

## Is it liqueur? Is it coffee? It's liqueur coffee!

Can't make up your mind whether to have a cup of coffee or a shot of liqueur after dinner? Well, you can have both at one go - in the form of liqueur coffee, that is fast gaining in popularity.

Pour some caramel sauce in a glass, add one espresso shot and half a cup of hot water. Now add 30 ml Irish whisky and top it up with loads of creme and your Golden Irish coffee is ready.

Golden Irish coffee is a liqueur coffee and in India its availability is restricted only to five-star hotels or some bars. A liqueur coffee is a coffee drink with a shot of liqueur that is topped with creme and served both hot and cold.

Italian coffee chain Lavazza has launched liqueur coffees in its cafe outlets Barista.

'People are bored of drinking regular cold and hot coffees, they needed a refreshing change and liqueur coffees are just for that. We have always pioneered in innovations and understanding our customers. Through our R and amp;D we constantly try to understand our customers and our study showed that they wanted change in the menu,' Barista Coffee Company chief operating officer Sanjay Coutinho told IANS.

'We have always tried to excel and move ahead of our contemporaries. Earlier, the idea of having a liqueur coffee was only restricted to five-star coffee shops but now one can have it in a regular coffee shop,' he added.

At present, the liqueur coffee will be available in Barista's Defence Colony outlet only as getting a licence to serve liqueur is 'very difficult'.

'You need L-4 licence to serve liqueur and it is very difficult to get one because there are many protocols associated with it. Like you can't have a liqueur shop near institutional areas, religious places, hospitals,' Coutinho explained.

'Hence right now we are offering these coffees only in one outlet and we will offer these coffees in other cities as well depending on the feedback. Also, we have applied for licence in other cities which will take some time,' he added.

While Barista is the first coffee chain to serve liqueur coffee, Cafe Mocha was the first to introduce the idea of liqueur coffee in a coffee shop. They don't use the liqueur, but a replica instead.

'We don't use liqueur in these coffees, we use flavours that have been designed by our in-house chefs. We don't have licence to serve liqueur in our coffee shops but in our Mocha bars, we serve liqueur coffees,' said Deepali Gupta, brand manager of Impresario Entertainment and Hospitality Pvt Ltd that has brands like Mocha and Smoke House Grill under its umbrella.

'We have got that special whisky developed that serves the base of our liqueur coffees and they are very popular among coffee lovers,' she added.

Ankush Singh, 20, wants to try these liqueur coffees but is not sure whether he would be allowed to drink as the minimum age for consumption of liquor is 25.

Commenting on this, Coutinho said that the coffee shops would adhere to the protocols by asking for identity cards where they have doubts about the age of the customer.

'Well, it would be tough to ask each and every customer for their identification cards but, yes, wherever we have doubts, we would ask for their I-cards,' Coutinho maintained.

The quantity of liqueur in these coffees is restricted to 30-60 ml as they don't want their customers to get drunk.

'We normally use 30 ml liqueur for hot coffees and 60 ml for cold coffees. We don't want to cross that 60 ml limit because we don't want coffee lovers to get drunk,' Barista's brew master Atul Sudharm told IANS.

Adding to this, Coutinho said that for liqueur coffees one has to develop a taste.

'As we all know that one needs to acquire taste for liqueur, the same goes for liqueur coffees - you need to cultivate the taste. So I can assure you that a person can't drink more than two at a time,' explained Coutinho.

These liqueur coffees are priced between Rs.199-399.

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