



**Kosher
Information
Bureau**

KASHRUS CONSCIENCE

A service of the Kosher Information Bureau
by Rabbi Eidlitz

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“Coffee”

Before opening my Bais Medrash I was told that it isn't an official Bais Medrash until it has a coffee room. How did coffee become so central to the lives of many around the world, and the places of Torah and learning in particular.

How and when people started drinking coffee is not clear. An often repeated source (perhaps even true) is that an Ethiopian shepherd over 1200 years ago, found his goats had a lot more stamina than usual, and he traced it to their eating coffee beans. He tried it, liked it, felt invigorated by it, and the rest is history. Since coffee started in Ethiopia, it reached Sepharadim first. The American Colonies switched from tea to coffee after the “Tea Party” made tea scarce. The Radvaz in Egypt (about 1500) was the first known Posek to comment on the Halachos of coffee. One of the first תולאש (questions) was concerning סובע לשיב. Can they add milk? Is the coffee itself kosher? Is it Bittul Torah? Can one drink it before Davening or only water is allowed? And many more...

For many years coffee was only available in coffee houses, which were often frequented by the same type of people, i.e. doctors to one coffee house, a separate one for wealthy people, and so on. Much as today on golf courses and at Starbucks etc., coffee houses were viewed as good places to conduct business.

Instant coffee remains the most popular. After roasting the beans, they are cooked a great deal and then dried to powder. Freeze dried is somewhat better by freezing the liquid than drying it. This locks in more of the flavor. In recent years Nespresso and Keurig machines have made the process of making freshly ground coffee easier so there is a slight shift away from instant coffee.

Some of the questions that come up concerning coffee:

Cold Brew, Starbucks. Airlines, Pesach, Flavored, Instant, unflavored ground, Elephant/goat coffee, in other countries, Shabbos, Bishul Akum

Rav Yaakov Emden in the early 1700's got into an embarrassing situation when he was seen by many Rabbonim drinking in a coffee house in England and even allowing them to add milk. In reality he held that it was allowed although he did not wish to go against local Minhag. He described himself as a mostly tea drinker who later converted to drinking a few cups of coffee daily. He and many others felt that coffee was medicinal.



Bishul Akum (ח"ל פד ז"ע) : This Issur theoretically should have rendered all coffee cooked by a non-Jew as a non kosher item, however the Radvaz, the Pri Chodosh (ד"י) and many other Poskim did not view it as a problem. Although coffee beans must be roasted and cannot be eaten raw, and it can be used at an elegant event, it is allowed for the same reasoning we make a לכהש on beer, both are mostly flavored water. As we know water is not subject to סובע לשיב. As far as the coffee houses using the coffee cookers for multi use, he felt that they would not do this due to contamination of the flavor. In our times we face a challenge of some Starbucks and restaurants of the dishwasher possibly being used for non kosher food dishes as well as coffee implements.

Drinking with a non-Jew in a coffee establishment: The **Shulchan Aruch** forbids drinking alcoholic beverages with a non Jew in formal situations such as a bar due to socialization and perhaps intermarriage, the Radbaz felt that the same is true of a non-Jewish coffee house.

Although the **Chochmas Odom** does allow drinking alcoholic beverages with a non Jew in an informal setting, he agreed that coffee houses were formal and could lead to intermarriage.

Our coffee houses are not considered as formal as they were during the time of the Radvaz and Chochmas Odom.

Drinking before Davening: As far as the Issur of drinking anything other than water before Davening, the **Mishna Brura** says that it is acceptable if locally it is consumed to concentrate better in Davening. (89:22) Part of the reasoning is that as mentioned above coffee is considered like flavored water, which is allowed before Davening.

Reb Shlomo **Zalman Auerbach** says that in our time coffee with milk and sugar is considered a regular non indulgent drink and is allowed before Davening. (Halichos Shlomo 2:2)

Coffee on Shabbos is very difficult to make fresh coffee on שבת. In Igros Moshe (Igros Moshe OC 4:60) Reb Moshe's grandson asked him if an automatic coffee maker could be set up on Erev Shabbos and programmed to start brewing Shabbos morning. Reb Moshe Paskened that it is Assur to do and is likely included in what the Novi Ezra said עשות חפצך ודבר דבר, that we cannot do weekday work even if technically it is done in a permitted way. To ask a non-Jew to make coffee would be an Issur of לעכור – the prohibition of asking a non-Jew to do something we ourselves cannot do. However, However, if a person is in a non-Jewish hotel where most of the guests are not Jewish, and the hotel makes fresh coffee on Shabbos morning primarily for the non-Jews, a Jew could drink it since it was not made for him and is not לעכור. The common method used is to make "sense", which is concentrated coffee that is prepared before שבת. On Shabbos it is used by adding an appropriate amount of sense/concentrate to hot Kli Shlishi water. Instant coffee is fine in a Kli Shaini (מ"ב שי"ח), following the rule אין בישול אחר בישול אלא בדבר לח – once cooked it cannot be recooked. To make sure the mug is a Kli Shaini, one needs to first put the hot water in the mug followed by the coffee.

Hechscher on coffee: Ground coffee is made by taking the green moist beans, roasting them at about 350 degrees, followed by grinding at various degrees of

fineness. Ground coffee is dried in a spray dryer or freeze dried. right after grinding and brewing it into a drinkable coffee. Due to the simplicity and use of dedicated machinery, most Poskim allow instant and ground coffee to be used worldwide without a Hechscher when it does not contain additives such as flavoring. However, Harav Henkin zt"l felt that even salt and coffee would be better with Kosher supervision. (132 לארשיל תודע).



Brocho on smelling coffee:

Although the Mishnah Berurah (רט"ז) says that a person who on purpose smells roasted coffee bean will say the Beracha: הנותן ריח טוב לפירות, most Poskim say that this only applies on the beans, not on a cup of coffee or just walking by the area without attention to smell the beans.

Flavored coffee: The entire process of making pure coffee is done on dedicated machinery without additives. The result is a product that is fine without Hashgacha. However Flavored coffee does require a good Hechsher. Whether the coffee beans were imbued with flavor or the flavor was added to a person's individual cup, the source of the flavor will need to be determined if it is kosher

Decaffeinated coffee: since it is not flavored it does not present a Kashrus issue. There are different methods of removing the caffeine, some involving grains. The pure water method is usually acceptable for Pesach while the solvent one is not.

Coffee shops: There are different types of coffee shops. Some sell only coffee, while others are a semi restaurant and may serve non-kosher meat etc. Starbucks for instance has both. A Kiosk in a mall or a stand alone in the airport usually does not sell anything other than coffee. The question is concerning the establishments that do sell both. The brew basket and other parts of the machinery for coffee may be washed in a dishwasher together with the non kosher plates. It is important to keep in mind that due to a ספק ספיקא a double doubt concerning the status of the coffee machinery, coffee is often allowed. A. we are not sure if it was washed with any non-kosher food on the plates, B. the soap in the dishwasher may render the food פגום/unedible and have no effect on the coffee machine parts. Most

contemporary Poskim agrees that if a person is on the road or for some other compelling reason (such as a hospital, airport, traveling) needs a coffee and cannot find an outlet that only serves coffee, they may use coffee from that establishment. (see Starbucks below)

Flavored coffee: Any product with flavoring requires good Hashgacha. This is true due to the ambiguity of the words Natural Flavoring and Imitation flavoring. Neither one is what it sounds like. Colorings and Flavorings include the following:

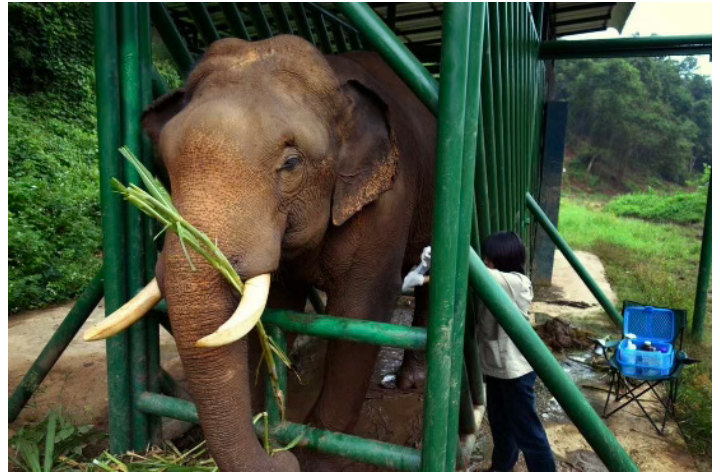
- Carmine (Red Dye 4, cochineal): Derived from crushed cochineal bugs; still used in products like fruit cocktails to keep cherries red. Some companies have pledged to stop using it.
- "Natural flavorings" can mask non-kosher origins:
- Ambergris — derived from sperm whales; used in perfumes, cocktails, and medicines.
- Civet absolute — from civet cat scent glands; appears in frozen dairy desserts, baked goods, candies, puddings, and gelatins.
- Alpha Amylase - Source: hog pancreas
- Artificial flavoring – often derived from grape juice

Pesach: the bad news is that some Poskim such as Gaon Rav Avraham Broda (quoted by the Chida), originally thought coffee is within the Gzaira of Kitniyos. Fortunately, Poskim agreed that it is not Kitniyos.

Pesach has a different issue concerning instant coffee. Until recently there were many brands of instant coffee. However, coffee producers realized that the coffee would stay fresh by microencapsulating each grain. Unfortunately, corn syrup is used for this purpose. A few companies do not do this procedure and are fine without a Hechsher for Pesach.

Strange and Expensive Coffee:

A number of years ago a new type of coffee bean was discovered to be much more mellow and for some more enjoyable. These coffee beans have gone through the digestive system of either a Civet cat and is called Kopi Luwak, or more commonly now through the digestive system of an elephant. By removing and cleaning the beans from the after product of these animals, one gets a different pricey cup of coffee. Now it is about \$70 a cup.



The following are two lists of the most used coffee inquiries.

Nespresso Pods:

Harav Yisroel Meir Schlezinger from Basil reliable certifies the below Nespresso pods for year-round, except Pesach.

Nespresso Classic (NC) Range

Infiniment Espresso, Dharkan, Hawaii Kona Special Reserve, Jamaica Blue Mountain Special Reserve, Special Reserve Galapagos, Forest Black, LE La Cumplide Refinada, Café Joyeux, Speciale Reserve Australia, N°20, Festive Black Espresso , Change Please , Envivo lungo, Linizio Lungo, Filter Style Mild, Filter Style Intense, Unforgettable Espresso Limited Edition, Café Florian, Festive Collection Espresso.

• Reviving Origins

Reviving Origins Cafécito de Cuba, Reviving Origins Tamuka mu Zimbabwe, Reviving Origins Esperanzade Colombia, Reviving Origins Amaha awe Uganda, Reviving Origins Organic Kahawa ya Congo

• Ispirazione Italiana

Ispirazione Italiana Kazaar, Ispirazione Italiana Ristretto Decaffeinato, Ispirazione Italiana Arpeggio

Décaffeinato, Ispirazione Italiana Ispirazione Roma, Ispirazione Italiana Ristretto, Ispirazione Italiana

Arpeggio, Ispirazione Italiana Ispirazione Venezia, Ispirazione Italiana Ispirazione Napoli, Ispirazione Italiana Livanto, Ispirazione Italiana Ispirazione Italiana Milano Intenso, Ispirazione Italiana Arpeggio Extra.

- **The Original Collection**

The Original Collection Così, The Original Collection Volluto, The Original Collection Capriccio, The Original Collection Volluto Decaffeinato

- **Master Origins**

Master Origins India , Master Origins Nicaragua, Master Origins Ethiopia Organic, Master Origins Ethiopia, Master Origins Colombia , Master Origins Indonesia, Master Origins Costa Rica, Master Origins Peru Organic, Master Origins Indonesia Organic, Master Origins Papua New Guinea Grand Cru, Master Origins Brazil Organic, Master Origins Honduras.

- **Barista Creations**

Barista Creations Chiaro, Barista Creations Scuro, Barista Creations Corto, Barista Creations Freddo Delicato, Barista Creations Freddo Intenso

- **World Explorations**

World Explorations Paris Espresso, World Explorations Istanbul Espresso , World Explorations Rio de Janeiro Espresso , World Explorations Lisbon Bica, World Explorations Cadiz Espresso, World Explorations Vienna Lungo, World Explorations Tokyo Lungo, World Explorations Shanghai Lungo, World Explorations CapeTown Lungo, World Explorations Stockholm Lungo, World Explorations Miami Espresso, World Explorations Buenos Aires Lungo, World Explorations Zurich Lungo, World Explorations Vienna Lungo Decaffeinato.

Professional Range

Lungo Leggero, Ristretto intenso, Exclusive selection Nepal Lamjung, Co-creation Franck Giovannini, Exclusive selection Kenya Milima, Change Please, Forte Extra, Café Joyeux, Master Origins India, Reviving Origins Congo Organic, Co-creation Heiko Nieder, Exclusive Selection Galàpagos

- **Classics**

Classics Ristretto, Classics Ristretto Intenso, Classics

Intenso, Classics Leggero, Classics Décaffeinato, Classics Forte, Classics Finezza, Classics Forte Extra.

- **Origins**

Origins Guatemala, Origins Brazil, Origins Peru Organic, Origins Colombia Organic, Origins India, Origins Brazil Organic, Origins Indonésia

- **Creations**

Creations Bianco Delicato, Creations Bianco Intenso, Creations Ice intense

Vertuo

Diavolitto, Altissio, Voltesso, Il Caffè, Altissio Decaffeinato, Orafiò, Toccanto, Intenso, Fortado, Arondio, Bianco Leggero, Infiniment Double Espresso, Festive Black Double Espresso, Unforgettable Double Espresso, Fortado Decaffeinato, Inizio, Alto Ambrato, Alto Onice, Melozio, Solelio, Half, Caffeinato, Stormio, Odacio, Café Joyeux , Change Please , N°20, Melozio Decaffeinato, Ristretto Classico, Ristretto

- **Coffee/Mug**

Coffee / Mug Intenso, Coffee/ Mug Master Origins El Salvador, Coffee / Mug Melozio, Coffee / Mug Solelio, Coffee / Mug Stormio, Coffee / Mug Odacio, Coffee/ Mug Master Origins Colombia, Coffee/Mug Master Origins Mexico, Coffee/Mug Barista Creations Bianco Forte for Milk, Coffee/ Mug Cold Experiences Ice Forte, Coffee/Mug Melozio Decaffeinato

- **Espresso**

Espresso Il Caffè, Espresso Master Origins Peru Organic, Espresso Diavolitto, Espresso Altissio, Espresso Voltesso, Espresso Altissio Decaffeinato, Espresso Orafiò, Espresso Barista Creations Bianco Piccolo for Milk

- **Reviving Origins**

Reviving Origins Tamuka Mu Zimbabwe, Reviving Origins Cafecito de Puerto Rico, Reviving Origins Organic Kahawa Ya Congo, Reviving Origins Esperanza de Colombia, Reviving origins Café de Cuba, Reviving origins Amaha awe Uganda.

- **Master Origins**

Master Origins Peru Organic, Master Origins Costa Rica, Master Origins Ethiopia, Master Origins Ethiopia Organic, Master Origins El Salvador, Master Origins Colombia, Master Origins Mexico, Master Origins

Sumatra Grand Cru, Master Origins Papua New Guinea Grand Cru, Master Origin Zambia Limited Edition

- **Barista Creation**

Barista Creations Ice leggero, Barista Creations Bianco Doppio for milk, Barista Creations Chiaro, Barista Creations Bianco Forte for Milk, Barista Créations Ice Forte, Barista Creations for Milk Bianco Piccolo, Barista Creations Bianco Forte, Barista Creations for milk Bianco Doppio

- **Double espresso**

Double espresso Cold Experiences Ice Leggero, Double Espresso Dolce, Double Espresso Chiaro, Double Espresso Scuro, Double Espresso Barista Creations Bianco Doppio for milk, Double Espresso Chiaro decaffeinato.

- **Gran Lungo**

Gran Lungo Master Origins Costa Rica, Gran Lungo Master Origins Ethiopia, Gran Lungo Fortado Decaffeinato, Gran Lungo Inizio, Gran Lungo Fortado, Gran Lungo Arondio

- **XL**

XL Alto Ambrato, XL Alto Onice, XL Cold expériences Cold Brew Style Intense.

- **Blue Bottle**

Blue Bottle Blend N°.1, Blue Bottle Gitega Hills, Rwanda, , Blue Bottle Blend N°.2, Blue Bottle Nola.

- **Coffee+**

Coffee+ Melozio Boost Infused with caffeine. Found naturally in coffee, Coffee+ Stormio Boost Infused with caffeine. Found naturally in coffee, Coffee+ Melozio Go Infused with caffeine. Found naturally in coffee, Coffee+ Stormio Go Infused with caffeine. Found naturally in coffee.

- **Craft Brew**

Craft Brew Cold Brew, Craft Brew Carafe Pour-Over Style Intense, Craft Brew Cold Brew Style Intense, Craft Brew Carafe Cold Brew Style Mild, Craft Brew Carafe Pour-Over Style Mild

- **World Explorations**

World Explorations Lisbon Bica

- **Cold Expériences**

Cold Expériences Cold Brew Style Intense, Cold Expériences Ice Forte, Cold Expériences Ice Leggero

Nescafé

- **Farmers Origins**

Farmers Origins 3 Americas, Farmers Origins Africas, Farmers Origins Africas Ristretto, Farmers Origins Andes Lungo, Farmers Origins Brazil Lungo, Farmers Origins Colombia Espresso, Farmers Origins Colombia Décaféinato Espresso, Farmers Origins India Espresso, Farmers Origins Mexico Espresso, Farmers Origins South Asia Espresso

Starbucks

- **Starbucks OL**

Caffè Verona, Blonde Espresso Roast, Blonde Espresso Roast Decaf, Breakfast Blend, Espresso Roast, Espresso Roast Decaf, Holiday blend, House Blend, Italian Style Roast, Single Origin Sumatra, Pike Place Roast, Single Origin Colombia, Single Origin Guatemala, Sunny Day Blend, Italian Roast, Ristretto Shot.

- **Starbucks VL**

Blonde Espresso Roast, Caffè Verona, Double Espresso Starbucks Blonde Espresso Roast, Espresso Roast, French Roast, Holiday blend, Iced Double Espresso Starbucks Blonde Espresso Roast, Pike Place Roast, Reserve Remix Blend, Single Origin Colombia, Veranda Blend, Single Origin Sumatra, Sunsera Blend.

- **Starbucks PL**

Espresso Roast, Blonde Espresso Roast, House Blend, Pike place roast, Single Origin Colombia, Italian Style Roast, Breakfast Blend, Single Origins Guatemala, Sunny Day Blend.

Paper

- **Original Compostable (OL)**

Ispirazione Aosta, Decaffeinato, Ispirazione Emilia, Ispirazione Sicilia, Peru Organic, Ispirazione Palermo, World Explorations London Lungo.

- **Original Compostable (PL)**

Ispirazione Italiana Decaffeinato, Ispirazione Italiana Dolce, Ispirazione Italiana Ristretto, Colombia Organic Single Origin.

Buondi

Descafeinado, Encorpado, Extreme, Intenso, Original, Ristretto

Zoegas

Buongiorno, Elegante, Originale, Skånerost.

Starbucks Stores: (from the Star-k)

When one is traveling, (traveling means when one is away from home and no other viable kosher certified coffee option is readily available), this creates a situation of sha'as hadchak – i.e., a difficult situation – and one need not be concerned with the restrictions on the beverages listed below (based on the psak of the Noda B'Yehuda quoted in Yad Ephraim, Y.D. 122-6, D'H' Shelo. It can be found in Shu"t Noda B'Yehuda Kama 36). One does not need to be driving on the highway to fit into the category of traveling.

We cannot recommend syrups, sauces, toppings, powders, soy or almond milk or other items not listed below unless the consumer confirms that they bear a reliable certification.

Please note: Starbucks stores serve Cholov Stam.

The following recommendations are for the USA and Canada only.

*CONSUMERS MUST CHECK FOR RELIABLE KOSHER SYMBOLS

*Whipped cream found in most Starbucks stores is made from heavy cream (Cholov Stam) and vanilla syrup that carry a reliable Kosher certification. Before adding it to the product, consumers must first verify its kosher status by checking the original containers for a reliable kosher symbol.

Note: Starbucks Frappuccinos bearing on the back a KD are recommended as well as Via and many other powdered coffee from Starbucks brand bearing OU.



HOT BEVERAGE	ACCEPTABLE AT ANY STARBUCKS	ONLY ACCEPTABLE WHEN TRAVELING (BEDI'EVED)
CAFFE AMERICANO Avoid using the "shot" glass.	✓	✓
CAPPUCCINO (Cholov Stam)	✗	✓
COFFEE, REGULAR AND DECAF	✗	✓
ESPRESSO Avoid using the "shot" glass.	✓	✓
ESPRESSO MACCHIATO (Cholov Stam)	✗	✓
HOT TEA Unflavored	✓	✓
HOT TEA Flavored with kosher symbol on box	✓	✓
LATTE HOT/CAFFE LATTE (Cholov Stam)	✗	✓

ICED BEVERAGES	ACCEPTABLE AT ANY STARBUCKS	ONLY ACCEPTABLE WHEN TRAVELING (BEDI'EVED)
BOTTLED STARBUCKS DRINKS (Cholov Stam). with a KD	✓	✓
COLD BREW	✓	✓
ICED COFFEE	✗	✓
ICED CAFFE AMERICANO (Cholov Stam)	✓	✓
ICED CAFFE LATTE (Cholov Stam)	✓	✓
NITRO COLD BREW	✓	✓
REFRESHERS BEVERAGES (ALL FLAVORS)	✗	✗
TEAVANA BLACK ICED TEA	✗	✓
TEAVANA GREEN ICED	✗	✓
TEAVANA ICED WHITE TEA	✗	✓