

Milk techniques

A TRAINING GUIDE



DARKWOODS
COFFEE

MILK TECHNIQUES

As any well-established coffee shop will know, the majority of their income is based around the sales of “milk” drinks such as cappuccino, latte or flat-white so it pays to get them right.

A QUICK LOOK AT MILK

It is the presence of protein in milk that allows us to create foam. Protein is present in all milk (it’s what makes it white!) so with care we can use a wide variety of both dairy and plant based products to make high quality milk drinks.

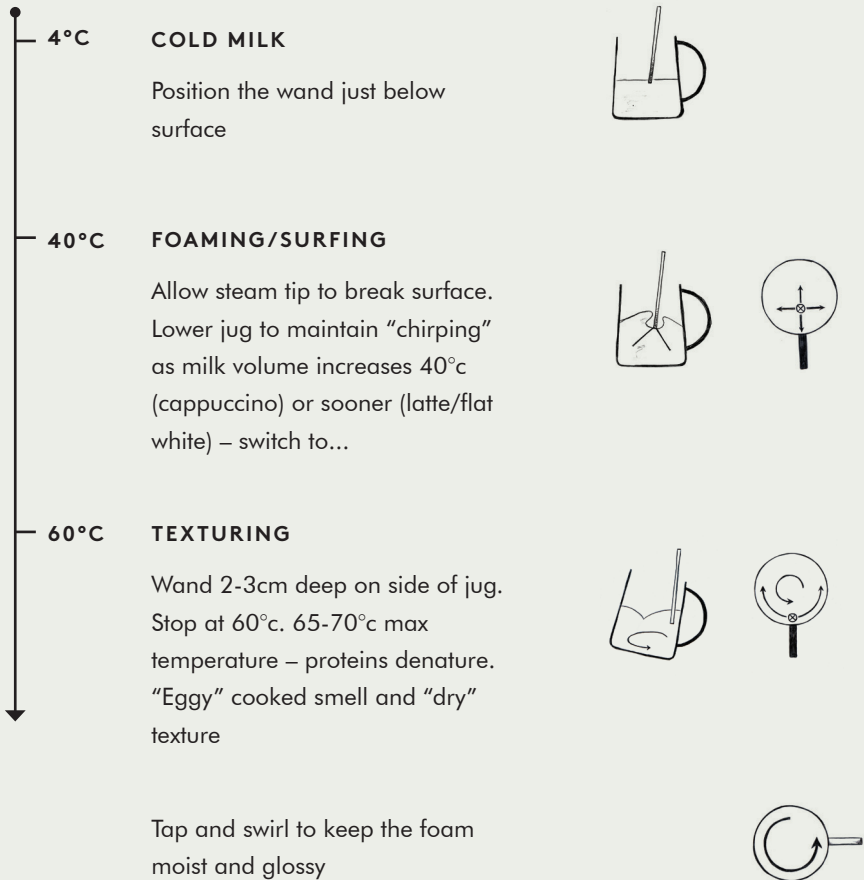
Whole (“full fat”) cow’s milk will give you a richer, sweeter and more supple foam than semi or skimmed due to its higher fat content. Non-dairy milks such as soy, oat and almond may require a little more care in preparation but newer “Barista” versions of these milks with enhanced protein levels are more resistant to heat and acidity and will even allow for latte art.

Whichever milk we choose, keeping it cold, using it fresh and never heating it above 70c will give best results.

MICROFOAM – Any foam in which the bubbles are too small to see. Good milk techniques yield glossy, shiny foam with no visible bubbles.



STEPS TO FOAM & TEXTURE



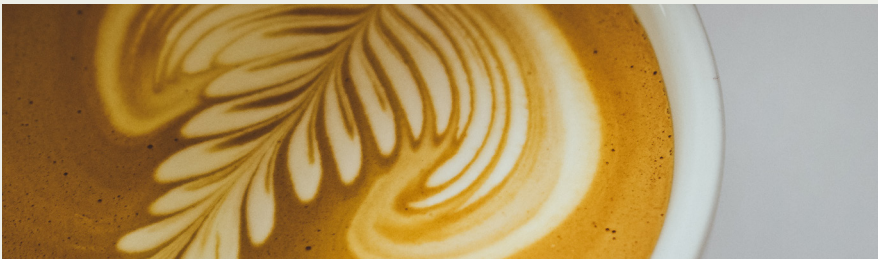
CAPPUCCINO VS. LATTE – There is no fundamental difference in technique when we make cappuccino, latte or indeed any milk drink. If we want more foam (cappuccino) we linger in the foaming position for longer (40c max). If we want less (latte/flat white) then we must transition from foaming to texturing a little sooner.

LATTE ART

Latte art may just be a garnish, a pretty pattern on top of your drink but it does require good espresso, well textured milk and a skilled barista... and customers love it. Crema on our espresso provides the canvas onto which our milk will paint. This paint must be bubble-free, well-textured and “wet” – trying to pour latte art with “dry” foam just won’t work. The trick is getting the textured milk to fall from the jug in a controlled manner...

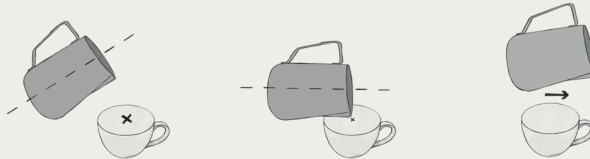
- THE SWIRL** Roll your espresso in the cup to prevent the crema sticking or “rafting” – a dash of hot milk added at this stage can get help create a richer and more fluid “canvas”. Swirl the hot milk in your jug to a high gloss that looks like cream before pouring.
- THE HEIGHT** If you hold the pour too low, your foam will settle on the crema before you are ready so begin high.
- THE ANGLE** Foam will settle on top of the milk and stick to the sides of your jug so you must swirl the milk and foam immediately before pouring. Once your pour is established you must dip the jug spout confidently forwards allowing the foam to slide out freely.
- THE FLOW** Pour too fast and you will fill your cup before finishing your pattern – pour too slow and the foam will stick to the jug and only liquid milk will pour.

It does take practise so start with a simple pattern like the “heart” and build up to rosettas, tulips or other more complex multi-pours.



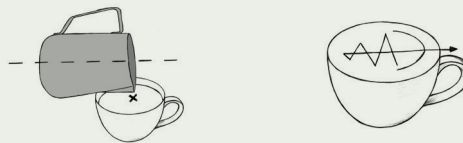
THE HEART

Pour into the centre with jug about 6-8cm above cup to puncture through the crema bringing it higher up the cup. (You may find it easier to tilt the cup slightly towards you making it easier to get the jug close in the later stages of the pour). When cup is half full, lower jug to centre of the crema, with the angle of the jug dipped slightly downwards. "Wiggle" it a couple of times to tease the foam out. Stop wiggling, but keep pouring into the centre, with the jug in the dipped position Just before the cup is full pour forwards lifting the jug slightly higher, to drag the foam into your heart.



THE ROSETTA

Start by pouring in to the centre of the crema from about 6-8cm above the cup. Lower jug close to centre of the crema, with the angle of the jug dipped slightly downwards until you see a white spot of foam in the centre. This will "anchor" your rosetta as you wiggle the jug, still in the dipped position, gently from side to side moving towards the rear of the cup as you do. As soon as you reach the rear of the cup pour forwards cutting the wiggled foam into the leaf like pattern of the rosetta.



THE TULIP

Again similar to the others although you have to start and stop the pouring making it slightly harder (a multi-pour). Start by pouring in to the centre of the crema from about 6-8cm above the cup. Then lower the jug close to centre of the crema, with the angle of the jug dipped slightly downwards until you see a white spot of foam in the centre then stop pouring. Repeat point 2 pouring just above first white foam blob then stop again (you can push the jug slightly towards the first blob as you pour, to form a curved leaf like base of the tulip). Keep doing this to create as many leaves as you can. On the last pour, rather than stopping, pour forwards to cut through all the blobs to create the tulip pattern.





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