

LATTE ART

Get lots of milk | Make great shots | Stifle screams of frustration while learning

Originals

Chris Deferio

In the early days, Chris Deferio and Billy Wilson were atop the winner board for latte art competitions. They give some tips via these YouTube video's:

<http://youtu.be/LS3t9eYUTwM>

<http://youtu.be/WIFJg65k-Do>

<http://youtu.be/Sb6JN7wIPEY>

Billy Wilson

<http://youtu.be/qYdqac3qdfg>

Practice!

I went through gallons of milk and pounds of coffee. And change up your technique: try something different! If you are pouring the same way but not getting results, change where your pour, how your pour, the speed of your pour, the distance or stretch the milk less. We are all creatures of habit. Change them and mix it up for better results!



Basics

Pouring latte art does not guarantee an outstanding drink. But it does demonstrate that the barista cares about what they are doing. When done properly, latte art is only the finishing touch to a great drink. Knowing how to bring out the sweetness of the milk, make micro foam, pouring into perfectly pulled espresso, the art is a finishing touch. I've had latte art on drinks where the milk was burnt or too hot and where the espresso was tasteless. Keep that in mind. It's only the final indication that everything else in the drink was made with special care and attention.





Making the rounds

I poured the art above and must have posted it on Facebook or my blog. Today, when doing a search in Google for latte art images, it came up on the website for coffee. This might actually be with Soy Milk.

Basic Tips:

Know your espresso. I call the roaster and ask for their profile for the blend I'm using. That gives me a range to start working with.

Good quality fresh milk and a cold pitcher. Milk will only merge with air when it's cold. You have a very small window to begin aerating the milk. Do it gently, a small hiss will work best.

As the pitcher reaches 100°, lower the wand and begin texturing the milk by creating a whirlpool motion inside the pitcher. Every machine is different so find the technique that works best with your equipment. You want to have a velvety shiny surface when finished.

Some general video links demonstrating latte art:

This is the first of three video's: <http://youtu.be/X6EuEygqB08>

From Whole Latte Love: <http://youtu.be/ZIPyN-Hsb7g>

You'll notice a lot of variance in how people prepare and pour their latte art. I don't like to let the espresso sit as it can become bitter. My machine allows me to pull shots and prepare milk simultaneously. How you hold the pitcher, pour techniques, tipping the cup you are pouring into or leaving it flat are all contrasting suggestions. Find the technique that works best for you.

Three basic tips: speed, distance and location. Some very helpful tips!

<http://youtu.be/yOI1skOI7C8>

Now in slow motion:

<http://youtu.be/Kz2gplx3cak>

<http://youtu.be/dzkcTYXo9GA>

And the Heart: <http://youtu.be/jALbKGQ-qiw>



The photo above is my first real latte art pout at the ABC school in Portland.