



# Chicago Rabbinical Council Guide to Starbucks Beverages

July 2023 / אב תשפ"ג

Starbucks shops 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 cleanup 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 Reiss שליט"א, *Av 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*. He noted that this is especially true because there are viable alternatives in every Starbucks store.

One significant change in recent years is that almost all Starbucks stores – even smaller kiosks – serve hot non-kosher sandwiches and wash all utensils in shared sinks (and some also share sinks or dishwashers with nearby non-kosher stores). Accordingly, certain differences which used to apply to kiosks are no longer relevant.

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 following list is accurate at this time for stores in the United States and Canada, and since the information is subject to change **this list should not be used after July 31, 2024**. [The list is limited to beverages and does not address foods sold in Starbucks, or toppings and other items added to beverages.] It is also worth noting that many items sold at Starbucks are dairy and *chalav stam*, and that many of the “flavors” are now certified as “DE” (dairy equipment).

Drink	Recommendation
Almond Milk	✘ <sup>E</sup>
Americano (hot)	✓
Apple juice (steamed)	✘ <sup>C</sup>
Bottled beverages When bearing KD; Dairy	✓
Caramel Macchiato	✘ <sup>K</sup>
Coconut Milk	E
Coffee, brewed	J
Coffee, cold brew (includes Nitro)	A
Cream	D
Espresso	✓
Espresso Macchiato	✘ <sup>B, C</sup>
Flavor syrups	E
Frappuccino	✘ <sup>G</sup>
Hot chocolate	✘ <sup>G</sup>
Iced Americano	✓

Drink	Recommendation
Iced coffee	✘ <sup>H</sup>
Iced latte	✓ <sup>F</sup>
Iced shaken espresso	F
Iced tea	✘ <sup>E, H</sup>
Iced white mocha	✘ <sup>K</sup>
Latte/cappuccino	✘ <sup>C</sup>
Lemonade	✘ <sup>G</sup>
Milk, cold	✓
Milk, steamed	✘ <sup>C</sup>
Nitro Coffee	A
Oleato	L
Refreshers	✘ <sup>G</sup>
Soy Milk	E
Tea (hot)	E

**Key**

✓ Recommended

✘ Not Recommended

## Notes

- <sup>A</sup> 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*.
- <sup>B</sup> Confirm with Barista that the espresso portion of this beverage is prepared directly into a disposable cup, instead of a reusable shot glass.
- <sup>C</sup> Metal steaming cup may have been washed with other non-kosher items. Beverage is okay if Barista agrees to manually limit heat to 115° F or less.
- <sup>D</sup> Cream is purchased regionally and must be checked for kosher certification.
- <sup>E</sup> Check specific variety for kosher certification.
- <sup>F</sup> Check milk substitute and/or syrup for kosher certification.
- <sup>G</sup> Bases are not kosher certified.

- <sup>H</sup> 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.
- <sup>J</sup> Brew basket may have been washed with non-kosher items. Although the brew basket is only used as a *kli sheini*, the cRc recommends purchasing items which are free of all *shailos*.
- <sup>K</sup> Sauces used in these products are not certified.
- <sup>L</sup> Extra virgin olive oil is acceptable without certification. Different varieties of this beverage contain cold brew coffee, espresso, latte, oat milk, steaming, and/or (toffenu) flavor; the status of each of those are given elsewhere in the chart.