

Coffee Shops

Understanding the Menu and Tips for Making Wise Choices

Coffee Shops

In the past, coffee shops were known to have simple menus offering coffee, tea and some light snacks or baked goods. As coffee shops become more popular, the number and variety of options on the menus continue to increase — almost daily!

With so many options, it can be difficult to know what to order. Here are some things to consider before ordering at your favorite coffee shop.

Understanding the Menu

As you consider your options, your first step is knowing common terms on the menu. Here are the most common coffee terms to know.

■ Espresso

An espresso is a concentrated coffee beverage served with a layer of foam (“crema”) on top. They are typically made from darker roasts but can be made with any type of finely ground beans.

■ Americano

An Americano is made of one to three shots of espresso and hot water. The more espresso used, the stronger the coffee will be.

■ Latte

A latte is made by pouring espresso into a cup, then filling the rest of the cup with warm milk.

■ Macchiato

A macchiato is a beverage made with espresso and a little bit of steamed milk. It is much stronger than a latte.

■ Cappuccino

A cappuccino is made by pouring espresso into a cup, then filling the rest of the cup with steamed milk and foam.

— If you order it “dry” you will get more foam than steamed milk.

— If you order it “wet” you will get more steamed milk than foam.

■ Pour over

A pour over is made by placing coffee grounds in a filter (in a pour over cone) and pouring hot water over them.

■ Single origin

Single origin coffee comes from one place. This could mean it comes from the same farm or general area.

■ Blend

A blend is a mix of two or more varieties of coffee.

Tips for Making Wise Choices

■ Skip the whip.

You’ll save about 100 calories, 9 grams of sugar and 10 grams of fat!

■ Consider a smaller size.

A step down in size may be just enough to satisfy your craving. You’ll enjoy the money you save too!

(over)

- **Choose fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk in lattes, macchiatos cappuccinos and other beverages that include milk as an ingredient.**

You can also request for unsweetened almond milk, unsweetened coconut milk or another non-dairy milk option of your choice.

- **Ask the barista how many pumps of syrup, chocolate or caramel is going into your beverage.**

You can ask for less if you'd like to decrease the amount of calories and sugar.

- **If you're adding sugar to an unsweetened beverage (black coffee, Americano, pour over), decrease the amount of sugar you add gradually.**

You probably won't enjoy your beverage if you jump straight from sugar-packed to no-sugar-added. Try decreasing the amount of sugar or syrup little-by-little until you're closer to an unsweetened coffee.

- **Go for real.**

If you want to sweeten your cup, make sure you're adding **real sugar** in the form of white (granulated) sugar, honey or dairy creamers.

Do not add:

- artificial sweeteners:

These sugar substitutes have the sweet taste of sugar without the calories.

However, some studies have shown that people who replace real sugar with artificial sweeteners end up eating more without realizing it!

- non-dairy creamers:

These often contain trans fats (hydrogenated oils). Trans fats are known to increase your risk for heart disease.

- **Try a sprinkle of cinnamon!**

Cinnamon brings a spicy sweetness to beverages without the sugar.

- **Treat it as dessert.**

If you decide you want to order your favorite sugar-sweetened, caramel-drizzled beverage, that's OK! Call it what it is — dessert — and consider it a treat.

- **Eat at home, not off the menu.**

Most coffee shop menus are packed with high-sugar, low-nutrient foods. Grab a better-for-you option (hard-boiled egg, oatmeal or banana) from home instead.

- **Pair your coffee with conversation.**

Enjoy your beverage even more with a buddy! You'll nourish your relationship and your spirit!