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Coffee Soda: The Most Refreshing Way to Get Your Caffeine Fix

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By JENN RICE



There are an almost overwhelming number of ways to get your coffee fix these days—from good old drip to nitro—but there's one more permutation to add to your caffeine rotation: coffee soda. This refreshing alternative is, essentially, coffee mixed with soda water; a bubbly, iced Americano if you will. And it's the most summer-appropriate way to get your morning buzz.

Baristas are treating these concoctions like mixed drinks and adding everything from bitters to a splash of citrus to create really inventive cups. Sound a bit strange? Don't knock it until you try it. The citrus and coffee combination has become common in some spots overseas: "In Italy, you can find someone squeezing a lemon into their espresso [and] Australian cafes have been known to create a Sparky [lime with double shot espresso]," says Thi Lam, co-owner of Keepers Coffee Soda—a canned mix of coffee, soda, and citrus that's just about to hit the market Stateside. The combination of citrus and coffee works because "coffee is actually a fruit that can contain hundreds of different flavor notes depending on the region and elevation where they are grown," says Lam. And adding a splash of lemon, for example, can really magnify more subtle, natural citrus notes in the beans.

"These kinds of drinks seem like a natural evolution for coffee," says Methodical Coffee's Co-Owner, Marco Suarez. "Cold sugary drinks like Frappuccinos were a natural evolution from Starbucks' lattes and coffee sodas seem like a natural evolution for third wave coffee shops who focus on more complex flavors. As for coffee sodas specifically, it's becoming more common to roast coffees in a way to highlight the bean's brighter tones and when that's mixed with the crisp effervescence of a soda, it makes for a super refreshing summer drink."

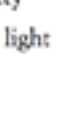
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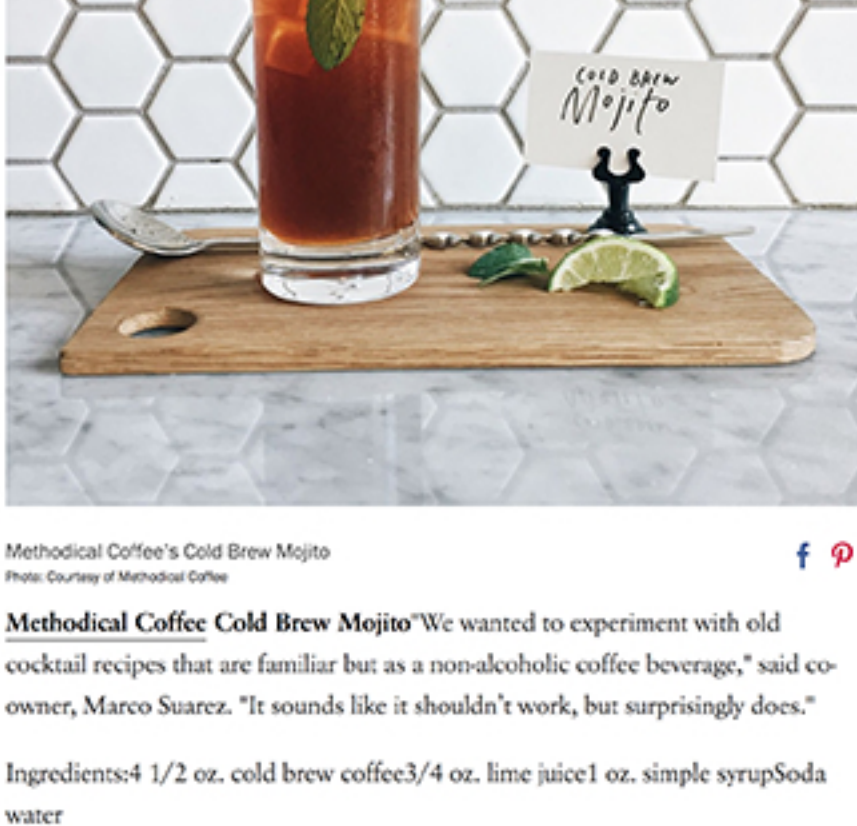
The Wild Son's Cold Brew Fizz
Photo: Courtesy of The Wild Son



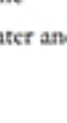
The Wild Son Cold Brew Fizz I like the idea of having a coffee with tasting notes of hazelnut that is also slightly dry with undertones of vanilla," says Co-Owner and Beverage Director, Jason Mendenhall. "The sherry gives it this beautiful nutty quality that works well with the natural flavor of the cold brew. It's fun and light but you're still getting the caffeine charge you get from your ice coffee."

Ingredients: 2 oz. cold brew coffee 2 oz. Amontillado sherry 1/2 oz. Madagascar vanilla syrup 1 dash Angostura bitters 4 oz. soda water

Method: Combine first four ingredients and place in the refrigerator to chill. When the coffee cocktail mixture is chilled, put mixture in a glass with fresh ice. Top the cocktail with soda water and stir to mix all ingredients. Garnish with coffee grounds.



Methodical Coffee's Cold Brew Mojito
Photo: Courtesy of Methodical Coffee



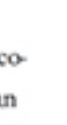
Methodical Coffee Cold Brew Mojito "We wanted to experiment with old cocktail recipes that are familiar but as a non-alcoholic coffee beverage," said co-owner, Marco Suarez. "It sounds like it shouldn't work, but surprisingly does."

Ingredients: 4 1/2 oz. cold brew coffee 3/4 oz. lime juice 1 oz. simple syrup Soda water

Method: Fill a highball glass with ice and pour in a mixture of cold brew, lime juice, and simple syrup over the ice. Fill to the top of the glass with soda water and garnish with a few mint leaves.



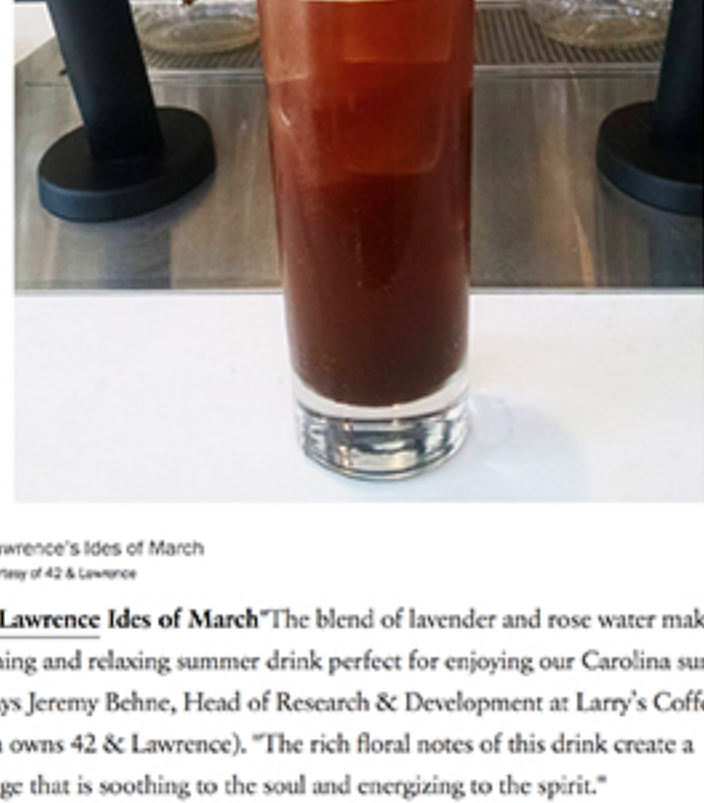
Persephone Bakery's Coffee Soda
Photo: Lindsey Rust / Courtesy of Persephone Bakery



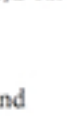
Persephone Bakery Espresso Spritzer "A bubbly coffee drink is the most refreshing thing we could imagine having on these hot summer days," says co-owner Ali Cohane. "It's much lighter than a latte, and we put less vanilla bean syrup than a latte so it stays refreshing, not cloying."

Ingredients: 2 shots Black Cat Espresso (Intelligentsia Coffee) 1.5 oz. vanilla bean syrup 5 oz. Pellegrino Splash of half and half

Method: Combine in a 16oz. cup over ice.



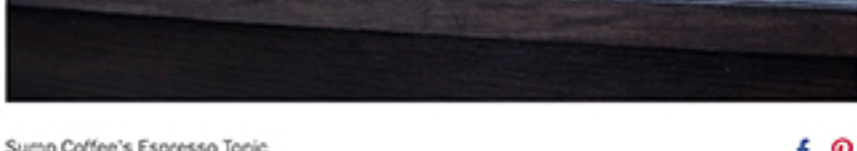
42 & Lawrence's Ides of March
Photo: Courtesy of 42 & Lawrence



42 & Lawrence Ides of March "The blend of lavender and rose water makes for a refreshing and relaxing summer drink perfect for enjoying our Carolina summers," says says Jeremy Behne, Head of Research & Development at Larry's Coffee (which owns 42 & Lawrence). "The rich floral notes of this drink create a beverage that is soothing to the soul and energizing to the spirit."

Ingredients: 4 oz. nitro cold brew (find it canned in stores like Whole Foods) 2 oz. lavender simple syrup Seltzer Two dashes rose water

Method: Add two large ice cubes to a 16 ounce cup. Pour nitro cold brew and lavender simple syrup in glass. Top with seltzer and add rose water. "To create lavender simple syrup, boil 1 part sugar, two parts water until sugar is dissolved; add in lavender to flavor."



Sump Coffee's Espresso Tonic
Photo: Courtesy of Sump Coffee



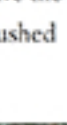
Sump Coffee Espresso Tonic Look for coffee with a citrus profile, owner Scott Carey recommends. "We have found, for us, that the drink works only with washed coffees from Ethiopia," he says.

Ingredients: 6.8 oz. tonic (Carey prefers Fever Tree Indian Tonic) 1.1 oz of espresso (of Ethiopian origin)

Method: Add tonic and espresso in a glass of ice. Float the shot on top of the tonic, to avoid a glass that mimics a "shaken can of cola," notes Carey.



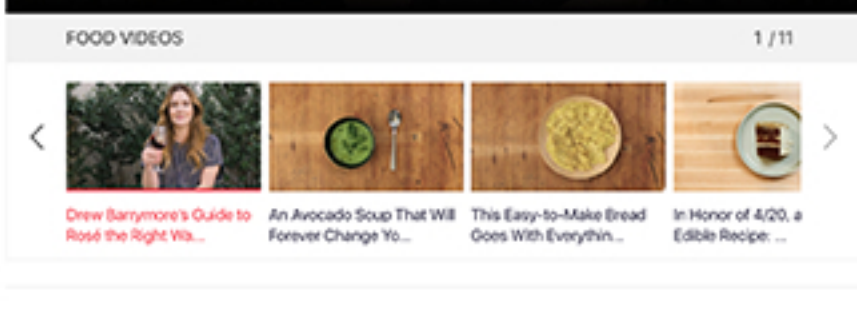
The Durham Hotel's Coffee Soda
Photo: Albie Muller / Courtesy of The Durham Hotel



The Durham Hotel Coffee Soda "You get sweetness, the vanilla, then the coffee and the burnt caramelized sugars, all tied together by the lemon," says barista Mark Daumen.

Ingredients: 8 cups cold brew coffee 4 cups sugar 1 vanilla bean Sparkling water Lemon twist (for garnish)

Method: Combine cold brew coffee, sugar and vanilla bean in a medium sauce pan and reduce the volume to 4 cups to make a coffee soda syrup. Once you have the syrup, combine syrup with sparkling water (1 oz. syrup to 10 oz. water), crushed ice and twist of lemon for garnish.



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