

Seasonal Sippin

Sports Editor Callie Hawkins visited cafés around Dallas to review holiday drinks. The review features a combination of coziness and hospitality of cafés as well as the taste and feeling these drinks arouse in hopes that our readers will indulge in the Christmas flavors this holiday season.

STARBUCKS - Toasted White Chocolate Mocha

As Halloween ends, the multinational cafe chain skips over Thanksgiving and whips out their Christmas cups and decor on Nov. 3. While their seasonal menu does include the fall themed favorite pumpkin spiced latte as well as a toasted caramel bruleé cold brew, those drinks are overshadowed by the outlandish Christmas themed drinks. The environment, the seasonal menu filled with options for a Christmas feeling coffee and the red and green colors decorating the cafe made me want to start singing "It's Beginning to Look A Lot Like Christmas" when I sat at the table with my toasted white chocolate mocha. When I asked at the checkout what the employee's favorite, pretty holiday drink was, she recommended the toasted white chocolate mocha. Although the little red peppermint flakes were not included like it showed on the menu, this coffee was delectable. It was rich in the white chocolate flavor, but the warm temperature combated the thickness of the chocolate and it slid down my throat, warming my insides on the way down. I decided to not stir in the whipped cream on top so that with each sip I had a little burst of something cold and sweet followed by the warm and rich coffee. If it were only a tad less sweet, and had been presented as the picture, this drink would have been the perfect holiday morning drink.
5350 W Lovers Lane



SUMMER MOON - Peppermint Mocha Moon Latte

Before doing this review, I had never been to Summer Moon. I've always thought of it as the small, probably mediocre cafe that took over the Starbucks I went to sometimes on my way to school. But when I walked into the cafe, I was greeted by friendly and accommodating staff, and they're Thanksgiving decor was still up, which I appreciated. Summer Moon in reality is a popular chain that started in Austin, now with locations in many Texas cities, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Kansas, and it is still expanding. The shop has a good variety of seasonal drinks on their menu with Christmas cookie, gingerbread, and chestnut flavored drinks, but here I played it safe and got what they call the Peppermint Mocha Moon Latte. And I'm happy I made that decision. Decorated precisely and beautifully, this cup of coffee was a peppermint hot chocolate for someone who needs caffeine. It gave me the same feeling as a wonderful Christmas morning opening gifts with the family by the fire, or snuggling up by the Christmas tree to watch Elf or Christmas Vacation with my sister. The cafe itself and the look, taste and feeling of the drink was perfect and easily my favorite of the five seasonal drinks I tried.
4343 W Northwest Hwy #390



DRIP - Hot Spiced Apple Cider

Personally, I have always loved Drip Coffee and think they have one of the best cups of coffee in Dallas. I was disappointed that they only had one seasonal special, an eggnog latte, although I'm sure if I asked for a peppermint or pumpkin drink, they would have been accommodating as they always are at Drip. Instead, I went with the hot spiced apple cider that is on their menu year round but is a holiday classic, since I am not a huge eggnog fan. I felt that some sort of cider drink was necessary for this review anyway. I have never been a super huge fan of hot cider, and this experience didn't quite make me one either. It was just the right temperature when it came out, and the ratio of the sweetness coming from the apple flavor to the biting taste of cinnamon and spice was on the spot. Other than that, it was just a regular apple cider, and the lack of seasonal drinks to choose from made this experience at Drip my least favorite of the five.
4343 Lovers Lane



LA LA LAND - La La Pumpkin Spiced Iced Latte

La La Land Kind Cafe is always one of my favorite places to be. The beautiful and pristine café and the staff of angels make it feel like it's more than just a coffee shop. Within the name, you can tell they most likely are not able to keep the job if they are not welcoming or kind which really does make the place feel warm and welcoming to its customers. Their regular menu already has many fun flavors and pretty drinks, and this year, they offered two fall-themed seasonal drinks and five themed for Christmas. At one of the shops, I needed to test a more fall and traditional flavored coffee, and I also thought I would review at least one iced drink. The pumpkin-spiced iced latte came out beautifully prepared with a smile on the barista's face, but it was not my favorite this time, surprisingly. It was a little strong on the pumpkin flavor and a tad too milky, making it kind of sticky on the back of my throat. La La Land, to reiterate, is a great café, but unfortunately, this drink fell short of my expectations. It wouldn't stop me from recommending La La Land to anyone though.
5600 W Lovers Lane



WHITE ROCK COFFEE - Gingerbread Latte

This café is popular amongst many ESD students since it is in close proximity and is on many students' routes to school. This was my first time at White Rock, and I enjoyed my experience thoroughly. The employees were very kind, and it was decorated for Christmas, making it feel cozy and festive. I ordered the gingerbread latte, another crucial flavor during the holiday season. It came out in a cute red mug with a perfect foam heart on top. It did burn my tongue the first sip I took, but that was my own fault, not having waited for it to cool off. After a few minutes, the following sips were delectable. The gingerbread flavor was not overpowering to the coffee flavor, and just the right amount of milk was added to balance the flavor. I definitely would suggest this coffee shop and this drink to coffee drinkers this holiday season.
5930 Royal Lane

