

The power of the bean in the sign of the times – that was the 9th Vienna Coffee Festival

Last weekend, almost 9,000 visitors went on a fascinating journey of discovery through the world of coffee: The 9th Vienna Coffee Festival in Vienna's Marxhalle was all about sustainability. With Lukas Stoelner the SCA also crowned a new state champion in coffee roasting.

VIENNA. Despite summer temperatures, around 9,000 visitors flocked to Vienna's Marxhalle over the weekend to find out about the latest trends surrounding the bean over three days at the 9th Vienna Coffee Festival. Around 100 exhibitors from a wide range of areas provided insights into the most diverse forms of coffee enjoyment - from roasting and latte art to equipment and accessories for the home barista.

Core topic of sustainability

The main theme of the festival this year was “Environmental Social Governance” (ESG). The Italian company “Sweet Coffee Italia” presented its new, induction-operated roasting machine “Gemma” for the industry and private use, which promises an energy reduction of around 60%. The M200 from Cimbali also celebrated a premiere, in which “more than 93% of the materials used are recyclable,” as Günter Stoelner, Managing Director of Gruppo Cimbali Austria, reveals.

With “Helmut Sachers Kaffee”, an Austrian company was also at the start this year, which has been operating as the first CO₂-neutral coffee roasting company in Europe since 2022. Owner Hannes Schlögl: “We only use renewable energy for our production, the exhaust air is cleaned using biofilters without additional energy consumption. In addition, we deliver our products directly to the customer using an electric vehicle fleet.”

Diverse program

This was also the case with the transparent procurement of sustainable green coffee from the

Countries of origin, i.e. fresh, seasonal coffee varieties for the roasters, a separate discipline in the “Green Coffee Lab” curated by Oliver Goetz. Here, Europe's best green coffee retailers presented their specialty coffees in cupping sessions and provided detailed information about their business models and their commitment to sustainability. In the “Roaster Village”, curated by La Marzocco Austria, visitors were able to get to know the best micro-roasteries in Europe and learn the stories of the coffee farmers. A particularly sought-after conversation partner was the reigning world champion in coffee roasting, the Lower Austrian Felix Teiretzbacher.

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Future Talk: Where is the journey going?

Naturally, the topic of sustainability was also the focus of many of the informative and sometimes controversial talk sessions and lectures that took place at the festival. Christoph Wagner (COHO), who, as a sustainability expert, moderated the talks together with his brother Jörg: "Don't be perfect, get going, was the central message. Be it the topic of sustainable cultivation, efficient transport, CO2-neutral roasting, recyclable packaging and preparation with machines that are energy-efficient, water-saving, repairable and subsequently also recyclable." Whether the future of coffee means higher-priced plantation coffee or cheaper, new ones hybrid varieties will be contested, only the future will show. And keep an eye on the Vienna Coffee Festival.

Dancing & Drinking

Another highlight for festival visitors were the numerous musical acts in the Open Stage Arena, which was brought to life for the first time by ORF Radio Vienna. And all those who were looking for a variety of drinks during the course of a festival day were in good hands at the stand of Vienna's top winemaker Fritz Wieninger or Budweiser. Likewise with Amber Ambassador Reini Edinger, who served the best coffee cocktails with "Tia Maria", "Disaronno" and "Licor 43". "The components alcohol and coffee," says Edinger, "have a long tradition. It is important that the alcohol content is between 18 and 25% and that the drink is sweet."

Lukas Stoelner is the Austrian Champion in coffee roasting

As part of the Vienna Coffee Festival, the SCA (Specialty Coffee Association) also determined the state champion in coffee roasting 2023. The victory went to the Lower Austrian Lukas Stoelner (DeLuks Kaffee, Krems), second place went to Dominik Bruno Pausch (Koun) ahead of Michael Prem (prem fresh coffee).

Michael Manhart, chairman of SCA Austria: "We congratulate all participants and look forward to Lukas Stoelner representing Austria at the World Championships." The 32-year-old, who has been running the Kaffee Campus Krems for seven years now, was visibly touched by the award, thanked his family for their support and will be taking part in the World Roasting Championships in Taipei/Taiwan in November. Immediately after the award ceremony, it was clear to him what he had to do until then: "Practice, practice, practice!"

Further informations: www.viennacoffeefestival.cc

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