



Chicago Rabbinical Council Guide to Starbucks Beverages

July 2, 2015

Over the years, Starbucks shops have evolved from simple coffee shops to stores that serve many kosher and non-kosher items, with the most serious non-kosher items being hot meat sandwiches. The standard daily clean up at Starbucks includes a hot wash of all utensils and some parts of that washing are done without soap. This clean up process challenges the kosher status of the otherwise kosher products and each product must be judged by a competent halachic authority.

When evaluating these issues, Rav Schwartz Shlit" a, Rosh Beis Din of the cRc, acknowledged that there is basis for being lenient on many of the items being sold at Starbucks stores, but directed the cRc to be true to the mission of a reliable *Kashrus* Agency which only recommends items that are free of all *shailos* and not those which are only acceptable *b'dieved*.

Rav Schwartz Shlit" a noted that this is especially true because there are viable alternatives in every Starbucks store, and even more options in those locations that do not serve hot meat sandwiches. These are generally the Starbucks "kiosks" that can be found in some airports, highway rest-stops, supermarkets etc., and at these locations the cRc is able to recommend many more beverages, as noted on the list below. [Some kiosks, such as those found at Target, share sinks and other equipment with nearby stores; those Starbucks facilities have the status of the full-service stores noted below.]

To fully explain the details, questions, and *shailos* involved in this issue the cRc printed an analysis of the topic in the Spring 2011 edition of *The Journal of Halacha and Contemporary Society*, and that article is available on the cRc website.

The coming list is accurate at this time for stores in the United States, and since the information is subject to change **this list should not be used after December 31, 2016**. [The list is limited to beverages and does not address foods sold in Starbucks (e.g. sandwiches), or toppings and other items added to beverages.] It is also worth noting that many items sold at Starbucks are dairy and *chalav stam*.

Drink	Full-Service Store	Kiosk-Type Store
Americano, using disposables ^B	L	✓
Apple juice (steamed)	x ^C	✓
Brewed Coffee	H	✓
Caramel Macchiato ^K	x	x
Clover-brewed coffee	x ^J	✓
Cold Brew Coffee	A	✓
Coconut Milk	✓	✓
Cream	D	D
Espresso, using disposables ^B	L	✓
Flavor syrups	E	E
Frappuccino ^F	x	x
Hot chocolate	x ^{C, D}	D
Iced coffee	x ^G	✓

Drink	Full-Service Store	Kiosk-Type Store
Iced latte, using disposables ^B	L	✓
Iced tea	x ^G	✓
Latte/cappuccino	x ^C	✓
Lemonade ^F	x	x
Milk, cold	✓	✓
Milk, steamed	x ^C	✓
Smoothie ^F	x	x
Soy Milk	✓	✓
Tea (hot)	E	E

Key	
✓	Recommended
x	Not Recommended

Notes

- ^A Coffee may have been stored/*kovush* in non-kosher pitcher for more than 24 hours; although coffee is permitted *b'dieved*, the cRc recommends purchasing items which are free of *shailos*.
- ^B Have espresso made in a disposable cup, instead of into a reusable shot glass.
- ^C Metal steaming cup may have been washed with other non-kosher items. Beverage is okay if Barista agrees to merely heat it to 115° F or less.
- ^D Cream is purchased regionally and must be checked for kosher certification.
- ^E Check specific flavor for kosher certification.
- ^F Bases are not kosher certified.
- ^G Plastic pitcher used to hot brew the (double-strength) coffee or tea may have been washed with other non-kosher items. Iced-coffee made with espresso shots is acceptable.
- ^H Brew basket may have been washed with non-kosher items. Although the brew basket is only used as a *kli sheni*, the cRc recommends purchasing items which are free of all *shailos*.
- ^J Whisk may have been washed with non-kosher items; beverage is okay if Barista uses disposable stick instead of whisk.
- ^K Caramel sauce is not certified (caramel syrup is certified kosher).
- ^L Ask the barista to remove the "shot-divider" from the Masterna machine's pour spout before brewing the espresso portion of this beverage.