



PRESS RELEASE

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## World's most valuable tongue insured for £10 million

Gennaro Pelliccia, the man responsible for the taste of the 108 million cups of Costa Coffee enjoyed in Britain and around the world each year, has had his tongue insured by the company for £10 million at Lloyd's of London.

Costa has taken the exceptional step of insuring arguably the world's most valuable tongue because of new research, published today, that undisputedly proves that Costa serves the nation's preferred cappuccino in head-to-head comparison tests with rivals Starbucks and Nero.

The research proved Costa had a record margin of victory, with 7 out of 10 coffee lovers preferring its cappuccino.

The average tongue has approximately 10,000 taste buds which means Costa has in effect insured each of Pelliccia's taste buds for £1,000.

Pelliccia, Costa's Italian Master of Coffee, personally tastes every single batch of raw coffee beans at the company's roastery in Lambeth, London, before they are roasted and shipped to its stores.

Speaking for the first time about the huge insurance policy that has been taken out on his tongue, Pelliccia said:

"In my profession, my tastebuds and sensory skills are crucial. My 18 years of experience enable me to distinguish between thousands of flavours. My tastebuds also allow me to distinguish any defects, which enable me to protect and guarantee Costa's unique Mocha Italia blend."

John Derkach, Managing Director of Costa Coffee, said: "Gennaro is responsible for making sure that we maintain the highest quality of coffee. His ability to determine what tastes best enables us to serve great tasting, superior quality coffee, and we've taken out the £10 million insurance policy to protect such a vital element of the business."

Coverage was placed through Lloyd's Broker Glencairn Limited with certain Underwriters at Lloyd's of London.

A spokesman for Glencairn said:

"The tastebuds of a Master of Coffee are as important as the vocal chords of a singer or the legs of a top model, and this is one of the biggest single insurance policies taken out for one person. It shows how valuable Gennaro's tongue is to the Costa brand and everything it stands for."

**ENDS**

**CONTACTS:**

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**Notes to editors:**

The results for the coffee comparison tests astounded Sean Chamberlain, MD of Tangible Branding. He commented: "Costa is the most successful winning product of any direct product test we have ever run across like for like food and drink products. We have never seen such a substantial win."

TANGIBLE BRANDING LIMITED is a consumer-centered marketing consultancy that enables brand owners to realise top-line business / brand growth in increasingly complex and competitive markets. Tangible has offices & research facilities based in Windsor, Sheffield and Birmingham.

Tangible has experience of product testing including the following markets:

Soft drinks - Colas and Lemonades  
Chocolate  
Fruit yogurts  
Buttery spreads  
Butter  
Milk shakes  
Mature cheddar cheese  
Bread

(N.B. results of other companies' testing will not be divulged)

**Guide to the Testing**

At the venue, unbranded sleeves were placed over the cups and lids were removed to ensure all products were blind tested. The only marking on each cup was a code letter (J,K,L) to indicate which product was being tasted 1<sup>st</sup> / 2<sup>nd</sup>. The order of tasting was rotated across all sessions.

Respondents were informed that they would be asked to taste two cappuccinos (either Costa vs. Nero or Costa vs. Starbucks) and that they could drink as much of the product as they wished (as opposed to a sip test). The first cappuccino would then be presented to each respondent.

Once appearance and smell had been rated, respondents were allowed to add sugar to taste, if desired. Respondents answered questions based on the tasting attributes, and upon completing the questions relating to the first cappuccino, the second cappuccino was then presented. The same questions were then asked of this product.

They were then asked to identify which they preferred.

Number of respondents = 334 across three locations, the required number to ensure scientific accuracy.

**About Costa:**

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

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.

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

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.