

For most of us, getting a Starbucks coffee means going to the coffee shop or having one delivered. However, you can actually make your own cup of Starbucks coffee at home.

One way is to use the Starbucks Premium instant coffee. The idea is to only mix the instant coffee with hot water, and you will get the same great taste from your local Starbucks. However, how good does it taste? Let's find out in this review.

I'll taste the drink for you in this post, including a wide range of flavorings. I will then conclude with how you can best enjoy the drink and who is this instant coffee for.

What Is The Starbucks Dark Roast Premium Instant Coffee?

Starbucks does carry a range of instant coffees under its [Starbucks Instant](#) line. These include freeze-dried versions of their popular roasts, such as Pike Place, French roast, or Colombian roast.

The main star of the lineup, however, is the premium instant coffees. The premium instant coffee is the same as Starbucks Via. The only difference? The Via comes in smaller, single-size packets.

There are three choices in the premium instant coffees - the Blonde Roast, the Medium Roast, and the [Dark Roast](#). In this post, we will be looking at the Dark Roast version.



I purchased a fresh can of Starbucks Dark Roast Premium Instant Coffee for this review.

From the packaging, I can see that instant coffee uses 100% Arabica beans. These beans are also ethically and sustainably sourced. The [Starbucks Dark Roast Premium instant coffee](#) is also a blend of 98% instant coffee and 2% finely ground coffee beans.

This differs from Lavazza's Prontissimo Intenso blend, which uses a 90:10 instant coffee-to-ground ratio. With this one, I can predict a smoother coffee with less sediment.

The can does look premium, with the can and the lid all made of aluminum. I popped open the lid, and a thin layer of foil kept the instant coffee fresh. Pull the tab, and you should see the insides.

Instead of granules common with most instant coffees, you get fine powder instead. The fineness of the powder reminds me of Turkish coffee grinds.

When I pulled the tab, I did not notice any aroma coming out. Instead, I must bring my nose to the can to smell the instant coffee. This instant coffee has a strong earthy aroma; it reminds me of roots and herbs.

Starbucks does print out clear instructions on how to make your coffee. Combine about 6 oz (180ml) of hot water with a teaspoon of instant coffee. Note that it is hot water, not boiling water. The perfect temperature here is 185°F (85°C).



What you get is a dark brown concoction that smells great. When I hold the coffee up against the light, I do not see much sediment or particles. This may be because there's only 2% ground coffee inside. Everything else simply melts into the hot water.

It has a stronger, more fragrant aroma than the [Lavazza Prontissimo Intenso](#). Aside from the typical coffee smell, I could detect the aroma of tobacco leaves. It smelled a bit like fresh, unlit cigarettes.

How Does Starbucks Dark Roast Premium Instant Coffee Taste?

Flavoring	Taste
Black	• Mild woody and smoky taste. • Mild earthy bitterness, some bittersweet taste.
With Sugar	• Less smoke and woody taste. • Enhanced the bittersweet taste. • Silkier, and more pleasant to sip.

With Sweetener	• Less smoke and woody taste. • Bittersweet taste becomes more obvious at the finish.
With Low-Fat Milk	• Coffee becomes silkier and thicker. • Less smoke and woody taste. • Loses bitterness and becomes creamier and sweeter.
With Creamer	• Coffee becomes silkier and thicker. • Less smoke and woody taste. • Loses bitterness and becomes creamier, with mild sweet aftertaste
Iced	• Stronger, but manageable bitterness and earthiness • Loses the bittersweet flavor



Black

When I bring the coffee to my nose, I notice a woody, tobacco-like smell. I was surprised by how mild the coffee tasted when I sipped some into my mouth.

The coffee has some smoke, wood, and earthiness, but it does not overpower your senses. This is unlike the many dark roasts I used to drink. I would have passed this as a medium roast coffee in blind tests.

The earthiness is also not too strong, to the point of making the coffee taste like dirt. This is, unfortunately, an issue with many low-quality instant coffee.

I pick up some bittersweet flavor as I continue to sip a few more. It tasted like very dark chocolate, with mild sweetness after a hit of bitterness up front.

The coffee is not sour, implying it is not very acidic. This may make sense since this is a dark roast. This is a comfortable coffee that you can sip on lazy weekend mornings or have afternoon conversations in the kitchen.

With Sugar

I made another fresh cup of coffee, and this time, I slipped in some white sugar. I dislike sugar in my coffee, but I notice that the sugar alters the aroma and flavor of the coffee.

There is less wood and smoke in the coffee's aroma and taste. The bittersweet flavor seems to be enhanced, with the sweetness becoming stronger.

The sugar also makes the coffee silkier and slightly more viscous, which makes it more inviting to sip and enjoy.



With Sweetener

I made a new cup of coffee, and this time, I slipped in two drops of [Equal artificial sweetener](#). Equal is basically Aspartame, which should sweeten the coffee differently than sugar.

I immediately noticed the bittersweet flavor becoming stronger. However, I can taste the flavor stronger towards the finish. The sweetness seems to come later after I sip the coffee. After I swallowed the coffee, my tongue seemed to retain the sweet taste longer too.

With Low-Fat Milk

With another fresh cup of coffee, I added a 30ml shot of low-fat, UHT (Ultra High Temperature) cow milk this time. Immediately, the milk made the coffee taste very different.

My first taste after I sip the coffee is smooth, creamy fat. Only then do the mild bitterness and earthiness appear. The coffee flavor definitely gets diluted. The milk also thickens the coffee slightly, making it silkier and smoother.

The lactose in the milk added some sweetness to the coffee, enhancing the bittersweet flavor.

With Creamer

For creamer, I used the [Coffeemate coffee creamer](#). I used the powdered version of the creamer, but they should taste the same as the liquid ones.

The creamer altered the taste of the coffee similarly to milk, with slight differences. I noticed that the coffee creamer's sweetness is more subtle than this. I suppose this is because creamers do not have lactose.

The bittersweet taste is about the same as if you drink the coffee black, only slightly elevated.



Iced

I was a little concerned that the iced version of this coffee would be as overpowering as the [Lavazza Prontissimo Intenso](#). I was however, happy to be proven wrong.

The ice certainly made the bitterness and earthiness of the coffee stronger. However, it does not overpower my palate and certainly does not taste like burnt espresso. The sweetness is more muted compared to if you drink it hot.

Starbucks Dark Roast Premium Instant vs Regular Coffee

I personally think the Starbucks Dark Roast Premium Instant Coffee could give any regular gas station or fast food coffee a fight.

It has more depth in taste and flavor than your regular instant coffee, such as Folgers or Maxwell House.

Against regular gas station coffee, it should also hold its ground. I particularly enjoy this coffee's dark chocolate-like bittersweet flavor, and I don't think many regular coffee can compete with that.

Some regular coffee may be too earthy compared to the Starbucks Dark Roast Premium Instant Coffee.

Who Is Starbucks Dark Roast Premium Instant Coffee For?

Starbucks made this Dark Roast Premium Instant Coffee as a way to allow you to brew your own cup of Starbucks at home. In this area, I think they did the job well.

The instant coffee tastes premium and is very inviting to sip. Personally, I think this coffee tastes best black, without flavorings. My tongue prefers the hot version.

However, it cannot compare against a properly brewed cup of Americano from your barista. Instant coffee lacks aroma and depth of flavor.

As a result, I think the Starbucks Dark Roast Premium Instant Coffee is good for those wanting quick and easy access to their Starbucks coffee. On top of that, you also are comfortable trading away some depth in flavor and aroma.

Despite being a dark roast, this is surprisingly an easy-to-sip coffee. I can easily imagine this being your lazy weekend morning coffee or an afternoon cup you enjoy with chocolate chip cookies.

That's exactly what I did too. After writing this post, I made a cup of this instant coffee, added some ice, and enjoyed it with some cheeky cookies 😊



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