

## FOOD AND DRINK

## Black Gold



There's a coffee shop on every corner. But **who really pours the best cup o' joe?** We sent a dining critic with a mild coffee addiction to sample the regular daily brew from each of the city's most prolific purveyors. **BY MIRIAM GOTTFRIED**



**Metropolis Coffee Company** Samba blend, **\$1.50** **Description:** Nutty, with a hint of peppermint on the nose. Low in acid, lively flavor of rosewater and fresh herbs. **Verdict:** Complex enough to win over even the pickiest of customers.



**Caribou Coffee** Guatemala roast, **\$1.50** **Description:** Hazelnut aroma. Light, with a flinty, mineral texture and a hint of orange. Flat finish. **Verdict:** The coffee is nothing special, but the lines are shorter than Starbucks'.



**Julius Meinl** Vienna house blend, **\$1.50** **Description:** Caramel on the nose and a thin, slightly sweet milk chocolate flavor. Very little finish, but fills out with cream. **Verdict:** If it's good coffee you seek, go with the espresso.



**Starbucks** Yukon roast, **\$1.50** **Description:** Cinnamon aroma, maple and blackened salmon on the palate, moderate acidity. **Verdict:** Your cash would be better spent elsewhere, but try telling that to office drones who queue up for their daily fix.



**Dunkin' Donuts** Original blend, **\$1.24** **Description:** Weakly brewed. Mulled cider on the nose. Flavor of sugar and nutmeg with little acidity. A smooth finish. **Verdict:** Barely decent enough to wash down a freshly baked cruller.



**Café Descartes** Dark roast, **\$1.35** **Description:** Scent of burnt sugar. Light and slightly sweet, with cinnamon and orange flavors. Low in acid. **Verdict:** Handily trumps the national chains'.



**Intelligentsia** La Perla de Oaxaca, **\$1.50** **Description:** Aromas of melon and pear. Medium-bodied and complex with flavors of milk chocolate, nuts, and apples. **Verdict:** This enlightened and interesting brew offers pure pleasure to those who take coffee seriously.



**Lavazza** Granfiltro house blend, **\$1.50** **Description:** Full-bodied and strongly brewed. Aroma of dark chocolate and orange. Gingersnaps and toasted walnuts on the palate. **Verdict:** An international chain with top-tier coffee—who'd have thought it possible?



**McDonald's** Premium roast, **\$1.10** **Description:** Hazelnut and floral on the nose. Very weakly brewed; tastes like watery soil. **Verdict:** Too much water and time spent lingering in the pot keep this cup from achieving its "premium" potential.