



Marco Herrmann of Swica Importers with his Swiss-made Nespresso machine.

PETER BATTISTONI/VANCOUVER SUN

■ IN GOOD SPIRITS

Swiss-made coffee machine brews perfect cup in seconds

BY KATE ZIMMERMAN

What's the coffee equivalent of Hollywood North — Coffeeworld North? Seattle may be the American city best known for its java junkies, but in Canada, Vancouver's thirst for quality joe is known to be unshakable.

Who knew we had rivals for our passion in Switzerland? Transplanted Swiss native Marco Herrmann, who distributes a coffee-making system here called Nespresso Professional, reports that Switzerland rivals Italy in the manufacture of espresso makers. And, he says, "The Swiss drink a lot of coffee."

Back home, the customary drink is long espressos, says Herrmann. (A long espresso means using the same amount of coffee as in a regular espresso, just more water.)

He himself slurps down three to four cups a day of "Espresso Forte," a pure Arabica blend from Central and South American harvests, made in the Nespresso Professional.

It, apparently, is an idiot-proof machine where all you have to do is fill a chamber with water, then insert a prefabricated capsule containing ground beans. The capsule gets punctured by the machine, then discarded. The brewing takes about 20 seconds, delivering what Herrmann describes as "consistently high quality authentic espresso each time."

The machines (which are \$399 to

\$799) must be ordered from him at Swica Importers; the coffee capsules are shipped to customers from Ontario.

There are six types of coffee sold in the capsules, grown in Africa, Asia and South America but roasted and packaged in, you guessed it, Switzerland. The capsules, which come in packages of 50 per blend, are about 65 cents each.

The Nespresso concept has been around for 15 years but is catching on here in offices, small restaurants and hotels. "It's very simple, hassle-free," Herrmann says.

But, as we all know, there are many ways to swing a cuppa caff. No matter whether it's percolated, drip, French press or instant, as the weather heats up, many fans like to use coffee to chill down. Iced caffeine is not as popular in Europe as it is here, Herrmann says. There, no matter what the temperature, one of the most popular after-dinner coffee drinks combines two shots of strong, hot espresso with one shot of grappa. That's called an espresso "corretto," which means "corrected."

The morning after a few such corrections, the hung over may be interested in the following chilled recipe provided by Herrmann. It offers a soupçon of healthy citrus to get your day going, and no naughty alcohol whatsoever.

Please send your tips about unusual nightspots and intriguing potables to me at katezimm80@hotmail.com.

■ ICED COFFEE WITH ORANGE JUICE

- 1 capsule Nespresso's Cafe Forte, or 1 oz espresso
- 1 tsp. white sugar
- 1 tbsp. cold orange juice
- 5 ice cubes, three of them crushed

Prepare your coffee in the usual fashion and pour it into a large cup. Add the sugar and stir well. Pour the sugared coffee into a cocktail shaker along with the orange juice and three crushed ice cubes. Shake the mixture vigorously. Serve in a chilled glass with two more ice cubes.

■ CAMERON'S COW

Gotham Cocktail Bar's Cameron Shearer has a coffee mocktail he recommends. He didn't name it, so we did.

- ½ a banana
- 1 shot espresso, cooled
- 1 to 1½ ounces coconut syrup
- Milk or cream to taste
- Ice

Put ingredients in a blender and blend. Serve garnished with a slice of banana.

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