

# BETTER COFFEE • BETTER WORLD COFFEE CONNOISSEURSHIP

*with*



## FINE DINING DEMANDS FINE COFFEE

Coffee holds a special place in my home and in my restaurants. Growing up in the Conant household, I learned from my mother that coffee is a part of good hospitality. She always had a Moka pot waiting on the stovetop. Like many Americans, my taste in coffee has evolved over the years. But my growing appreciation only reinforces my belief that great coffee is crucial for great hospitality.

In today's fine dining, no detail can be left uninspected. When I looked closely at coffee, illy became my go-to coffee for a number of reasons. First and foremost is taste. Super-acidic lighter brews may be trendy at the moment, but that is not coffee to me. I take my coffee strong and bold with no sugar and no dairy. A well-made illy espresso is full and rounded, with a complex and balanced flavor. After taste, comes consistency. The illy espresso

I made myself today is exactly what I tasted the first time I tried illy. For a chef, being able to source a product of consistent high quality means one less thing to worry about.

It's equally important to remember that the products we source as chefs and consumers affect those far beyond the places where we live and work. We are all involved in multiple communities. We all have a responsibility as part of the greater world community, and I want to align with companies with a long-term, thoughtful approach. With illy, we are able to offer a great product while directly benefiting hardworking farmers who need to provide for their families. It is an enriching and cyclical experience—one that just feels right.

Few businesses have the daily intensity of a restaurant. For us, the espresso machine is like the

water cooler in an office. When we need to solve a problem, the solution usually begins with, "Let's have an espresso and talk." We take a step back, enjoy a coffee and a moment of reflection and that is how we improve ourselves. When it comes to our guests, coffee is our last chance to make a taste impression before the check arrives. It becomes the exclamation point on the meal. To be in the hospitality world, you need to have a generous soul. I strive for energetic generosity in everything we do. Few things express that like fine coffee.

—Scott Conant

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Scott Conant  
Chef & Author

