

# The Most Popular Beverages Indeed

by Thei Zervaki

"It used to be common for restaurants to offer two or three dessert wines by the bottle, but now restaurants are offering four to six by the glass."

He adds that chefs are trying more herbs and spices with their desserts to help complement wines, and guests are taking their dessert pairings almost as seriously as they are the entrée pairings.

"And they are requesting exactly what they want, whether it is an iced wine, a Sauternes or a tawny port."

## Coffees

As any true java-loving consumer will tell you, not all coffee is the same. Many experts are pointing to a rising demand for strong, dark coffees. There's also a movement toward offering organic as well as free-trade coffees. Don't overlook sweet or flavored coffees; many consumers will like to end their meals with liquid treats, too.

To read more about the *What's Hot in 2010* chef survey by the National Restaurant Association, visit [www.restaurant.org/research/whats\\_hot2010.pdf](http://www.restaurant.org/research/whats_hot2010.pdf).

Coffee is one of the most popular beverages in the world, but according to the experts in the industry, tea is the second largest category of consumed drinks after water.

What are the trends in coffee shops? Jonathan Rubinstein, founder of Joe ([www.joeneويورك.com](http://www.joeneويورك.com)), an independent and very popular coffee chain in New York (currently with five shops), shares the following:

- One is doing more coffee brewed by the cup than the large batch. This includes using the brewers Chemex and Clovers, which Joe introduced about a year and a half ago.
- Many quality-driven shops have started pushing smaller sized milk-based drinks, where the ratio of coffee to milk is higher. Most have done away with beverages over 12 ounces.
- Many coffee bars are giving more information about the beans they sell: who the farmers are, at what altitude the beans are grown, how it is processed and an expanded explanation of flavor notes.

Rubinstein's advice and suggestions are excellent if you plan to start your own coffee shop or coffee business, but what about hotels and restaurants? How can they improve their coffee servings?

Rubinstein suggests that hotels and restaurants can improve by looking at coffee quality in the same way as coffee bars: investing in excellent equipment, training their baristas well and working to include some of the trends listed above.

David Latourell from Intelligensia Coffee ([www.intelligensiacoffee.com](http://www.intelligensiacoffee.com)), a one-stop shop that buys, roasts and sells coffee and offers lab training classes for wannabe baristas, pre-

dicts the emerging practice of direct-sourcing, which goes against the traditional commodity-sourcing. In other words, coffee buyers work directly with the coffee growers and source coffee via extensive travel. In this way, the producers get the maximum returns for their work, and buyers buy, roast and distribute quality coffee beans. Another trend, Latourell says, is the individual brewed cup. He agrees with Rubinstein: brew your own cup is one of the trends in the coffee business.

Miriam Novalle, founder and CEO of the T Salon and T Emporium ([www.tsalon.com](http://www.tsalon.com)), a tea importing company and tea salon, says that "tea is the second most popular beverage in the world, after water." That explains the increasing popularity of tea drinks, tea-based and infused cocktails and even tea-infused cookies.

Trends in tea drinking include anything related to well-being and slimming. In other words, teas with slimming qualities together with teas that relax and empower are becoming very popular, particularly in hotels. Hotels now customize their tea-serving based on their customers' needs. If a client steps in and is jet-lagged, he or she will be served a tea to help alleviate that condition, says Novalle. If, on the other hand, a customer needs more energy to perform in a business meeting, he or she will be offered a different tea to match that situation.

Novalle also sees a high consumption of tea in bars, with innovative and fun cocktails being created by mixologists.

"We work together with some well-known mixologists to create tea cocktails and tea drinks that will change the bar scene," says Novalle.

Is this another trend? Yes, indeed. Just have a look at the liquor store and see what tea and liquor blends they have to offer you.

