customer who happens to be a newspaper columnist and someone who appears on various television shows, walked into a café in Dorchester and asked for an extra-hot latte. As she later recounted it in a newspaper – oddly, three whole weeks later – the barista 'point-blank refused'.

The customer went on to write that the barista 'lectured' her about how hot milk would compromise the taste of his coffee beans, and she reported his 'arrogance, rudeness and condescension'. She wrote: "he seemed to have no clue about the concept of customer service or indeed what his job is – to serve coffee exactly how the person paying for it wants it. A barista is not there to educate people; he's not there to give everyone who walks through his doors a 'coffee experience', because, frankly, most of us aren't interested. We just want our coffee the way we like it.

"But this barista clearly sees his job as something far grander. He's not entitled to insult and patronise paying customers who keep him in business."

This escalated into a war of words online: the coffee shop remarked "we had a think, turns out we still know better," and among thirty or forty other comments on their Facebook page, one of their customers said: "it's your shop and you run it how you want and make coffee how you want. If people don't like it and want it their way then they can go somewhere else."

This is not a new story, of course; it's one of those recurring ones which has turned up several times a year, right across the world. However, the argument about what is 'right' with regard to coffee still exists. There are baristas who say they will only serve coffee the way they want to, because that is what their business does; there are others who set out to serve the wider world, and take the view that in the hard world of business, coffee snobs are a very small percentage of the numbers you need to serve to stay in business.

The reporter/TV person canvassed various trade views on the subject: one barista trainer told her flatly that 'you do not preach to customers', and no less than Peter Dore Smith of Kaffeine in London told her it was 'ridiculous' to refuse a customer's specific request, adding that he often serves David Beckham an extra-hot latte. The duty manager at the Ritz told her: "it's absolutely no problem whatsoever. It has to be the way the customer likes it - or what's the point?"

In practical terms, if a customer does ask for an extra-hot latte, what is the best way to serve it, without ruining the milk? One BSA director suggests the way to satisfy the customer: first, pre-heat the cup, even if it is a takeaway cup. Then carefully steam the milk just a few degrees hotter than normal, but well below burning. Invite the customer to stir the result, which will even out the heat across the drink.

All these together, he suggested, will give the customer the sensation of an 'extra-hot' drink, and everyone will be happy.



## Farrers' beer tea is a hit

**Farrers of Kendal, a BSA member company, has become the latest tea and coffee company to link with a brewery. Farrers has worked with the local Handsome Brewery to create Lonesome Hare, which features the Lakeland Special tea blend.**

Tea beers are not new – there are dozens of them in America – but this one has proved sufficiently successful to be developed from its launch in keg form last year, to be now available in bottles.

The founder of Handsome, Marcin Serwatka, has said that the original batch in kegs sold quickly, and remarked that "tea allows brewers to craft some really interesting brews, with subtle flavour notes and a real depth."

Hare in bottles is priced at £3.00.

## Demand for high-quality chocolate drinks is on the rise, says Callebaut

Barry Callebaut, a BSA member company, has produced a research document which suggests that hot chocolate and chocolate-themed drinks are becoming more important to the catering trade. The report is about desserts, but the preference of dessert-eating customers for chocolate drinks is a regular feature of the project. In particular, the theory of a combined dessert-and-chocolate-drink deal occurs several times.

The Callebaut Desserts report has come up with the figure that half of those customers who order dessert with a meal will also order a hot drink to finish their meal; this apparently is a far higher figure than those customers who do not take a dessert.

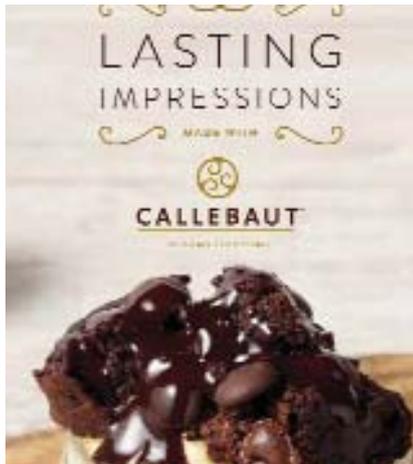
A surprising remark is Callebaut's assertion that 'three in five consumers who wouldn't normally order a dessert would order a high-quality chocolate drink'. Further, says Callebaut, a fifth of dessert consumers would be more motivated to order a chocolate drink if were combined with a dessert offer, as a combination deal, particularly if there is a 'mini-dessert and drink' option. Eight customers out of ten say they now expect their chocolate drink to be "expertly crafted with real-high quality chocolate".

Desserts and pastries are now an all-day business, says Callebaut, with there now being 'a real appetite' for dessert items outside traditional mealtimes. It says that breakfast croissants paired with hot chocolate are now a popular combination, that 52 per cent of respondents order a pastry mid-morning in the café sector, and that two-thirds of respondents order a dessert or cake mid-afternoon in a café. All of these transactions, it is suggested, form an opportunity for an additional hot chocolate deal.

As a result, says Callebaut, "dessert-eaters should be considered by café and coffee-shop operators when developing menus."

Meanwhile, the Thorntons brand has endorsed the idea that chocolate-drinking customers now demand quality, with a remark at the launch of its new Luxury Hot Chocolate Powder. The brand says that 75 per cent of people prefer a hot chocolate from a recognised brand, adding (not surprisingly) that 90 per cent prefer the brand to be Thorntons!

We are obliged to Tommy Coleman, technical solutions manager at Espresso Service, for this pic of the state of the innards of a coffee machine he was asked to work on – he comments: "would you cook a steak in a frying pan that's not been cleaned for days, weeks, months .... why is coffee any different? There is not enough education within our industry that coffee is a food product!" We recall that a long-retired sales director from Brodies, the Edinburgh roaster, told us how he would always visit a client and ask to have a look at their espresso machine - he would remove the portafilter, prise the basket off, and invite the client to look inside. The reaction was always one of utter shock – because very few everyday staff think to clean the things.



Ruby hot chocolate flakes by Marimba

## The further rise of the ruby

The concept of 'ruby' hot chocolate continues to become a movement. Even the big chains have now got behind it, with Costa having just launched its ruby chocolate drink, marketing it as 'baby pink, fit for a princess' at £3.35, which is a decent selling price for a coffee-shop hot chocolate.

Ruby is a natural chocolate phenomenon with a fruity taste and colouring, and the Barry Callebaut brand has called it 'the fourth chocolate', alongside dark, milk and white.

Callebaut spent fourteen years working on the product before introducing it; several brands now offer it, with Marimba doing a hot chocolate melt, and BSA member company Farrers have one in stock. Such brands as Kit-Kat, Magnum and Haagen-Dazs have used it.

However, certain food writers have now called ruby chocolate a 'fake' product, one of them alleging that all cocoa beans have a ruby or purple tint, which disappears in fermentation, and that the 'new' chocolate is simply an under-processed product, a cost-cutting product to turn lower-grade beans into a profitable product. This view is widely disputed!

## When you've got to go... some cafes make it hard for you

A writer in *New Statesman* magazine has reported that a new service has been created to allow access for the general public to the toilets in certain cafes. A campaigning organisation has complained that many cafes are making it difficult for the general public to use their facilities, a practice which runs directly contrary to other campaigns which recommend that toilets in pubs and cafes should be open to all, particularly the elderly and disabled.

"Throughout our towns and cities," she writes, "many public places still have de facto toilet charges, with cafés placing keypad door locks on their loos and providing the combination code only on receipts given to customers."

Against this, a 'guerilla' campaign called London Loo Codes has begun on social media, giving out the codes to the facilities in many London cafes. The campaign attracted thousands of followers almost immediately, and it is reported that other cities have taken up the idea.

The organisers say the project came from their own habit of taking notes of toilet access codes for their own use, before they decided that it would be significant public service to make them widely available. This decision came about when one of them was in a chain café and asked if she could have the code before she ordered her tea, but the staff insisted she had to buy something first.

The organisers say that their idea highlights a big general issue which must be addressed – at the same time as councils are closing down public facilities because of the cost of keeping them open, so are certain businesses making their loos available only to customers.

"Most functioning toilets are run, maintained and locked by businesses with no legal requirement to open them to people who aren't customers," the organisers have said.

"The problem is that everybody needs to use them, and some more urgently than others – consider those with health conditions, older people, those caring for children, between three and six million people who suffer from incontinence problems,



*One of the various national 'open loo' badges which can be seen at some helpful cafes.*

and many rough sleepers."

In the interests of fairness, the campaigners do identify cafes and coffee-houses which make no access charge; on the other hand, they report one chain bookshop which appears to be changing its code regularly as a deliberate attempt to frustrate the campaigners.

"Not everyone who needs to use the loo can afford a coffee," said one of the organisers. "We feel it's conducive to basic human dignity to afford access to clean loos without the demand of a purchase."

This is apparently a worldwide problem: a New Zealander tourist in San Francisco complained to his local paper that he was expected to install an app on his phone just to use a café's restroom; when he declined, the staff printed him out a QR code which could be shown to open the door.

In China, there have been complaints about a café which reportedly told customers to scan a code if they needed toilet paper.

**Many coffee shop owners may welcome an initiative from Tokyo, where a café has a ban on speaking.**

The café is the Lion in Shibuya, Tokyo's major commercial district, and is one of the few remaining examples of a Japanese tradition of cafes where customers go to concentrate on music – the Lion has a remarkable collection of recorded classical music, much of it on vinyl and played on antique equipment, and the protocol is that one enters and takes a seat, and a waitress silently brings a menu and a programme of the day's music; a little later she returns and will take a whispered order. Anything louder brings a telling-off.

Some customers read, some are students working in the remarkably peaceful surroundings. One travel writer reports that the only voices heard are the staff "announcing the music selections through a microphone in an almost indecipherable murmur".

Also in the Far East, a Taiwanese coffee house has banned the Instagram generation, and in particular the recent phenomenon of 'influencers'. The management of Mittsume café in Taipei became so fed up with self-important 'influencers' causing havoc to take photographs which they would post in Instagram, they simply banned them.

Their announcement read: "Starting today, no standing on chairs for photo-taking, no photographing other customers or taking photos with other customers' meals, no moving of shop furniture for photo-taking.

"We understand if you want to document a cake you ate today, or a nice corner of our café, we will not interfere with that. But contemporary internet culture and the culture of social media tagging has seriously crossed the line and infringed on the balance between shop owners and customers. We are not restricting photo-taking, but just wish that everyone can stay in their seats and not disturb others."

# Practical modern-day baristas - and the robots just around the corner

UCC has been working on several practical trade projects, It has a new series of down-to-earth training videos aimed at the practicalities of coffee service in the commercial world, and it takes a look into the near future to see what automation will mean for the coffee trade.

**In launching its new series of Coffeeworks training videos, UCC Coffee has taken a rather entertaining swipe at certain training methods in the coffee world.**

Coffeeworks features a video series led by the company's head of coffee excellence, Gareth Davies, who intends to 'challenge common industry misconceptions' and offer expert advice with a realistic commercial aim. He has said that UCC experiences many businesses consistently all making the same mistakes with their coffee, and wanted to create videos which are "educational, with a focus on real-life operational benefits."

The inspiration for it comes from his own early experience of receiving inadequate training.

A typical remark he makes in the training is that "coffee is about your customers, not the barista", and in a talk to a pub and bar trade gathering recently, Gareth Davies reported that this lesson comes from his own time in the hospitality trade.

He said that as manager of a boutique hotel, he was proud of everything he provided – except the coffee. In this, he said, the training he received from suppliers was a box-ticking exercise provided by "trendy, cool baristas who spoke in riddles... which made them feel good, but damaged my business.

"My coffee was just as mediocre as everyone else's on the high street, and regardless of how much training or support I asked for, it never got any better. I'd tell customers my machine was broken rather than make them a cup of coffee!

"The mysterious and guarded way baristas teach us often leads us to look in the wrong places and chase trends."

This, he said, is a major clue to



*"The training I received from suppliers was provided by "trendy, cool baristas who spoke in riddles... which made them feel good, but damaged my business." - Gareth Davies*

establishing a good coffee offer – don't chase trends, but concentrate first on training staff in the basics of coffee preparation, the freshness of coffee, the freshness of milk, and the importance of cleaning espresso machines.

Elsewhere, UCC has published its Future of Automation report, which argues that as the entire world embraces automation in every walk of life, so must its potential inevitably affect the world of coffee and beverage service.

In the report, UCC's Phil Smith says that by mid-2020, thirty per cent of jobs will be at risk due to automation – typically, Amazon is now using 30,000 robots, and only five per cent of Nissan's British factory is human. In the catering trade, he says, robot chefs, servers and smart kitchen gadgets have appeared and are improving performance; we have already seen robot-manned bars, and there is now a robot which can create personalised cocktails.

In coffee, drones are now being used on farms to collect the same

amount of data in ten minutes that would take farmers eight hours to assess manually.

What will happen at the 'customer-facing' end of the trade? Although it is generally reckoned that the barista will still have a job of some kind, UCC offers the fascinating finding that half of coffee shop customers would be happy to serve themselves from an automatic machine if it avoided the need to queue.

This is already happening in the Far East, says UCC – one of its own group companies has launched a Japanese 'robot café system', in which the robot can identify customers by gender, age and even clothing. A robot-powered chain in California can serve at the rate of two drinks a minute, and the rapidly-growing robotic Briggo Coffee Haus from Texas allows for a surprising amount of drink personalisation and even remote ordering.

Perhaps delving a little far into the future, UCC says that the latest

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artificial intelligence can identify people based on eye movements, and that "touch-free self-service coffee machines of the future will likely be able to read eye movements to distinguish customers and make informed coffee selections..."

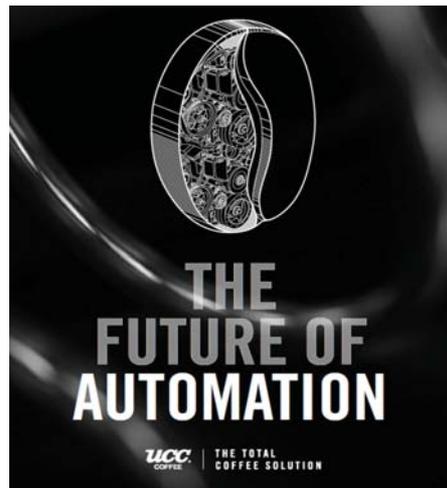
Science fiction maybe, but as an American writer recently put it: "maybe the world of espresso will be better for a robotic invasion – no false pleasantries at the counter, no drink errors, no transliterations of your name written on the cup!"

For the multi-site catering operator, says UCC, the world of super-automation brings greater facilities through telemetry. This began by creating communication between remote machines and head office for fault-reporting and re-ordering of supplies, and has now expanded into targeted marketing.

For one-off machines, UCC points to the advantages of such features as auto flush and automatic group head purging. These are basic good practice, says UCC, but "often one element of the process that the barista most frequently forgets". Automatic regulation of all the various features of milk-steaming, says UCC, is now "giving the impression that the milk is hand steamed". Other equipment providers are coming up with matching ideas, says UCC, pointing to the Puqpress (from BSA member company Brew-It) which tamps automatically and consistently, in 1.3 seconds.

What does this mean for the customer?

The most important factors in buying coffee, says UCC's research, are convenience and efficiency. This seems to be very practical development from the rah-rah attitude to coffee shops in the early-2000s boom, when it was widely believed that a cup of world-beating coffee was the customer's main interest; many companies have always known that the provision of 'very good' coffee to the mass market is the major aim... and, the report notes, 72 per cent of customers expect to pay under £3 for a cup of very good coffee.



Card transactions overtook cash payments some time ago, and in one finding which might bear further investigation, UCC suggests that "nearly 60 per cent of people use coffee shop apps on portable devices".

Automated delivery is well into its testing phase - IBM has patented a drone to deliver coffee to offices, and in Australia, drone delivery of coffee to homes has already been launched. (In a perhaps unfortunate turn of phrase, it has been said that the drone uses GPS to get coffee to the 'drop zone!') Automatic collection by drone of cups for recycling has been proposed.

In another practical comment, Phil Smith remarks that "automation can help customers receive a higher-quality, more consistent coffee. However, it's important to remember that we are in a service industry - technology is certainly helping in all areas of the coffee industry, but may never replace the role of the human.

"Often a friendly smile and great service is the difference between success or failure in an increasingly crowded market space."

The head of UCC, Elaine Swift, has told the Bulletin that the automation report has aroused "a great deal of interest from existing and potential new customers. With consistency, quality coffee, and sustainability strategies extremely high on the agenda of operators and consumers, we believe the report is bang on trend."

The Future of Automation Report is free to download on [www.thefutureofautomation.co.uk](http://www.thefutureofautomation.co.uk)

People who regularly drink coffee tend to have stronger bones than those who don't, according to research from the university of Hong Kong. There is no shortage of health-related coffee research, from which we can infer both that the drink is remarkably good for us, and possibly remarkably harmful. In this case, the study compared the bone mineral density of those who said they drank coffee regularly with those who didn't - coffee drinkers came out strongest.

Two of the most wonderful researches of recent times, involving a total of almost a million people in the UK and USA have suggested that coffee offers everlasting life. In a rather bizarre turn of phrase, the researchers said that regular coffee drinkers are less likely to die 'from any cause', than those who don't drink coffee.



A British businessman called Elliott Manning reports that he has seen and photographed this original device in an Australian coffee house. The item he has circled in red is a 'phone cage' - customers who lodge their phone in there for the duration of their stay get a ten per cent discount off their bill. His picture scored 25,000 'likes' on social media.

The Birmingham Coffee Festival will return this year; it is to be held from June 5-7 in the delightfully-named Custard Factory. It comes after the Otley event (25 April), and the Glasgow festival is 1-3 May. The London Coffee Festival ( 2 - 5 April) has a new feature – visitors can nominate their favourite coffee shop for the London's Best Coffee Shop Awards. Voters can win a year's free coffee.

## The animal coffees that stay a long time in the mouth...

Ever since kopi luwak was discovered by the general press many years ago, there has been a regular stream of exotic animal-related coffees. There is monkey coffee (we have actually been part of a search for it in India - and found it!) and elephant coffee, and now from Madagascar we have bat coffee.

Unlike the other coffees, this one is, as we understand it, not actually consumed by the animal – the bats simply nibble on the beans and spit them out. The farmers in Madagascar, who used to grow robusta, now farm a bourbon coffee which is provided to the bats; the result is being sold at a hundred dollars a pound. A local hotelier has said, understandably, that "the taste of this coffee stays a very long time in your mouth..."

Meanwhile, another of the exotic coffees has cropped up, with a London café named after it - this is the new Jacu café in Westminster. For some years, it has been known that the Brazilian jacu bird 'processes' coffee beans in very much the same way as the kopi luwak, and again these beans sell at a premium. The London café serves the coffee in a wine goblet, at £30, though its normal coffee menu shows conventional prices of around £3. Nonetheless, the café owner reported selling four of the jacu coffees in his first week.

By remarkable comparison to the bat coffee of Madagascar, one customer who tasted the jacu coffee told a reporter: "it has an oily taste that stays in the mouth...!"

## Boston Tea Party's 'make things better' day

The rapidly-expanding Boston Tea Party café group has come in for praise from customers for its novel creation of National Making Things Better Day, timed for June 1st. The first such day highlighted the business's ban on single-use disposable cups, then there was an awareness project about plastic straws and stirrers, and another about about single-use milk bottles - the chain used 190,000 a year, and began a move towards returnable pergals.

It has been reported that banning disposable cups lost the chain a quarter of its takeaway customers, but this was countered by the sale of 30,000 reusable cups.

Although Boston Tea Party customers approve of the campaigns, café chief Sam Roberts has said that the wider industry still needs to move on such issues: "nothing much has actually changed within the wider industry - lots of noise and sticky plaster fixes, but very little concrete action."

Meanwhile, Boston Tea Party is also supporting the Bristol campaign Billy Chip. This commemorates the work of a local ambulanceman who had become concerned about the general public being unwilling to give money to homeless people, out of worry that it would be spent on drugs. The Chip is a token: customers can buy one for £2 at a café branch and give the token to a homeless person, who can then exchange it for a hot drink.

A café owner in Liverpool has spoken out to her local press about a considerable increase in people doing a runner, and leaving without paying their bill. The owner of the Rose Tree tea room in Burscough said they are 'shocked' at the rise in non-paying customers, and that the effect on a small family business can be devastating. One of the delightful features of this café is their creativity with cakes and traybakes... their unusual Rocky Roads are apparently a habit in the venue, and are made with Cadbury cream eggs, peanut butter, Terry's chocolate, and various other things. They have also created a cream egg Scotch egg!



*David Neilson slips into character*

**We always enjoy stories from cafes who discover that they have a 'celebrity' customer onsite.**

This picture comes from the Lavenham Blue Vintage Tea Rooms of Suffolk, who were surprised to find themselves serving David Neilson, of Coronation Street - he plays, of course, the café owner Roy Cropper, of the brilliantly-named Roy's Rolls café.

Once the actor and the café management had agreed that they were essentially in the same trade, the actor obligingly slipped on one of the café's aprons and prepared to take orders!

(One of his colleagues in the soap opera really is a café owner - the actress Jennie McAlpine, who plays the character Fiz, runs her own café in Manchester city centre).

It has been reported that Blackburn Cathedral is to launch its own brand of coffee. The Dean's Beans will be locally sourced, selected and roasted and will be sold at an onsite cafe. It is not the first time the cathedral has branched out with its commercial activities - in 2018 it launched Cathedra Gin, a locally-distilled brew.

# Why does Fairtrade Fortnight never support the sharp end of the trade?

The point of Fairtrade Fortnight is that it is a promotional event, from which the trade can benefit. Candidly, you can make money from it.

At the end of this month, from 24 February to 8 March, we will have Fairtrade Fortnight. This is, I think, the 23rd year of the Fairtrade awareness event, and it has always amazed me that the catering trade does so little to mark it.

Not, I hasten to add, just for the selfless and charitable reason of promoting the cause of fair trading - I mean I am surprised that the catering trade does so little to make profit from it. And I have been surprised for many years that the Fairtrade Foundation does very little to support the catering and hospitality trades in doing so.

Why does the coffee trade do so little with Fairtrade?

True, there have long been doubts as to the quality of the product - up to a few years ago, many speciality coffee roasters told me they simply wouldn't touch Fairtrade coffee (there are various reasons for this, which we won't bother going into).

It was at a BSA meeting some years back that the buyer for the Co-op, who were very early Fairtrade pioneers, recalled how, in the first days of fairly-traded coffee, it was known as 'suffering coffee'... this, he said, was because you suffered in solidarity with the farmers every time you drank it!

But now there are very good Fairtrade coffees available to the trade (my own favourite, which I say openly in the hope of getting a sample, is Cafedirect's Macchu Picchu. The Grumpy Mule brand is rather good for Fairtrade stuff, too; and of course BSA member Miko, which has its own conservation programmes, is also Fairtrade-badged. Very good Fairtrade coffee for cafes is there if you look.

True, there have sometimes been



doubts over the 'usefulness' of Fairtrade, for want of a better word. Nobody who was there will ever forget the 'blood on the carpet' Q&A session at an Allegra conference in (I think) Vienna, when representatives of the various ethical-trading organisations sat rather self-consciously behind a table waiting to be congratulated, and a notable economist tore the Fairtrade Foundation representative into tiny shreds over the shortcomings of his business model.

It was a masterly assassination, and yet the Fairtrade man could have saved himself if he had only said: 'criticise our model if you like, and if you don't like it, go and buy your coffee somewhere else - but give us credit for doing something, in the way we think correct'.

And that choice is open to all of us - those who believe in fair trading, but not necessarily Fairtrade with a capital F, are free to adopt direct-trade, or Rainforest, or Utz, or indeed any good cause badge, and choose whichever route they think correct.

But my point is, Fairtrade Fortnight is a useful promotional event, from which the trade can benefit. Candidly, you can make money from it.

Is that an ethical view? It certainly is, and in support of this I have the word of the redoubtable Harriet Lamb, when she was the boss of the

Fairtrade Foundation, who made it perfectly clear to us that it is perfectly acceptable to market Fairtrade Fortnight for all you're worth, and to make as much money from it as you can. Her logic was that the more you do so, the better it serves the farmers at the growing end of the chain.

The fact is - this is a commercial opportunity. And yet, looking around this year, I can barely find any evidence of the catering trade supporting it, or indeed of the Fairtrade Foundation supporting the catering trade in return... not even the Foundation can offer me any example of this happening.

They do tell me that there are two coffee farmers to be here in the UK, but not whether they will be made available to the coffee trade for promotional purposes.

So if you're going to mark Fairtrade Fortnight, it looks like you'll have to do the work yourself.

But any promotional opportunity is worth taking, for both profit and ethical purposes - so at the very least, download some of the Foundation's free posters and banners and make sure you have some of the right coffee to hand if and when someone asks for it.

- Steve Slark, Chairman

## On-pack recycling messages are 'too confusing', conference told

There was a quite fascinating choice of speaker at the recent Foodservice Packaging Association seminar - the organisation invited Extinction Rebellion. The organisation's representative appears to have been well received, offering to work with the FPA on such issues as litter. A speaker from Foodservice Footprint suggested that the Rebellion group could be of use to the foodservice industry by using its influence to highlight packaging waste issues.

From the Scottish government, Janet McVea said that they are committed to accelerate the pace of change, with the aim that by 2025 the ambition is that all beverages will be sold in reusable cups. Their research suggests that a 20p levy on disposable cups will drive 49 per cent of consumers to move to reusable cups.

In this regard, the On Pack Recycling Label group has now said that food and drink packaging will now come with a simple 'recycle' or 'don't recycle' label. The current label terms of 'recycled', 'check local recycling' and 'not yet recycled' have been found to be too confusing. Single-use cups will join the 'specialist label' list for packaging that can be recycled at specific sites or instore sites.

Of these, consumer tests showed that the label 'recycle at coffee shop', had the highest score for clarity, with the OPRL saying that for consumers to know that they could dispose of a cup at any coffee shop and not just the one in which they originally purchased, would be even better.

A to-the-point approving comment by the FPA was that 'it is very hard to imagine any consumer took the previous advice to "check locally", so thankfully this option has been removed'.

Elsewhere, a light show was projected on to the council building in Bristol to promote the city's new paper cup recycling facilities. One hundred recycling bins specifically for disposable coffee cups are being installed across the city as part of the Bristol Waste campaign, 'For Cups Sake', which aims to recycle up to four million paper cups in the first year alone.

Cups thrown into the bins in Bristol will be sent to the James Cropper paper mill in the Lake District where the plastic lining is removed from the cup, and the paper then recycled and turned into items such as notebooks and paper shopping bags.

The head of the Bristol project said: "we know that people generally want to do the right thing with recycling, but three in four people are still unaware that cups need to be collected separately from normal card and paper."

A new emoji, which is the pictorial symbol used in text messages and the like, will appear next month – it is a red teapot, which will probably be used to signify 'time for tea'.

The Yorkshire Tea brand, owned by Taylors, has claimed credit for having the emoji approved by the Unicode Consortium, which is the body that decides which smileys and the like may appear on phone keyboards. The teapot emoji, notes the brand, is remarkably similar to Yorkshire Tea's own red teapot symbol.

The new emoji will appear on smartphone keyboards in March, joining the roll-out of one showing bubble tea and 116 other new emojis including a woolly mammoth, a polar bear and, for some reason, a 'gender-neutral Santa Claus'.

The mobile coffee franchise Cafe2U, a BSA member company, has launched a '20-20 vision' of its aims for this year. The company was named in one of the rankings of Top 20 franchises for 2019, and intends to develop various of its projects this year - it says it will be investing heavily in its green credentials, and will hold its third annual 'Green Coffee Week'. Cafe2U will also launch a customer app, which will alert customers to when vans are arriving. There will also be a 'brand re-fresh'.



In celebration of World Nutella Day on 5th February - yes, it really exists - a special Nutella-themed afternoon tea service was held at the Tower Eye in Sydney, Australia.

Customers could have an hour-long tea experience featuring an assortment of chocolate hazelnut breakfast and dessert items, with views of the entire Sydney harbour... for \$50 a head. Elsewhere, the world's first Nutella café, in Chicago, offered Nutella flavoured ice-cream and shakes, with free personalised jars to the first hundred customers.

We do recall that six years ago, our old friend Gino d'Acampo invented a Nutella latte at his pasta bar in London; as the paste is hazelnut flavoured, the result is not a lot different from a latte flavoured with hazelnut syrup.

## More espresso machine makers turn to the capsule option

The newest arrival in the capsule market is a machine from a BSA member - the La Spaziale S15 comes from the Brew-It Group, and is the latest development in capsule machines which look like espresso machines, featuring a real steam wand instead of the frother used by many capsule machines.

"This came to us from some very excited Italians who thought it was fantastic!" Brew-it's Angus McKenzie told us. "I had held back on capsules, as they seemed to be the scourge of the industry. I had been concerned that capsules created so much waste, but now we see so many people producing Nespresso-compatible capsules in an eco format, so now seemed to be a good time to get into the spotlight."

This is the latest in a line of trade traditionalists who at first dismissed the concept of capsules, but then turned to the realisation that the modern capsule does create perfectly acceptable coffee.

"I have been listening to people from restaurants who say that they want to serve great coffee, but that they don't want to employ a barista. I don't believe this is a coffee-shop machine, but it has a real place in hotels and restaurants - it has a specialist place in a non-specialist environment. We now have the situation where a guest checks in to a hotel at midnight, and wants a cappuccino when the hotel café is shut, but whoever is on the



*The Lavazza S15*

desk can now make it."

As many suppliers have observed, an advantage of capsules is the opportunity to switch instantly between coffees.

"It's now easy for a small restaurant anywhere to be able to offer both a dark-roasted Brazil and an Ethiopian... in the same way that a high-end restaurant would tempt you with a selection of ports or whiskies, so many customers may now opt to be offered a choice of high-end coffees.

"We have now even seen Jamaica Blue Mountain in capsules. It may sound odd to put JBM through an espresso machine, but I found it worked - very soft with a light crema. You certainly don't want an expensive bag of JBM hanging round your grinder hoping that someone will order one... but with capsules, you can now have it as a guest coffee."

The S15 is not entirely unique. "Many manufacturers now have a portafilter holder which will accept a capsule. This is a little bit unique in working towards capsule use with barista technique and adjustment."

Elsewhere in the coffee trade, Rancilio says that its similar machine is the Baby 9. "It's a plug-in two-group machine with a water tank; looked perfect to us but needed to be adapted for 13amp. A good little machine, which can be converted to take any of four different capsules - it's an easy change for an engineer, just a different group handle and a different shower head."

Another importer said: "I have been arguing the benefits of such machines for years. The benefits against a fully automatic are lower machine and servicing costs, faster delivery speed, maybe double, and that the theatre of coffee-making is somewhat retained. The downside is the cost of capsules - my estimation is that up to 100 coffees a day it may be cost effective, but thereafter costs are prohibitive.

"Also, capsules are generally made from plastic, which is not good. Some capsule manufacturers are claiming compostable capsules but then refer, in the small print, that they are 'industrially compostable' - in other words you can't put them in the food waste, and specialist recycling is required."

### From cups to notepads...

**A printing company from Dorchester has launched a range of products created from recycled takeaway cups.**

This is Coffee Notes, which comes from the Epic print company, and which works with recycled cup paper from the James Cropper mill. The Cropper 'CupCycling' process converts 90 per cent of the waste from a cup into usable paper and board, and the plastic content of an old cup is used for 'energy recovery'.

The Coffee Notes range includes various sizes of notebook, and Costa is already selling branded ones. Coffee Notes is also a partner to The Outdoor Guide, a walking and litter-prevention scheme run by TV presenter Julia Bradbury.



# We've been brewing it wrong!

A new scientific study, which has dictated that we have got our espresso recipe all wrong – if we grind coarser, we shall save ourselves a fortune...

"I have never seen a story about coffee spread so widely around the world!" said a BSA director this month – and the story he was referring to is a new twist on the regular old chestnut of 'scientifically creating the perfect cup of coffee'.

It is a British project that started this worldwide interest, when professor Jamie Foster at the University of Portsmouth and his colleagues decided to investigate the puzzle of consistency in espresso brewing.

Prof Foster is a coffee fan, and questioned why, when brewing two espressos one after the other, using the same ground coffee and brewing in exactly the same way, the two shots could taste quite different.

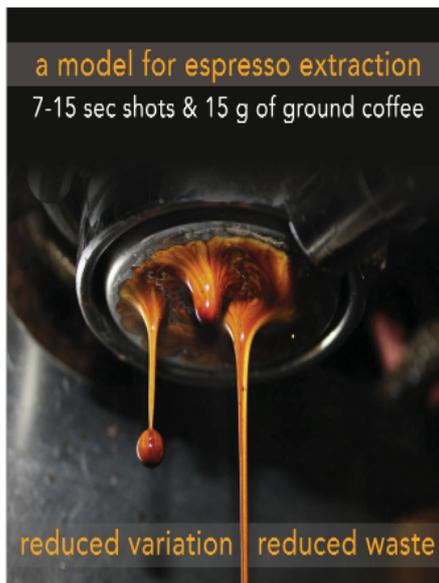
With colleagues in America, he set out to develop mathematical equations to model the processes occurring in the bed of coffee as brew water passes through it.

According to their research, published in a scientific journal, the mathematicians concluded that the secret to the best espresso is all down to the grind (which baristas could probably have told them). They confirmed the principle that the finer the grind, the greater the flavour extraction, because there is more surface area for the water to come into contact with.

It is the consequence of this which has come as a surprise.

When the team carried out tests in a real cafe, they found that very fine espresso grinds are unpredictable in the way that water passes through. This is because the small particles tend to clog up the bed of ground coffee in the filter basket... but this clogging occurs in an unpredictable way each time.

The team concluded that when different parts of the bed clog up, the water flows through the coffee in a different way, and extracts differently.



*The 'model for espresso extraction' which has surprised the trade*

Thus, there is a variation in flavour from what would appear to be two identical brews.

In essence, said Professor Foster, if cafes grind too finely, they risk their taste being unpredictable. But by grinding more coarsely, say the researchers, there is less variation in water flow, and so less difference in extraction from cup to cup.

"The mathematical theory tells us that this is because reducing coffee mass means that the water flows faster through the shallower coffee bed. The coarse grind results in a relatively permeable bed, such that water flow and extraction are uniform and predictable. This method leads to shots that taste the same each time.

"The key is to have the particles just large enough that the flow is uniform and predictable, but still as small as they can be to maximise the surface area," said Foster.

He has followed this up with the argument that by grinding slightly more coarsely, the barista can lower the mass of coffee used for each shot to get the desired taste more consistently, and at lower cost. Simply

put, a coarser grind gives a higher extraction of coffee for the same dosage, or - and this is the part which has attracted so much attention - the same extraction for a smaller dose.

The same taste can be achieved by using less coffee.

His team tested their theory in a coffee shop in Oregon for a year and found they could increase serving speed, reducing shot times to between seven and fifteen seconds, while using less coffee - this café is reported to have saved about a quarter of its coffee use, totalling thousands of dollars over a year.

"Using our protocol we estimate that, in the U.S. coffee market alone, the total savings would amount to \$1.1 billion in America's cafés per year."

What does the British coffee trade think of this? One response was: "the sensationalist view that American coffee shops could save billions by brewing less, faster, may be an illusion... it may be a race to lower quality. We may be better to follow the policy that quality sells."

In response, Professor Foster told the BSA: "The feedback from the industry has largely been positive, and people have been happy to see someone approaching coffee making in such a rigorous way.

"There is at least one coffee shop that has been using our approach to make all their coffee for the past eighteen months. They have saved an appreciable sum of money, and customer reviews have not suffered. For milk-based drinks, I think the vast majority of people would not tell the difference between the traditional approach and ours."

*Systematically Improving Espresso: Insights from Mathematical Modeling and Experiment can be found here: [https://www.cell.com/matter/pdfExtended/S2590-2385\(19\)30410-2](https://www.cell.com/matter/pdfExtended/S2590-2385(19)30410-2)*

# No more meat pies and Bovril at the football match?

Readers will recall that a few months ago, we reported how the Green Farm coffee business of Norfolk had begun supplying coffee to Norwich City football club, and we recalled that Lavazza had deals with the Arsenal and Liverpool clubs.

We are now absolutely delighted to read that the Caffeine company of London is supplying Tottenham Hotspur's new stadium with coffee and machines, and has done so with the comment: "the stadium is the first in the UK to serve only top quality coffee". And at the same time, we have come across the comment from the catering manager of a premiership club catering manager who remarked that "most large stadia work with in-cup coffee to keep pace with demand, but the quality of the end product is like drinking sludge..."

The coffee that Spurs are taking is the Tiki Tonga brand, which is half-owned by Justin Stockwell of Caffeine and half by Brad Barritt, a former England internationalist (although born in South Africa) and current captain of Saracens. The brand has two coffee shops in South Africa, and will open its first British café this year in Hertfordshire.

We could not resist teasing Justin about his claim of being the first top-quality stadium coffee in the UK. But at the same time, we wondered: do tens of thousands of football fans really care about the quality of their half-time coffee? He replied:

"Spurs have spent the best part of £2 million on 60 state-of-the-art Schaerer bean-to-cup machines backed up by 160 Bunn bulk brewers to cope with the coffee rush. Unlike other stadia, they only serve fresh coffee from whole beans, or filter coffee, and only using fresh milk. There is no instant or powdered



*The Guinness coffee produced an astonishingly high response during the rugby world cup*

product at Tottenham Hotspur at all.

"There are over 65,000 people in the stadium and the equipment copes perfectly... and yes, we know a lot of people have noted the quality of the coffee, as we have been approached to supply other businesses and large stadia who have visited. We are currently in talks with several stadiums about their coffee offering."

The one Tiki Tonga coffee which is probably not a football half-time drink is their new 232 Guinness blend.

"This was born out of the rugby

world cup last year. The good people of Guinness wanted to promote a drink-awareness campaign as each game was being played early in the morning. Brad, as a professional rugby player, was approached to see if he could produce a special Guinness coffee blend for the cup campaign.

"We came up with the '232' name as that is the temperature that Guinness is brewed at - to legitimise our blend, we turn up the roaster to 232 degrees for a split second to make the product a genuine one, but also to mimic some of the flavour profiles of Guinness. We wanted something to resemble their creamy malty taste with a slight bitter finish, and we came up with a premium hundred-per-cent Arabica blend using mainly high-quality African coffees.

"Guinness have been nominated for an award for Blend 232, we've also become the highest digital media campaign that Guinness have ever had."

(According to the advertising industry, 400,000 Guinness coffees were served at Flat Iron Square, the south London area which was nominated as the hub for rugby fans during the event; the coffee posts on Guinness' global Instagram page were the most commented posts they have ever had).

Is the coffee available to the wider trade? Yes, says Caffeine - even Marriott hotels reacted to the rugby campaign and placed orders for 232.

**There is no end to themed cafes, particularly in Japan. We now have not only Peanuts cafes in Tokyo, but Shaun the Sheep ones as well.**

Several Peanuts-themed cafes around Japan are all offering a spring-inspired menu for the cherry-blossom season which is so big in Japan. There are Peanuts afternoon teas, with all kinds of branded items, and even cut-out Snoopy templates for chocolate sprinkles on hot drinks. The appearance of Shaun the Sheep cafes in Japan is quite astonishing. One pop-up themed café had 30,000 visitors during what was supposed to be a four-month stay, and not surprisingly decided to become a permanent business.



# A BSA ready-reference directory

Please refer to the BSA website for more details of these companies

- 3M** 01344 858437 [www.3m.co.uk/filtration](http://www.3m.co.uk/filtration)  
**Allpure Filters** 01252 519955 [www.allpurefilters.com](http://www.allpurefilters.com)  
**Alpha Kaffe** 30210602537 [www.alphakaffe.gr](http://www.alphakaffe.gr)  
**Arden Coffee** 01246 252832 [www.iwantacoffeemachine.com](http://www.iwantacoffeemachine.com)  
**Barry Callebaut** 01244 370500  
[www.barrycallebautvending.co.uk](http://www.barrycallebautvending.co.uk)  
**Brita** 01869365840 [www.brita.co.uk](http://www.brita.co.uk)  
**British Coffee School** 07907 997979  
[www.britishcoffeeschool.com](http://www.britishcoffeeschool.com)  
**Bryan Stockley Consultancy** 07832 258879  
[www.bscls-ltd.co.uk](http://www.bscls-ltd.co.uk)  
**BWT** 07831382929 [www.bwt-uk.co.uk](http://www.bwt-uk.co.uk)  
**Café 2U** 0845 644 4708 [www.cafe2u.co.uk](http://www.cafe2u.co.uk)  
**Cafebiz** 01707 286 966 [www.vend-ex.com](http://www.vend-ex.com)  
**Caffeica** 01993 776753 [www.caffeica.co.uk](http://www.caffeica.co.uk)  
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**Coffee Care** 01756 794 811 [www.coffeecare.co.uk](http://www.coffeecare.co.uk)  
**Coffee Classics** 0844 800 5387 [www.coffeeclassics.co.uk](http://www.coffeeclassics.co.uk)  
**Coffee Kids** 16466882774 [www.coffeekids.org](http://www.coffeekids.org)  
**Coffee Perfection** +353 01 8253981 [www.coffeeprecision.ie](http://www.coffeeprecision.ie)  
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**Coffix** 01530 242800 [www.coffix.com](http://www.coffix.com)  
**Coffox** 07736 950673 [www.cafesuccesshub.com](http://www.cafesuccesshub.com)  
**Complete Beverage Solutions** 01635 877173 [www.cbs-beverages.co.uk](http://www.cbs-beverages.co.uk)  
**Cornish Coffee** 01209 215555 [www.cornishcoffee.co.uk](http://www.cornishcoffee.co.uk)  
**COTECO** 306944258158 [www.bsaeeducation.gr](http://www.bsaeeducation.gr)  
**Edgcumbes** 01243 555775 [www.edgcumbes.co.uk](http://www.edgcumbes.co.uk)  
**Espresso Services** 0141 425 1083  
[www.espressoservices.co.uk](http://www.espressoservices.co.uk)  
**Espresso Solutions** 01293 769825 [www.espresso-solutions.co.uk](http://www.espresso-solutions.co.uk)  
**European Water Care** 01279 780268  
[www.watercare.co.uk](http://www.watercare.co.uk)  
**European Water Care Ireland** 00353719638155  
[www.watercare.co.uk](http://www.watercare.co.uk)  
**Evoca** 07384 836532 [www.evocagroup.com](http://www.evocagroup.com)  
**Farrer's** 01539 720020 [www.farrerscoffee.co.uk](http://www.farrerscoffee.co.uk)  
**Fracino** 0121 328 5757 [www.fracino.com](http://www.fracino.com)  
**GMS Espresso** 01494 484319 [www.gmsespresso.com](http://www.gmsespresso.com)  
**H2O Direct** 01892 669628 [www.h2odirect.co.uk](http://www.h2odirect.co.uk)  
**Habitat Café** 01887 822944 [www.habitatcafe.co.uk](http://www.habitatcafe.co.uk)  
**Inglehurst Foods** 01420 563 413 [www.inglehurst.co.uk](http://www.inglehurst.co.uk)  
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**Kokoa Collection** 0208 8832660 [www.kokoacollection.co.uk](http://www.kokoacollection.co.uk)  
**LF Spare Parts** 01285 861625 [www.lf Spareparts724.com](http://www.lf Spareparts724.com)  
**M\*A\*D Training Solutions** 07768 884693  
[www.coffeetraining.co.uk](http://www.coffeetraining.co.uk)  
**Miko** 0800 496 39 39 [www.miko.co.uk](http://www.miko.co.uk)  
**Miko(Distribution Centre)** 01942 601911 [www.miko.co.uk](http://www.miko.co.uk)  
**Miko (Scotland)** 01355 244466 [www.miko.co.uk](http://www.miko.co.uk)  
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**Mind Your Business** 0118 983 5827  
**Pentair Water Belgium** +32 (0)14 283 504  
[www.pentairfoodservice.com](http://www.pentairfoodservice.com)  
**Plantation Coffee** 01733 830875 [www.plantationcoffee.co.uk](http://www.plantationcoffee.co.uk)  
**Pumphreys** 0191 4144 510 [www.pumphreys.co.uk](http://www.pumphreys.co.uk)  
**Qualitasse** 01256 300050 [www.qualitasse.co.uk](http://www.qualitasse.co.uk)  
**R.W Stokes** 01522 512548 [www.stokes-coffee.co.uk](http://www.stokes-coffee.co.uk)  
**Rainforest Alliance** 00 31 20 422 8856 [www.rainforest-alliance.org](http://www.rainforest-alliance.org)  
**Ranald Paterson** 01494 674 095  
**RBC East Midlands** 0300 303 0666 [www.rbcem.co.uk](http://www.rbcem.co.uk)  
**Rcoffee** 0161 448 9171 [www.rcoffee.co.uk](http://www.rcoffee.co.uk)  
**Robert Mallerman** 01279 248100 [www.spray-dryer.com](http://www.spray-dryer.com)  
**SCA** 01245 426060 [www.sca.coffee](http://www.sca.coffee)  
**The Apple Tree** 01283 712332 [www.bartonmarina.co.uk](http://www.bartonmarina.co.uk)  
**The Black & White Coffee Co** 01205 460700  
[www.southlincsfoodservice.co.uk](http://www.southlincsfoodservice.co.uk)  
**The Brew Group** 0845 450 0500 [www.caffesociety.co.uk](http://www.caffesociety.co.uk)  
**The Brew It Group** 07970 389101 [www.brew-it-group.co.uk](http://www.brew-it-group.co.uk)  
**The Coffee Cart Co** 01432 278626  
[www.coffeecartcompany.co.uk](http://www.coffeecartcompany.co.uk)  
**The London School of Coffee** 0208 439 7981  
[www.londonschoolofcoffee.com](http://www.londonschoolofcoffee.com)  
**The Office Coffee Co** 0203 7634035 [www.office-coffee.co.uk](http://www.office-coffee.co.uk)  
**The Proton Group** 01924 892834 [www.proton-group.co.uk](http://www.proton-group.co.uk)  
**Total Refreshment Solutions** 0131 448 0666 [www.arumba-coffee.co.uk](http://www.arumba-coffee.co.uk)  
**UK Tea Academy** 07976517128 [www.ukteaacademy.co.uk](http://www.ukteaacademy.co.uk)  
**Voyager Coffee** 01364 644440 [www.voyagercoffee.co.uk](http://www.voyagercoffee.co.uk)  
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