

## FAQ'S - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**All the things you wanted to know about coffee machines and after sales support - but did not know where to ask!**

**Q. All coffee vending machines are basically the same right, only the prices vary? And some are even free so they must provide the best option?**

**A. Not exactly all the same - if you are trying to determine the best machine for your needs you must compare apples with apples (and avoid the lemons).**

- "Free" or "Subsidised" machines are usually "bundled" with a deal that ties you into a contract where you are required to buy an agreed level of consumable product per month from the machine/product supplier, otherwise the machine may be charged for to make up the difference. Also the machine supplied may be an inferior make or model.
- With "bundled offers" you lose the flexibility to choose the product supplier of your choice, your local coffee roaster for example, who may sell a blend and other consumables (chocolate or milk powder) that you really like and are prepared to pay for. The extra cost per cup if any, would be a matter of a few cents.
- Some machines currently on the NZ market offer flavoured hot beverages that are often high in sugar and also saturated fats (read their website information very closely and ask the operators).
- Some of these flavours look quite exotic and appear to be quite cheap, but as with everything else, you only get what you pay for. These are NOT REAL COFFEE machines although some may try to give that impression.

**Genuine coffee machines come in a number of variations. The main distinction is whether or not the machine is a:**

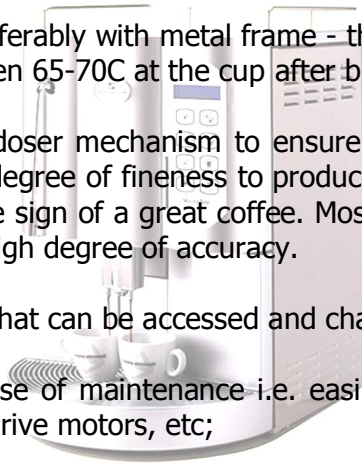
- Superautomatic Bean to Cup Espresso or Cappuccino - coffee beans freshly ground in the machine and brewed on demand in genuine espresso style; in vending machines made with high quality lo-fat skim milk powder added for the cappuccino or Caffè latte style beverages. These may also be fresh milk machines as increasingly found in small cafes, offices and upmarket car dealerships and suchlike. These are becoming very popular although they do require more care when cleaning due to the use of fresh milk.
- Automatic filter machines - where pre-ground coffee is dosed onto a continuous filter paper roll or fine mesh filter with hot water forced through to make a filter coffee. This is **NOT** "Espresso" however. As with bean-to-cup machines, milk powder is added for the "milky" coffees. As the pre-ground coffee will oxidise more quickly than whole beans the quantity of coffee in the hopper should be kept to a minimum.

- All soluble machines - where instant coffee is used, either high quality freeze dried coffee or granulated coffee mixed with hot water and dispensed with milk and/or other soluble products. These are a good alternative where the freshly ground bean option may not be justified on cost.
- "Pod" machines - a recent development has seen the introduction of these to the NZ market. They are compact and quick to use and the coffee "pods" or capsules have pre-ground coffee sealed inside, so retain their freshness somewhat longer. The downside is that they can only prepare one beverage at a time and "pod's" for one machine are often not able to be used in others, so a reliable supply of pods for your machine is a must.

**Q. So if I wanted a Fresh Bean to Cup machine, then those are all pretty much the same?**

**A. They are in the way they grind and brew the coffee but there are some important features in the better quality machines. The ones to look for should have:**

- Hardwearing, durable, damage resistant construction, preferably with a metal cabinet (usually with a powder coat finish) and rust resistant components.
- A heated brewing group preferably with metal frame - this ensures a hot coffee every time. The coffee should be between 65-70C at the cup after brewing and dispensing.
- An adjustable grinder and doser mechanism to ensure precise amounts of coffee can be freshly ground at the right degree of fineness to produce the best possible coffee with that beautiful golden crema - the sign of a great coffee. Most machines should be able to grind and dose 5-10 gms with a high degree of accuracy.
- User friendly programming that can be accessed and changed by the owner/site operator.
- Modular construction for ease of maintenance i.e. easily removed brewer unit, hot water module, electronic boards, drive motors, etc;
- For those with soluble powder ingredients (not fresh milk), at least three good sized soluble containers (many machines have quite small canisters and require refilling more often) and two mixing bowls to enable milk, chocolate and a third soluble powder to be used. The latter can be sugar (doing away with sachets), Milo, French Vanilla, Chai Latte or even soup for the colder winter months.



**Q. What about the operating costs to make a cup of coffee – the fresh beans and other ingredient costs? Can your machine produce coffees for \$0.09 as some claim?**

**A. It is simply not possible to make a fresh bean to cup espresso for \$0.09c as some less than honest machine providers would have you believe. The costs per cup will depend on the quality and hence the cost of the ingredients used.**

- For a reasonably priced premium blend of freshly roasted coffee beans you can expect to pay \$25.00 - \$30.00 per kg. Using an 8gm coffee dose (recommended dose for a good tasting espresso) that works out at around \$0.20- \$0.24c per cup.
- For a standard single shot cappuccino the total cost of all ingredients (including fresh or powdered milk) comes to around \$0.50 - \$0.70 per cup. For a double shot it is about \$0.75 - \$0.90 per cup.

**Q. Those machines with the coffee beans displayed on top look really cool - do yours have that? Also some machines are really curvy and "sexy" looking with bright graphics on the front.**

**A. No - our bean canister is fully enclosed within the cabinet. The beans on top may look cool, but the clear or "smoky" look plastic canisters holding the beans are exposed to ultra-violet light that accelerates the bean oxidation and ageing and results in a poorer quality beverage.**

As long as the bean container (or hopper) is not directly feeding the grinder i.e., it is for display purposes only, that style is fine. If that "look" is desired our machines can be customised to provide that.

This aspect is particularly important in machines where bean usage is relatively slow. The traditional machines and larger superautomatic fresh milk machines found in cafes etc; will often have the top mounted bean hoppers but they may be consuming one or more kilograms of beans per day so the problem of exposure to UV is minimal.

Customisation of machines to your requirements is one of our specialties. You may wish to have your corporate colours for example, on the doors, front panels, etc; and the cost can be as little as \$120 extra per machine. Other graphics can also be added which may use your logo or other art style markings that express your individuality.

These options are also available for our in-house rentals through "Euro Caffe" and add very little to the rental costs.

So - looks are important, but as they say, "Beauty is only skin deep". We think our range is very handsome and that the new "Blue Light Family" is quite stunning.

However in the end we believe that performance is the all important criteria and we think ours perform as well as, if not better than the competitors. But then - we would say that wouldn't we!!

**Q. What about options other than buying outright? Are Rentals or HP a good way to go?**

**A. Ask about Rental and HP options. These may also be called Operating Leases or Lease to Buy and can be a good option to save on the capital outlay required for outright purchase.**

Reputable machine suppliers will offer these alternatives and finance can be arranged quickly but beware of the front end (administration costs) and interest charges levied. Check on the Finance Rate being charged.

There are differing tax advantages with each option and if you are GST registered this may even offer more tax advantages, but firstly check with your financial advisor.

**Q. What about service and support if I am in Auckland or Dunedin or even the smaller towns and cities like Whangarei, Tauranga, Gisborne, Nelson, Hokitika, Oamaru, or Invercargill?**

**A. Ensure that the supplier has a comprehensive nationwide service network with suitably qualified technicians available or that they offer a cost effective Return To Base (RTB) service option with exchange modules available to ensure that your machine is restored to operation as quickly as possible. You may even be able to obtain a loan machine to keep you going until yours is fixed.**

Ask about the service providers response criteria from the time you log a request for service until you are contacted by a technician and if necessary how long before you can expect a site visit. Slow service response can result in excessive downtime and that could be costing you!

**Q. Your company is based in Christchurch so why should I deal with you if I am in Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Napier/Hastings, New Plymouth or even Wellington?**

**A. Yes we are based in Christchurch but our Sales, Dealer and Technical Support network covers the whole country.**

We arrange installation and commissioning of machines anywhere in NZ with our local Service Support agents and that also covers a full rundown on the machine operations, fault warnings and regular site operator daily/weekly/monthly maintenance requirements.

As part of our initial and ongoing support service we can provide comprehensive operator/end user maintenance guides and even video clips on CD/DVD to assist with site staff training. This can be invaluable with sites where there may be a higher staff turnover rate and crucial knowledge is easily lost.

With our **0800 111 820** Service & Support number we undertake to provide timely service to all major and most of the smaller cities and towns, initially with a telephone consultation and if required, an onsite service call.

Our target for telephone response is within an hour of a call for assistance and if necessary, an on site service call will be scheduled where possible, within 4 hours.

Remote areas can access the same **0800 111 820** service (where incidentally about 85-90% of problems can be sorted out) but realistically, on site attendance may take longer than 4 hours.

