



hot tips on coffee bean storage

- Coffee retains its flavour and freshness best when stored in a dark cupboard (not the refrigerator).
- Avoid exposing beans to humid conditions, other strong smells and sunlight.
- Coffee beans should ideally be used within 10 days.
- Better to buy small quantities often.

how to make great coffee:

- Knowledge of roasting and the quality of coffee helps.
- Good coffee is not just about the crema, it's about the flavour as well.
- Cleanliness is golden. The milk wand should be wiped clean with a rinsed cloth after every single use. That's certainly the case at St Ali.
- Don't use reheated milk. Toshi suggests heating enough for either a single coffee and up to maximum of three coffees.
- Fresh roasted coffee. If for espresso, grind as required.

Source Toshiyuki Isiwata Coffee Maker, St Ali.



caffeine hit

Meet Toshiyuki Isiwata, the coffee maker at St Ali Specialty Coffee Café in South Melbourne

Words Marg Hearn | Photography Andrew Lecky

Toshiyuki Isiwata prefers to be known as a coffee maker rather than a barista because it reflects the larger scope of his role at St Ali Specialty Coffee Café in South Melbourne.

"In Italy barista means bar tender, whereas in Japan barista can refer to everything from ordering the green beans, roasting to making the coffee," he says.

For Toshi, who has worked at St Ali for the three years since the café opened (short of one month), a typical week involves roasting coffee beans two to three days and making coffee on

the espresso machine for another two to three days. On an average day of roasting, Toshi roasts 140kg of coffee beans.

The coffee making role on the machine at St Ali operates as a slick partnership between two coffee makers who together serve up to 400 to 600 coffees on a given day. The coffee makers take turns at grinding, dosing and packing (tamping) the coffee into the group head, while the other makes the coffee and pours.

Thankfully Toshi likes coffee as not unlike a wine taster, part of the job is the need to sample

up to 15 brews a day. Toshi works with coffee from 30 different origins. His favourite coffee depends on how the coffee is made. If it's from a plunger, Kenyan is his preference. "I like its strong character and aroma — very fruity, almost like a black currant," the coffee enthusiast says.

During roasting, traditional cup tasting takes place to get to know the flavours and to create new blends. Toshi has undertaken specialist training courses in America at SCAA, and SCAJ in Japan. "There's always something new and exciting to learn about coffee," he says.

Down a discreet cobbled laneway off Coventry Street in South Melbourne is a refurbished warehouse. You won't see bold signage — word of mouth has built a strong following. St Ali is open seven days a week for breakfast, lunch or coffee. Beans are available for purchase.

St Ali, 12-18 Yarra Place, South Melbourne
www.stali.com.au

custom made

Meet 'Custom Made' shoemaker Brendan Dwyer

Words Marg Hearn | Photography Andrew Lecky

Melbourne shoemaker Brendan Dwyer has been designing and creating bespoke shoes for 20 years. He says there's a niche market for hand-made shoes and of the 150 to 200 pairs he crafts each year, 50 per cent of that demand stems from people in search of beautiful and interesting shoes. The balance of requests come from folk who find it difficult to work with existing footwear on the market. They may have special requirements or are looking for a particular style that's not in keeping with current fashion.

Brendan's pathway into shoes was a natural progression from an initial involvement in fashion, where he had an interest in accessories, clothing and hats before eventually settling on shoes.

Building a year-round steady stream of commissions has flowed on from the "tenacity of staying in the business and getting good at it. Anything that you make — if it's good, people will come," he says.

While Brendan defines his personal fashion sense as casual street wear, and he can make that style of shoe, he relishes the opportunity to mastermind unique designs.

Typically he would make an average of two to three pairs of shoes each week depending on the complexity of the shoe, "but if the shoe is particularly interesting, I get into it and make it happen. I always say to customers I have to be able to see the whole thing in my head. The way I work there's not that much opportunity to make decisions further down the line. You have to make them all before you start the ball rolling; you have to connect to what you're going to make.

"The downside of what I do is that it is eminently practical and so people sometimes come to me often for eminently practical shoes. But I do need to keep my creative side inspired otherwise it's just a job." For highly individual requests it's ideal for customers to allow the

shoemaker a passage of time "for the creative idea to develop — the idea that I'm making for that individual, to finalise a design enough for that creative side to be satisfied".

But there is no shoe that Brendan is uninspired to make. "All shoes are interesting to me," he says.

The shoemaker makes shoes for all walks of life, from straight classic-looking business shoes to footwear for movie stars and everything in between.

A couple of recent commissions included monkey boots for the flying monkeys in *Wicked* and acrobat flippers for performers in Circus Oz.

The smallest shoe size request in terms of traditional English sizing has been 3.5, the largest so far was size 15.

Brendan Dwyer Shoemaker, Room 7, 3rd floor, Nicholas Building, cnr Swanston St and Flinders Lane, Melbourne. Tel: 0411 676 572



wind maker

Introducing 'City Shaper' — wind energy developer Frank Boland, Babcock & Brown

Words Marg Hearn | Photography Andrew Lecky

There's a lot more to designing wind farms than tossing a few blades of grass into the air to see which way the wind is blowing, says Frank Boland, wind energy developer, Babcock & Brown.

After completing a double degree in commerce/science at Deakin University, 23-year-old Frank chose a career in wind energy in pursuit of a fascination with renewable energy. "Of all the renewable energies I think wind is the best energy source in the current environment because the technology has been proven," he says.

Every day is different for a wind energy developer. Frank works as part of a team on activities ranging from landowner liaison,

turbine supplier negotiations, site prospecting, feasibility and environmental studies, grid connection research and planning applications. It can take between three and six years from conception to the realisation of a wind farm. Strong and consistent wind speed, proximity to the National Electricity Grid and suitable topography are the vital requirements with the highest wind regions normally on ridgelines and coastlines.

"Wind farms are drought tolerant and guaranteed income for farmers without having to hoe or shear sheep," Frank says.

An increasing acceptance of wind farming has paralleled public acknowledgment that climate change is a real threat.

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Wind energy fast facts

- ➔ Wind energy is one of the most cost-effective forms of renewable energy.
- ➔ Each megawatt hour of wind energy generated in Victoria currently avoids producing one tonne of greenhouse emissions on average.
- ➔ Victoria currently generates around one per cent of its electricity from wind.
- ➔ Modern wind turbines convert up to 50 per cent of the energy in the wind to electricity, compared to brown coal power stations, which have a 25 per cent conversion rate.

Clearing up a few wind farming furbies

- ➔ Animals can peacefully co-exist with wind farms. In fact, monitoring at a Victorian wind farm reported less than 1.2 common birds fall casualty per turbine per year.
- ➔ There have been no reports of decreased production from farms that have wind turbines. For the cows and sheep it's business as usual.
- ➔ Modern wind turbines are not noisy — you can hold a conversation at the base of an operating turbine without raising your voice.

Source Sustainability Victoria May 2007.