

PRESS RELEASE
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COSTA CROWNS BEST BARISTA IN THE BUSINESS

Costa Coffee has completed this year's search for the finest global barista as a Dorking contestant stole the crown beating the nine other finalists at the Global Final of Costa's Barista of the Year Competition.

Held at Costa's London Roastery on 21st October, Gabor Kamondi, who works the Costa store in Dorking, convinced the panel of industry expert judges, which included Gennaro Pelliccia, Costa Roastery Technical Manager, and Charles Metcalf, Wine expert and TV presenter, that he is the cream of the coffee crop. The 10 outstanding finalists had battled through demanding country and regional heats to earn the chance to lay claim to the prestigious title which celebrates Costa's supremacy in the art of making fantastic coffee and become the Barista of the Year for 2009.

The finalists came from as far afield as China, India and the Middle East as well as Europe and six from the UK.

During the competition, the baristas are tested on skills such as their ability to produce a technically impeccable cup of handmade coffee and their knowledge and understanding of the industry. They are also judged on their overall performance, flair and passion for great coffee and in the final round of the competition contestants are tasked with creating their own unique signature drink which is judged on its taste, presentation and innovation.

Gabor built a rapport with the audience, judges and made drinks with flair and confidence. Along with his signature drink, Pick Mint, which is a blend of Costa's signature espresso with mint, inspired by his love of After Eights, his skill and passion earned him the first prize of a week's holiday for two – including spending money – to a country with a coffee growing region, as well as a custom-made winner uniform shirt to proudly wear in store and the all-important Barista of the Year Trophy.

Gabor commented, "I am absolutely delighted to have won. To be awarded for my Barista skills and to win such a prestigious competition is amazing for me. Coffee is not only my profession but also my

passion, and to be presented with this award, by leading coffee industry judges, partly due to my own unique speciality drink, is overwhelming.”

This year’s runners up were Jonathan Scott from Carlisle in second place, with third place going to Elia Burbello from Cork, Ireland.

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For more information about Costa’s Barista of the Year competition, please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

About Costa:

Costa was founded by Italian brothers Sergio and Bruno Costa in 1971.

Costa Coffee was the first UK coffee shop chain to commit sourcing beans from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms.

Costa’s in-store baristas are all coached in the art of coffee making at the company’s unique Costa Coffee Academy based at its own roastery in Lambeth, London.

The Costa Foundation was set up in 2006 to give something back to the communities within the countries from which Costa sources its coffee beans. The Costa Foundation works with an independent charity partner, Charities Trust, and is operating under the auspices of Charities Trust’s registered charity number 327489.

Costa is part of the Whitbread family of brands.

For more information, please go to www.costa.co.uk