

MILK & LATTE ART

A Guide to Preparing Milk

SOME BACKGROUND

It's hard to pin down when exactly latte art was invented, or who invented it. Coffee geek lore has it that Espresso Vivace's David Schomer was the first American to really nail it back in the mid-eighties. In Italy, meanwhile, a gentleman named Luigi Lupi was doing the same thing around the same time. One thing's for sure, though: Developing perfect latte art is a bit like beginning an exercise regimen. Things may start out a little awkward and puffy, but you're guaranteed steady (if modest) progress if you hang in there. Though there is disagreement within the coffee world about what milk's proper texture ought to be, we (along with pretty much all the other specialty coffee companies) prefer to craft a silky "microfoam" - something akin to wet paint or "white chrome", as Schomer himself put it all those years ago.

YOU WILL NEED:

- Ceramic or Paper Cup
- Espresso Machine & Steam wand
- Fresh Milk
- Stainless Steel Pitcher
- Thermometer

1 STEP 1

If you have a 350 ml pitcher, fill half of it with milk, this is about half a finger width below the bottom of the nozzle.



2 STEP 2

Angle the pitcher and so that your steamwand is aimed diagonally into the milk's lower right quadrant.



3 STEP 3

Place the tip of the wand one cm or two below the milk's surface and turn it on. You'll hear a tearing sound. Don't let it frighten you. After about three seconds, quickly but purposefully submerge the wand below the surface of the milk – not so deep that you hit the side of the pitcher, not so shallow that you continue to create bubbles, we are creating microfoam.



4 STEP 4

Submerging the wand will create the “whirlpool” motion necessary to break down bubbles and create microfoam.

5 STEP 5

Once your milk has reached the appropriate temperature (this is usually reached when you cannot hold the jug with both hands but your hands can tap it), turn off the steam wand. Purge it, and give it a few vigorous wipes with a clean towel.

6 STEP 6

Swirl the pitcher on a flat surface to break any remaining bubbles. Imagine you have a small plate under the jug, do not swirl in large circles. Give it a few swirls to equalize the texture. The consistency should resemble wet paint.



6 STEP 6

To achieve exquisite latte art, begin pouring your milk slowly. Start with a narrow stream to avoid breaking the espresso's crema. Once your drink is about half full, lower your pitcher's spout so that it's almost touching the liquid. This will guarantee strong contrast. Continue pouring. Your done!



HAVE QUESTIONS?

Ask our team at malta@lotsixtyonecoffee.com