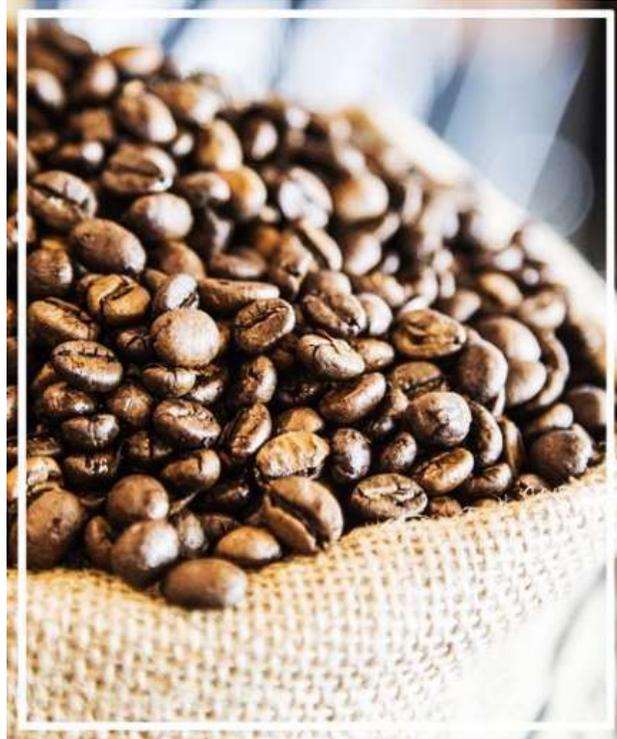


9 Experts Predict The Next Big Trend In Coffee

Source: MSN Food & Drink



Each season, we wait with bated breath to see what the next major trend will be. But really, we want to know now: What will come after nitro cold brew, draft lattes, and the latest flavored coffee drinks?

To find out, we asked the experts from top coffee shops and chains what they think the future of coffee will look like. Ahead, read their responses and get some professional insight into what you might be ordering next.

Stumptown: The Future Is Icy

"In my opinion, hot coffee had the focus of innovation during the past decade, with a huge number of flavor innovations. However, in the last couple of years, the light has started to shine on cold coffee drinks, and I think we are just getting started."

Three weeks ago, we had a Cold Brew Throwdown at Stumptown Coffee headquarters — roasters and brewers and baristas from around the Northwest showcased innovative drinks with Cold Brew Coffee as the base ingredient: Date Coffee Shakes, Hopped Cold Brew, Cold Brew

Sodas, etc. The possibilities are endless. Additionally, we continue to see restaurants, bars, and mixologists create amazing Cold Brew cocktails. So much potential for brunch deliciousness!"

I think draft has to be a part of the conversation too...and great coffee bars do not open without draft systems now. I think you'll see expansion of that in years to come. We can all remember when bars had three to four tap handles of beer, and now that number has exploded. With innovation in Cold Brew and other drinks, the draft offerings in cafes will likely follow suit." — Diane Aylsworth, director of cold brew at Stumptown .

Toby's Estate: More Signature Drinks To Come

"The trend we noticed is the rise in signature sweetened drinks. Not too long ago, it wasn't uncommon that specialty cafes weren't carrying even milk and sugar... We have found that our past signature drinks, the Apple Betty and Espresso Julep, were a big hit with our customers and well-received in the coffee community. Sprudge even puts together a 'Feel-Good Drinks of the Fall' list. This year, our fall drink takes coffee creativity a step further with our Maple Sage Latte — definitely stop in and try one!"

In terms of coffee production, waste removal is a major buzz trend. Farmers using the cherry skin that's removed during the coffee-harvesting process and [turning] it into a coffee flour for use in baking is one way — and roasting the green cherries, cherries that are removed at harvest by mechanical means...so that you can use all of the harvest, is another." — Amelia Evens, retail general manager at Toby's Estate .

La Colombe: The Fourth Wave Of Coffee Is Cold

"I'm just going to say it...the Fourth Wave of coffee is cold. People are finding new and better ways to brew coffee without heat, and it's exciting. The cold brew craze of the last couple years is just the beginning, and that's why I wanted to get moving on my Draft Latte — an iced latte with textured milk and cold brewed coffee served from a tap. No heat involved. With the response we've seen to the Draft Latte, I guarantee we're going to see a major shift in the industry towards cold coffee drinks." — Todd, CEO and head coffee geek at La Colombe .

Dunkin' Donuts: Espresso Is Everything

"In the coffee industry, the quality of the coffee and the increasing importance of specialty coffee beverages are two trends that are helping to shape the future. Whether a customer is an experienced coffee drinker or is enjoying their first cup, there is a greater expectation for authentic, handcrafted, high-quality coffee beverages... Additionally, specialty coffee and espresso-based beverages have been growing in importance. We have been closely monitoring this trend, and this is one reason why Dunkin' Donuts just this month has expanded its espresso beverage platform by adding Macchiato to the menu." — Chris Fuqua, vice president, Dunkin' Donuts Brand Marketing & Global Consumer Insights & Product Innovation .

Joe Coffee: It's All In The Water

"My main hope is that the next big thing [will] have nothing to do with cold-brewed coffee. I think that the next big thing in coffee will be water. I know that sounds odd and not very groundbreaking, but there has been a lot of talk recently about what you're using to brew your coffee. I believe that the industry as a whole will start looking more intimately at our water and using this ingredient in different ways. I imagine we aren't far off from a cafe offering a flight of one coffee brewed with three different water sources, or water that measures three different levels of TDS [Total Dissolved Solids]. Not only do I think the industry is thinking this way, I also find it a very approachable concept for the consumer that is often overlooked. Coffee is only 2% of the beverage, water is 98%. I think people may start to shift their focus to the 98%." — Amanda Byron, director of coffee at Joe Coffee.

Starbucks: Trends Start In The Tasting Room

"The amazing thing about coffee is that it's been around for 1,200 years, and we're still coming up with new ways to drink it. At Starbucks, we're constantly uncovering new ways for our customers to learn more about coffee and the craft of brewing — piquing curiosity about what, exactly, is in each cup. The menu at the Starbucks Reserve® Roastery & Tasting Room in Seattle is a great example; some of the most popular items include beverages you can only find at the Roastery, like the Shakerato Bianco and Iced Sparkling Espresso with Mint, in addition to our coffee tasting flights.

At the same time, the future of coffee depends on its sustainability. Coffee rust, a plant fungus that has damaged millions of coffee trees around the world, is one of the most significant threats to coffee farmers globally. On National Coffee Day this year, Starbucks is launching the Starbucks One Tree for Every Bag Commitment. Over the next year, every time someone buys a bag of coffee in a Starbucks store, a tree will be planted in a community that needs one. It's one way we can all give back, to make sure coffee is around for 1,200 years more." — Starbucks spokesperson .

The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf: Coffee Goes Global

"1. Increased focus on the technology of coffee beverage production...[the] opportunity to produce coffee beverages in a more specific way, [and] calibration to the type of beverage and even to the specification of the consumer."

2. Coffee and tea combination beverages — brewed coffee and tea together... [This is] being done internationally, specifically in Asia.

"3. Chicory with coffee is making a comeback, especially in cold brew. [This mixture is] from New Orleans originally [and was] a necessity during the Civil War to make coffee supplies last longer.

"4. Global local culture beverages making their way into the mainstream, [such as] Vietnam coffee with condensed milk and Thai iced tea."

5. The role of the barista continues to expand; now, they're more central to the beverage-making process versus just being a server — they are more of a mixologist."

6. Retention programs at the origin where coffee is grown, to inspire the next generation of coffee farmers to remain in the coffee sector and continue to drive quality... They typically only see the agricultural side and not the consumer side." — Jay Isais, senior director of coffee at The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf.

Rediscovering New Origins & Varieties

"What I see the next 'big thing' in coffee being is probably a combination of new varieties and new origins: I think coffee professionals are becoming more open to the notion of new and 'rediscovered' coffee varieties in the face of devastation, like we've seen with coffee-leaf rust disease in Central America. Until recently, many folks in the industry turned up their noses at cultivars like Castillo from Colombia, or Catimor (and its related hybrids); now that we have not only seen the obstacles we face in coffee due to the species's relatively limited gene pool, I think we're also coming to reevaluate our preconceived notions about new and new-to-us types of coffee. It might be what ends up saving coffee, after all."

As for origins, in my job on the green-sales team with Cafe Imports, a specialty-coffee importer based out of Minneapolis, I'm seeing a lot of new coffee-producing regions come across the cupping table, both from different areas within established producing nations (we're seeing folks branch out of the usual places in Kenya, Sumatra, and Brazil, among others), as well as coffees from places that are comparably brand new to growing coffee in the first place, like Taiwan, Thailand, and even Australia and the continental US." — Erin Meister, coffee expert .