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The coffee experience

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Coffee-marinated ribeye steak taco at Garrido's

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By Justin Davis September 30, 2010

The 1674 **Women's Petition Against Coffee** states that "Coffee leads men to trifle away their time, scald their chops, and spend their money, all for a little base, black, thick, nasty, bitter, stinking nauseous puddle water." But with the brown brew working its way into nearly every facet of American culture—from Alec Baldwin informing Jack Lemmon that **"Coffee's for closers only"** in *Glengarry Glen Ross* to Fall Out Boy bastardizing those same words by incorporating them into **a song title**—the very idea of banning coffee seems absurd today. Austin restaurants ensure coffee won't become prohibited anytime soon by using it in more inventive ways than a simple cup of joe, and *The A.V. Club* visited a few of these establishments to recommend some delicious coffee-infused dishes—and one that opts for tea instead.

Garrido's (360 Nueces, 512-320-8226)

The best part of waking up: a hint of dark roast in your taco

Located between Austin Music Hall and a short footbridge leading to Seaholm Power Plant, Garrido's offers a coffee-marinated ribeye steak taco with onion queso asadero and chipotle horseradish aioli. Although the coffee flavor is extremely subtle and it's mostly used to tenderize the meat, the well-cooked and fatty pieces of ribeye don't disappoint. Caramelized onions add a complementary sweetness to the smoky and sharp shock of the chipotle horseradish aioli.

Franklin Barbecue (3421 N. I-35, 512-653-1187)**The best part of waking up: involves pouring espresso over your meat**

Prepare for the unmistakably rich taste of Franklin Barbecue's espresso barbecue sauce when you cover the food trailer's pork ribs (which are tender, but have a welcomed toothsome pull in some bites) in the coffee-based sauce. Or order the Topsy Texan, a chopped beef sandwich with sliced sausage mixed with the espresso sauce. The sauce is a thin-but-powerful choice out of Franklin's three, usually unlabeled selections: the near-black espresso; a light-brown, sweet and peppery sauce; and a much thinner and vinegar-based red sauce. Though Franklin lists its operating hours as "11 AM – Sold Out," its schedule rewards early risers—the trailer has been known to sell out of many items by 1 p.m. on weekends. Best to get your coffee *before* heading to this East Austin spot.

Alamo Drafthouse (check website for locations)**The best part of waking up: mixes coffee with dessert and alcohol**

To stay alert in a lip-smacking way at the Alamo Drafthouse, skip the cough syrup-like taste of Red Bull and the chalky aftertaste of a 5-Hour Energy shot in favor of the Midnight Espresso milkshake. Whether you're taking part in *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* at the Village, watching **Master Pancake Theater** at the Ritz, or sitting through your fourth movie of the day during **Fantastic Fest** at the Lamar location, the espresso shake wakes you *and* your mouth up. For an extra flavor boost, request to combine the Midnight Espresso with the Alamo's Guinness shake for two intense tastes hidden inside a creamy, calorific concoction.

Along Came A Slider (2324 E. Cesar Chavez Street, 512-522-8284)**The best part of waking up: makes you jittery for more**

This cash-only food trailer has several gourmet sliders on its menu, including a coffee-rubbed pork shoulder with red wine barbecue sauce and creamy jalapeño slaw. You can't miss the immediately identifiable robust taste of coffee in the shredded pork, and topping the slider with the slaw gives it an amazing coupling of spicy and surprisingly sweet vibrancy that provides a magnificent twist.

Paggi House (200 Lee Barton Drive, 512-473-3700)**The best part of waking up: is an impostor**

If you agree with the Women's Petition Against Coffee, but still want a dark, caffeinated beverage mixed in with your food, visit Paggi House for its black-tea brined duck breast on a bed of quinoa, asparagus, and Hon-shimeji mushrooms with an orange-ginger gremolata and foie gras jus. Tempura-fried green onion straws also top this complex, multi-layered meal, but nothing in this dish distracts from any other element. While Paggi House cooks the duck closer to medium than the universally desired medium-rare, the breast remains tender, and the crispy duck skin accented by the black tea brine pairs nicely with the earthy taste of the mushrooms. Those 17th-century women can't fault you for enjoying this meal. Also, screw them—they're dead anyway.

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