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Milk, so we know it does our body good, right? But for many of us, milk from cows just doesn't work if you are one of the millions of people who cannot drink cows milk because you are lactose intolerant. And another million who may have a genuine dairy allergy to casein, a protein in cow's milk! Plant based "milks" are way up this year with giant chains like Starbucks offering alternative milk products for those who are vegan, avoid dairy milk for environmental or animal rights reasons, or have allergies/intolerances—or just plain don't like it. Early entries in the alternative milk market included soy milk and rice milk. While soy milk has enjoyed shelf space for a decade or more, newer entries like hemp, almond, cashew, coconut and even pea protein 'milk' are generally healthier and tastier options than soy milk. Here is a run-down of the current plant-based milk substitutes compared to real milk: Real Dairy (Cows) Milk. Real dairy milk still sits on top as the leader, but dairy milk sales are dwindling, especially in light of the many alternatives that are flooding the market. Milk has gotten a bad rap lately, and in light of what goes on at large scale industrial dairies, it's no wonder. Conventional dairy is full of antibiotics, growth hormones, bad fats and even nasty stuff like pus, from the constant infections that dairy cows get due to the unnatural and unhealthy conditions they have to endure. While it is true that we humans are the only ones who consume the milk of another animal meant to nourish their babies, milk has become a constant in our society and a reliable source of nutrition—if you get it from the right place. While conventional dairy production includes high temperature pasteurisation, and homogenisation of its fat, raw milk comes straight from the cow, full of enzymes and nutrients that make its vitamins and minerals more bioavailable, as well as easier to digest. For many with milk allergies or sensitivities, raw milk is the answer, as the pasteurisation not only destroys many of the helpful enzymes which make it easier to digest, and the heat degrades and distorts milk protein molecules making it a foreign substance that causes allergies. If organic milk is available, it is generally a step above conventional milk, but still not ideal. Organic milk avoids the antibiotics and growth hormones that are in conventional dairy milk. Grass fed milk contains nutrients that are vastly superior to conventional milk and organic milk, and comes from cows who are much healthier, eating their natural diet. Grass fed milk contains a higher amount of healthy omega 3 fats, conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) which have a variety of health benefits including immune system, bone mass, heart health, and lean body mass. Grass fed milk also contains a very unique and vital nutrient, vitamin K2, which helps our bodies utilise calcium in our bones and teeth, fights cancer and heart disease, and inflammation. However, raw milk is even better—loaded with enzymes, beneficial bacteria, vitamins, minerals, and protein—all of which are severely degraded or destroyed when it is pasteurised. Raw milk is not readily available in stores as most states still strictly regulate raw milk, and it must be purchased through farmers' markets or small dairy farms. Raw milk is usually far fresher and better tasting than any conventional or organic milk you find at your grocery store. And if you can get organic, grass-fed raw milk you have the perfect combination! Bottom Line: Conventional dairy milk is not good for you, bad for the environment and bad for the cows who produce it. Organic milk is slightly better as it avoids the growth hormones and excessive antibiotics in conventional dairy. Grass-fed milk contains better fats and vitamin K2, which actually helps prevent clogged arteries. Raw milk is the best choice, easier to digest, less likely to produce allergic reactions, and full of nutrients, enzymes and beneficial bacteria. And it tastes way better. Organic, grass fed, raw milk is really the best way to go if you are going to drink cow's milk. Also, it should be noted that goat milk is considered to be easier to digest for most people than cows milk, and a good option to consider. Soy Milk: The old standby alternative milk, is not as popular as it was once was, and is now being surpassed by almond milk, coconut milk, and other healthier choices. Soy is considered a decent source of protein, because it contains all the amino acids you need in your diet. However, avoid soy protein isolate as it can also create deficiencies of vitamins E, D, B12, calcium, magnesium, manganese, molybdenum, copper, iron and zinc. Soy milk has come a long way with flavour and most of the commercial brands taste pretty decent now. Soy milk is also considered a pretty highly processed food and contains something called 'phytic acid' which actually can block absorption of essential minerals – calcium, magnesium, copper, iron, and especially zinc - in the intestinal tract. One of the problems is that the majority of soy is GMO soy (which has its own host of potential problems), but even if it is labeled as organic, soy milk still contains plant estrogens that can disrupt natural hormones in the body, for men and women. Soy is thought to be 'feminizing' to men and possibly be the cause of excess weight gain and even gynecomastia, or 'man-boobs'. Bottom Line: There are better alternatives out there now than soy milk. Almond Milk: Almond Milk has become the darling of the plant-based milks. Almond milk is taking over the market and now makes up about two-thirds of the plant-based milk market in the U.S. But, while a handful of almonds is loaded with nutrition like protein, fiber, antioxidants and healthy fats, to get the equivalent nutrition of a handful of almonds, you would need to drink about 48 ounces of almond milk for the same nutrition, and a massive amount of calories. Almonds themselves require a large amount of water to grow, and almond milk, of course takes even more. So the amount of almonds you actually get in a glass of almond milk is pretty low. In fact, almonds are often actually the third ingredient, depending on the brand of almond milk you are drinking. Cartons of almond milk can contain as low as 2% almonds, the rest water, sugar, added vitamins and minerals, and thickening agents like carrageenan, and guar gum, which can upset stomachs. However, some brands are moving away from the carrageenan and adding an emulsifier-thickener-stabiliser known as gellan gum that seems to be less irritating to the digestive system. Bottom Line: Not bad if you just want a little on your cereal or in your coffee now and then, but don't start guzzling it because you think it is as nutritious as a handful of almonds. Go for the unsweetened version if you can, otherwise, it's a lot of empty calories with little nutrition. Coconut Milk: Coconut Milk isn't the same stuff you get straight from the coconut—it is processed a bit more. Don't confuse the canned coconut milk with the more processed coconut milk in the carton. They are two very different products! Coconut milk has a smooth, creamy flavour, and generally does not have much of a coconut taste. And if you are a first timer with plant-based milks, this may be a good one to try, as it generally has a pretty neutral flavour with no aftertaste like some plant-based milks. Coconut milk is loaded with medium-chain triglycerides (an easily-digested healthy fat that helps burn fat), potassium, a host of fortified vitamins, and calcium. As with the other plant based milks, avoid the kinds with added sugar, and go for the unsweetened variety. Coconut milk is lower in protein and calcium generally than almond milk. Because coconut milk generally has a thicker, creamier texture, it works well in coffee drinks and makes a great cappuccino—which is probably why Starbucks has added it to their alternative milk choices. Bottom Line: A decent milk substitute, but low in protein. Tasty tip: If you want a better tasting option than just almond milk or coconut milk by themselves, try mixing a carton of almond milk with a can of coconut milk... you end up with a much better taste with the 2 of these blended rather than either one separately. Cashew Milk: Cashew Milk is another nutty, creamy alternative to cow's milk. This recent addition is made by blending water-soaked cashews with water. This smooth beverage is a good source of fiber, antioxidants, copper (which helps produce and store iron) and magnesium (a mineral needed for proper nerve and muscle function). It can be added to everything from cereals to homemade puddings, to coffee. Bottom Line: Similar creamy flavour like almond milk, but cashew milk is not big on protein, and you should avoid the kinds with added sugars. Rice Milk: Rice Milk was one of the early additions to the alternative milk market, right after soy milk, and tasted much better—with little aftertaste. However, rice milk is a pretty thin, watery and sugary milk substitute, so if you are looking for something to pour on your cereal, rice milk is a little more like flavoured water. Rice milk also has a pretty high glycemic value and isn't a great choice for someone trying to lose weight or control their blood sugar. It's kind of similar to drinking sugar water, actually. Rice milk doesn't have much in the way of protein, but may have some calcium and other nutrients added in as fortification. Bottom Line: Rice milk is a possible substitute if you have dairy and/or nut allergies; however, it isn't a nutritional superfood, and it's thin and watery, and loaded with sugar usually. Hemp Milk: Hemp Milk is produced from the seeds of the hemp plant, but don't worry you won't get high eating your breakfast cereal! Hemp seeds are known for their complete protein (contains all essential amino acids, along with healthy omega 3 and omega 6 fats. Hemp seeds are often seen as an ingredient in protein powders and are even used as flour. Hemp milk is another great milk if you are allergic to nuts or coconuts, and want a thicker, more substantial milk that contains a bit more nutrition than some of the other plant-based milks. And unlike soy milk, hemp doesn't contain oligosaccharides, those complex sugars that can cause gas. The smooth, slightly nutty flavour makes it work for a variety of things, including breakfast cereal, baking, and even sauces and gravies (just don't get the vanilla flavoured type for gravy). Bottom Line: A decent tasting substitute for dairy milk, especially if you have nut or soy allergies, with a smooth creamy texture, healthy fats and protein. Blending them together... Once again, the best taste is probably if you combine either almond milk, coconut milk, or both. Blending various plant milks usually has a better taste than any single plant milk by itself. I've experimented in the past with blending hemp milk, almond milk, and coconut milk together in a blender with a little stevia, and then pouring into a pitcher, and the taste was MUCH better than any of those 3 milks by themselves! While all of these plant based 'milk' products are gaining ground, the ingredient lists on some of these can be high in sugar and thickening agents like guar gum and carrageenan, that can often upset digestive systems. With that in mind, it's best to choose the unsweetened versions and just add your own stevia or monk fruit sweetener if you like it a little sweeter. Many of these so-called 'healthy' plant milks could be classified more as a processed food than a 'natural' food. So beware, read the label thoroughly, and make your own informed choices based on your own particular needs and tastes. Hope you enjoyed the blog! Yours in health and happiness, Beth Cook © 2025 Plant Based News is a mission-led impact media platform focused on elevating the plant-based diet and its benefit to human health, the planet, and animals. | Plant Based News Ltd, 869 High Road, London, United Kingdom, N12 8QA, United Kingdom. Costa Coffee has finally launched vegan whipped cream across the UK. The coffee giant debuted its in-house Light Whip nationwide on March 1, describing the product as a "lighter alternative to cream". Light Whip has now replaced the brand's Light Dairy Swirl, which was unsuitable for vegans as it was made using skimmed cows' milk. Vegan whipped cream Confirming the release with Vegan Food & Living, a Costa Coffee spokesperson said: "The new topping can be enjoyed alongside our range of dairy and plant-based dairy alternatives. "The new Light Whip means we can provide more choice to those customers who opt for dairy-free drinks, without missing out on additional toppings." Costa already offers four dairy-free milk options: Soy, Almond, Coconut, and Oat. It has also recently unveiled its Ultimate Blend which can be used in any drink without surcharge until May 3. Light Whip has now replaced the brand's Light Dairy Swirl, which was unsuitable for vegans as it was made using skimmed cows' milk. Photo © Costa Coffee The launch of Costa's vegan whipped cream comes shortly after the chain expanded its plant-based range with six new items. Just two months ago, the company debuted a new vegan Mc'ball Wrap - featuring roasted red peppers and dairy-free cheese - and brought back its fan-favourite BBQ Chick'n Panino. For those with a sweet tooth, fear not. Costa also launched a Chocolate & Caramelised Biscuit Loaf cake, Rocky Road, Heart Emoji Gingerbread biscuit, and Iced Shortcake Biscuit. We bet you have a pair or two in your closet, but are your trainers vegan? Here's how to tell if your trainers are vegan. Featured image credit: Matthew Horwood via Getty Images © Costa Coffee British coffee chain Costa Coffee has revealed its Christmas menu for 2023, featuring new vegan-friendly options. The Vegan Turkey & Trimmings Toastie contains plant-based turkey slices with stuffing, cranberry sauce, vegan mayo, vegan gravy, and fried onions. It is served on bar-marked white bread. For a sweet option, the new Christmas Cake Slice — a rich fruit cake bar topped with marzipan and icing — is also suitable for vegans. The gluten-free and vegan Mince Tart, which features a pastry case with a fruit filling, is also making a comeback this year. The new options add to Costa's existing vegan food range, which includes the Sausage Bap, Fruited Teacake, Fruity Flapjack, Chocolate & Caramelised Biscuit Loaf, and Rocky Road. © Costa Coffee Festive drink options Vegan customers can also enjoy two new seasonal drinks. The Roasted Hazel Latte is vegan if ordered with plant milk and without the gold star topping, while the Gingerbread and Cream Latte can be made vegan by swapping the milk, requesting Light Whip instead of cream, and removing the gingerbread man. Light Whip is Costa's dairy-free whipped cream alternative, which was launched this March to replace the non-vegan Light Dairy Swirl. Costa has also developed a plant-based milk alternative called Ultimate Blend, which can be used in any drink. "The new Light Whip means we can provide more choice to those customers who opt for dairy-free drinks, without missing out on additional toppings," a Costa Coffee spokesperson told Vegan Food & Living in March. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. Costa have been hit with several complaints after changing their dairy-alternative milks during Veganuary. Now customers who are allergic, lactose intolerant or have Coeliac Disease can't have the milk they offer due to risk of cross-contamination as the new product labels read "may contain wheat". The changes comes as many people begin to take part in Veganuary - a period where people try new plant-based food and drinks as well as share their passion for all things vegan be it make-up, skin-care or fashion. According to blogger GlutenFreeCuppaTea, the chain will now use milk from the brand AdeZ who are owned by Coca Cola - who also own Costa. Taking to their blog they wrote: "Costa timed the change in milk to tie in with Veganuary, as they will now be serving Adez coconut, oat, almond and soya milk - all from the same Coca Cola owned brand - instead of Alpro. "So to answer the question 'is Costa's oat milk gluten-free?', the answer as of December 30th 2021 is a firm no." But what does this mean for people who are intolerant to gluten or are Coeliac? Discussing the health risk, Becky Excell who runs the blog explains: "As is painfully clear, it's no longer safe for anyone on a gluten-free diet to order any drinks containing oat milk for the foreseeable future. "Even if you never order a coffee with oat milk, the reintroduction of cross-contaminated oat milk alters the risk for any gluten-free person ordering a hot drink with frothed milk in Costa. Why? "Well, that's because all of the milk in Costa is frothed using the same steam arms) - now including non-gluten-free oat milk. "When all of the milk was gluten-free as standard (as Costa was using gluten-free oat milk) the risk of cross-contamination was greatly reduced compared to coffee shops like Starbucks. But that's sadly no longer the case." The gluten free blogger adds that when Starbucks made a similar change, Coeliac UK issued a statement. Bargain B&M 'bathroom revamp' hack shared by savvy shopper They added: "As the levels of gluten left on the steam arm are not known, Coeliac UK advise heightened awareness when ordering a coffee at a coffee shop that also serves non-gluten-free oat milk." Becky also contacted the coffee chain to query the change and according to them Costa Coffee replied: "As part of our new January menu we have changed supplier of dairy alternative products. Consumers can still enjoy the full range of dairy alternative flavours they've come to expect at Costa, including oat, soya, almond and coconut. "We have updated our Nutrition and Allergy Guide to reflect these changes and whilst the new oat flavour does not contain wheat, we have included 'may contain' information aligned to the suppliers risk assessment. "Updated information can be found in store or online and we've a new counter top card in stores notifying consumers of the change. "Get all the latest updates on restaurants and bars reopening and more from Glasgow sent straight to your inbox every week signing up to our free Food & Drink newsletter. The email update arrives at around 7pm every Thursday evening and is manually curated by our team, bringing you everything you need to know about the city's food and drink scene as lockdown starts to ease. To sign up, simply enter your email address into this link here and select Food And Drink. The blogger adds: "This response neglected to mention the new 'may contain' warnings on soya and coconut milk too! This is super important as most would automatically assume that at least soy and coconut milk would be gluten-free, so please help to tell everyone know. To say I am disappointed would be an understatement!" But people with allergies, intolerance and Coeliac Disease aren't the only ones who are finding the change an issue with loyal customers bemoaning the vegan milks "horrible." Taking to Twitter, hundreds replied to Costa one saying: "Will you bring back Alpro? Don't you care you've lost customers? Coffees were perfect - awful now." Another added: "Sorry to say I will never be in a Costa again until you go back to Alpro. The new milk alternatives taste horrible and ruin the coffee." A third agreed and said: "Why have you changed the coconut milk? This new stuff is disgusting sorry but will rarely buy from Costa now." A fourth tweeted: "Please bring back Alpro - new stuff horrible." What do you think of the new vegan and dairy-free alternative milks? Gregg's hint at return of popular product - but it's not macaroni pie Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is a meticulously crafted masterpiece that embodies the essence of the Costa Coffee experience. This exceptional blend is a symphony of premium Arabica and Robusta beans, roasted to perfection to deliver an unforgettable coffee experience. The Art of Bean Selection The foundation of Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend lies in the careful selection of premium Arabica and Robusta beans. Arabica beans, renowned for their delicate acidity and complex flavor profile, provide the blend with its aromatic foundation. Robusta beans, known for their robust body and intense flavor, add depth and richness to the blend. The Precision of Roasting The roasting process plays a crucial role in shaping the character of Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend. The beans are roasted in small batches, allowing for precise temperature control and monitoring. This meticulous approach ensures that each bean is roasted to its optimal point, maximizing its flavor potential. The Symphony of Flavors Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend offers a harmonious balance of flavors that tantalize the senses. Its initial aroma is a tantalizing blend of roasted nuts and dark chocolate, inviting you to delve into its depths. As the coffee meets your palate, you are greeted by a rich, full-bodied flavor with hints of caramel and spice. The finish is smooth and lingering, leaving you with a lingering impression of its exquisite taste. The Perfect Brew To fully appreciate the nuances of Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend, it is essential to brew it with care. The ideal brewing method for this blend is a cafetière, which allows the coffee grounds to steep fully, extracting the maximum flavor and aroma. Alternatively, you can use a filter coffee machine or an espresso machine for a more intense experience. The Perfect Pairing Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is a versatile blend that pairs well with a variety of foods and occasions. Its rich and nuanced flavors complement sweet treats such as pastries and chocolate, as well as savory dishes like cheese and crackers. It is also the perfect accompaniment to a relaxing afternoon or an invigorating morning. The Ultimate Experience Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is more than just a coffee; it is an experience that transports you to the heart of the coffee-making tradition. Its complex flavors, smooth texture, and lingering aroma create a symphony of sensations that will leave you craving more. Frequently Asked Questions Q: What is the caffeine content of Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend? A: The caffeine content of Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is approximately 100mg per 8oz cup. Q: Is Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend suitable for people with dietary restrictions? A: Yes, Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is gluten-free and does not contain any added sugar. Q: What is the best way to store Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend? A: To maintain its freshness, store Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend in an airtight container at room temperature away from direct sunlight. Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is a symphony of coffee beans meticulously curated from the finest coffee-growing regions around the world. This exceptional blend stands as a testament to Costa Coffee's unwavering commitment to quality and flavor. With each sip, the Ultimate Blend captivates the senses with its rich aroma, velvety texture, and symphony of flavors that dance on the palate. A Journey Through the Ultimate Blend The Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is a carefully crafted masterpiece, a journey through the world's most renowned coffee-growing regions. The blend's foundation lies in the vibrant African beans, known for their lively acidity and fruity undertones. These beans intertwine harmoniously with the robust and full-bodied beans from Central and South America, adding depth and a hint of smokiness. The blend is then enriched with the distinctive and aromatic beans from Asia, introducing a touch of spice and intrigue. The Art of Roasting: Unveiling the Essence of Flavor The roasting process for the Ultimate Blend is an art form in itself, a delicate balancing act that unlocks the beans' hidden potential. Costa Coffee's expert roasters employ a time-honored technique, carefully monitoring the temperature and duration of the roast to achieve the perfect equilibrium of flavors. This meticulous process ensures that the beans reach their peak of flavor and complexity, creating a blend that is both rich and nuanced. The Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is a harmonious symphony of flavors, a tapestry of notes that tantalize the taste buds. The blend's African components introduce a lively acidity, akin to the zest of citrus fruits, while the Central and South American beans contribute a robust and full-bodied foundation. The Asian beans add a touch of spice and intrigue, creating a blend that is both complex and captivating. The Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is a versatile coffee, a companion for all occasions. Its balanced flavor profile makes it an ideal choice for a morning pick-me-up, a midday boost, or an after-dinner treat. Whether you prefer it black, with milk, or adorned with a touch of sweetness, the Ultimate Blend adapts gracefully to your preferences. The Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend can be brewed using a variety of methods, each unlocking its unique nuances. For a classic and timeless experience, savor the blend through a traditional drip coffee maker. If you seek a more robust and intense flavor, opt for a French press, allowing the grounds to steep and release their full potential. For those who appreciate the convenience of single-serve brewing, the Ultimate Blend shines in pour-over or capsule machines. Costa Coffee takes great pride in its commitment to sustainability and ethical sourcing. The beans used in the Ultimate Blend are carefully selected from farms that adhere to strict environmental and social standards. The company works closely with its suppliers to ensure fair treatment of workers, promote biodiversity, and protect the delicate ecosystems where coffee is cultivated. Q: What makes the Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend unique? A: The Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is a carefully crafted masterpiece, featuring a harmonious blend of beans from the finest coffee-growing regions worldwide. Through meticulous roasting and blending techniques, the Ultimate Blend delivers a symphony of flavors, a perfect balance of acidity, body, and complexity. Q: How should I brew the Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend? A: The Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend can be brewed using various methods, including drip coffee makers, French press, pour-over, and capsule machines. Each method offers a unique experience, allowing you to explore the blend's nuances and find your preferred brewing style. Q: Is the Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend suitable for all occasions? A: The Costa Coffee Ultimate Blend is a versatile blend, perfect for various occasions. Its balanced flavor profile makes it an ideal choice for a morning pick-me-up, a midday boost, or an after-dinner treat. Whether you prefer it black, with milk, or adorned with a touch of sweetness, the Ultimate Blend adapts gracefully to your preferences. Click here for my guides to vegan food and drink at Starbucks, Pret, Greggs, Caffe Nero and click here to try my vegan copycat version of Costa's festive impulse Coffee Shortbread! January 24 and Costa have once again teamed up with BOSH for their Veganuary campaign. Foodwise, there is some new savoury food (about time) and a slight change to the cakes, although still traybakes rather than a vegan muffin. They will be keeping their usual vegan cakes: the chocolate and caramelised vegan loaf cake, rocky road and toasted teacakes. You can still order your favourite festive drinks for a while, until stocks last in store: Gingerbread Latte and hot chocolate. These are vegan if made with plant-based milk and vegan cream but no gingerbread man or sprinkles. Black Forest Hot chocolate. This is vegan if made with plant-based milk and vegan cream but not the sprinkles. If it comes with a separate cherry drizzle, this may not be vegan (tbc). Terry's Chocolate Orange Hot Chocolate. This is from their new range. This will be vegan if made with plant-based milk and vegan cream. The sprinkles and chocolate orange slice is not vegan, so ask to be made without. After Eight Mint Hot Chocolate. Again, this will be vegan if made with plant-based milk and vegan cream. The After Eight is not vegan, and ask to check the sprinkles in store. Roasted Hazel Lattes and Hot Chocolates. These are just made with their usual hazelnut syrup but come with some gold decorations which are vegan. These need to be requested, as always, with plant-based milk and vegan cream. Sadly the Sticky Toffee range is not be vegan. I have checked the sauce and it contains milk. No, Costa's new hot milkshake range is not vegan, they are made with a powder base that contains skimmed milk. The new range from BOSH offers vegans a little more choice than Costa has provided in the past, although they are mostly a repackaging of their previous vegan range. Plant-Based Smashin' Sausage Bap Plant-Based Crackin' Ham & Cheese Toastie Plant-Based Smokin' BBQ Panini Plant-Based Saucy Chick'n Fajita Wrap Lotus Biscoff Cheezecake Caramelised Biscuit Rocky Road Yes! As of now (October 2023), Costa are now using vegan marshmallows! Mango and Berry Bubble Tea - confusingly there are two versions of this, one with a pre-brewed base and one that's made to order. No idea really what the difference in flavour is, but both vegan. Refresher range: this is vegan. These are a range of three drinks: blood orange/straw, watermelon/mint and apple/rhubarb. They are basically just flavoured syrups mixed with water and ice. Might be nicer blended, which they can do in store. The iced coffees are still to be ordered as noted below. Coffee and Cream Frappe - this can be made vegan with dairy-free milk and vegan whip. It is flavoured with a real shot of coffee. Strawberry and Cream Frappe remains vegan if made with dairy-free milk and vegan whip. Tropical Mango Bubble Frappe - again, vegan if made with dairy-free milk and vegan whipped cream The Salted Caramel and Chocolate Fudge Brownie Frappes are not vegan. The base sauces have milk powder in them. The fruit coolers remain vegan. Mar/Apr 23: The new KitKat range is not vegan, the syrup used to make the drinks has milk powder in it. March 23: Costa have finally released their vegan whipped cream! I have tried it, it is a sweet cream, but really nice. One thing though, it leaves strange lumpy bits at the bottom of the drink. Not sure what this, stabilisers of some sort maybe. Note: The Rolo syrup is not vegan, it contains skimmed milk. When coffee shops first started popping up on the High Streets of the UK, they only had simple menus with the drinks that are still among the most popular today: Lattes, Americanos, Cappuccinos, Flat Whites, Tea. These were offered with a soya milk option but not much else was on the menu for vegans. Fast forward 15 (or more) years, and most restaurants and coffee shops on the High Street cater to all dietary requirements. It is still tricky trying to find something for the gluten free/vegan but they are getting there. So, here are drinks that are vegan friendly and can be found in your local branch of Costa Coffee. Please note, some stores may not stock all the vegan Costa food options. I worked for Costa for 6 years and smaller stores often have more limited availability, however, you should always be able to find a fine selection of plant-based milks in store. It's really important to remember that if you're unsure what is vegan, just to ask your barista: they are trained intensively to know exactly what you are after and give you coffee advice. Of course, if you have an allergy, always ask your barista to check for cross-contamination risks with products too. What Coffees are Vegan at Costa? All Costa coffees can be veganised, just ask for your preference of milk: Flat White Americano Latte Cappuccino Cortado/Caramel Cortado Espresso Macchiato Mocha Mocha Cortado No, Costa Express Machines are not vegan. They only have dairy milk options. What Plant Based Milks are available at Costa? Soya Coconut Almond Oat Ultimate Blend Important Note: Costa changed from using Alpro milk to using a company called Adez (owned by Coca-Cola, who also own Costa...coincidence? I don't think so). Unfortunately, due to the production of these milks, none of them can be confirmed as gluten-free (a sign instore confirms that the plant-based milks "may contain wheat"), which makes it impossible for sugar-free vegans to enjoy their normal drink at costa. Very disappointing decision from Costa who, time and time again, seem to ignore what their strong customer base wants and needs. What Syrups and Speciality Flavours are Vegan at Costa? So this one is both easy and difficult. All the Monin syrups (this includes Caramel, Hazelnut, Vanilla, Sugar Syrup, Gingerbread) are all vegan. However, some of the festive sauces are not, and contain milk. Note: as of 2023, Costa use very few Monin syrups now, using their own branded, cheaper tasting syrups. These are, however, vegan: Vanilla Sugar Free Vanilla Caramel Sugar Free Caramel Sugar Free Gingerbread Hazelnut Currently, Costa states on their website that none of their festive drinks are vegan. However, this is if they are prepared to "brand standard", i.e. with all the whipped cream and toppings. Some of the Christmas drinks can be veganised if you just know what to ask for. Autumn 23 drinks. Sadly their Autumn themed range, Costa's Maple Hazelnut range is not vegan - the maple sauce used contains milk. This is really disappointing because vegans or people with milk intolerances are unable to enjoy these seasonal drinks. You can of course ask for any of the festive syrups in your favourite coffee/mocha drink too. What Non-Coffee Hot Drinks are Vegan at Costa? So what can you drink at Costa if you don't like coffee? All the Tea and Fuze Tea Infusions Chai Latte! Is Costa Hot Chocolate Vegan? Costa hot chocolate is now vegan again! However, if you have a milk intolerance or allergy, there is a strong risk of cross contamination during production of the powder, so please bear this in mind. However, this is wonderful news for those of us who have been missing our Costa hot chocolates or mochas! What Cold Iced Drinks are Vegan at Costa? The Mango and Red Berry Fruit Coolers Mango Berry Bubble Tea Watermelon and Mint Refresher Blood Orange and Yuzu Refresher Apple and Rhubarb Refresher Iced Lattes (made with plant-based milk with and syrup). Costa sometimes refers to these as pour-over iced coffee (along with their other iced coffees that aren't blended). Cold Brew (without the topping) (not sure if Costa even does cold brew anymore?) Iced Americano Coffee Frappe. This can have an additional syrup shot added to it. Costa's Mint Frappe is vegan. I personally checked a bottle and it states that it is suitable for vegans. Just make sure to order it with dairy-free milk, vegan cream but without the chocolate sauce/sprinkles. Costa's Strawberry Frappe can be made vegan. Again, order with their vegan cream and with your choice of dairy-free milk. Unfortunately, the Iced Cappuccinos and Flat Whites are prepared with a dairy foam topping, so these are not suitable. What Food is Vegan at Costa? Costa have been consistently good, if unimaginative with their vegan food options, particularly their cakes, but it does depend on what store you visit. I would recommend that if you want to visit a specific store for a cake and a coffee, give them a call first to make sure that they have some vegan options for you. I find that periodically this list of vegan food changes, possibly with seasonal updates, but these are usually on the menu throughout the year (albeit sporadically). No. At the moment, Costa do not sell any vegan pastries. The croissants (plain and almond), pain au raisin and chocolate twists all contain butter. Rocky Road Slice Vegan Saus'ge Bap Vegan Smokey Ham and Cheese Toastie Vegan BBQ Chick'n Panini Costa now collaborates with M&S food, and the plant-based range is clearly marked M&S Plant Kitchen. This includes Tomato & Basil soup, Hoisin no-duck wrap, Nutty salad, golden syrup porridge and some fruit pots. Note: branches based in Tesco stores do not stock the M&S range. Chocolate and Caramelised Biscuit (Lotus) loaf cake Brown and white toast (make sure to ask for dairy free spread) Toasted Teacake (with dairy free spread) Fruity Flapjack Rice Cakes Pick n' Mix Updated Jan '24