



LEVEL 1 CERTIFICATE PROGRAM CURRICULUM

- CP103 Customer Service (REQUIRED CLASS)
- CP101 & CP102 Introduction to Espresso, Parts 1 & 2
- GE103 Introduction to Cupping
- CP151 Introduction to Coffee Brewing & Extraction
- CP190 Level 1 Certificate Test (Written Test & Practical Test)

Although candidates may choose to take the CP190 practical and written exams without taking the non-required classes, candidates must meet all the competencies described below. The SCAA acknowledges that there are many ways to prepare espresso other than the SCAA protocol. However, the SCAA protocol and definition have been developed over several years by dozens of industry professionals, and occasionally revisited and revised. Therefore, the SCAA protocol represents accepted best practice for our industry. We test the SCAA definition and protocol only in CP190, and our classes are designed to enable participants to have the knowledge and skill base to pass the CP190 tests. A competent barista should be able to demonstrate espresso preparation to these best practices, if they are competent.

COMPETENCIES

Knowledge, Skills and Explanations of the BGA Barista Level 1 (CB1) Designation

The Specialty Coffee Association of America (SCAA) and its Barista Guild of America (BGA) govern certificate programs complying with its standards. The mission of the SCAA is to recognize, develop and promote specialty coffee. The BGA uses a collaborative process to establish Competencies for baristas, evaluate performance of these Competencies, and serve as the principal organization on quality certification.

The BGA represents professional baristas, who bridge specialty coffee producers to the public. The professional certificate program represents needs of stakeholders of the program. Stakeholders include: Coffee producers, coffee mills and exporters, importers, roasters, allied product manufacturers, retail operators (coffee shops, restaurants, etc.) and consumers of specialty coffee. The BGA Level 1 Competencies reflect basic knowledge and skills that meet stakeholder expectations that qualified baristas are able to perform proficiently in a coffee shop environment, representing the business and the industry with quality and integrity.

The statements describing the Competencies are numbered consecutively. Accompanying each statement are knowledge, skills and explanations, which are directly related to the competency and specify what a barista must demonstrate to fulfill requirements of the competency.

The SCAA reserves the right to revise the competencies at any time.

A LEVEL 1 CERTIFIED BARISTA SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

Competency 1

Identify features of correct espresso.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| Explain common misconceptions about espresso. Specialty coffee industry definition of what espresso is. | State what espresso is and is not | A CB1 must be able to discuss espresso with consumers and set straight common misconceptions. This helps promote specialty coffee. |

Competency 2

State the SCAA definition of espresso and step by step espresso preparation instructions.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|--|
| Describe what constitutes espresso, and how to prepare. | State component parts of an espresso, and guidelines for best practice preparation. State and perform the steps and methods used to achieve best practice preparation. | A CB1 must be able to prepare and identify espresso according to best practices. |

Competency 3

List the four essential elements needed for brewing high quality espresso.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|---|
| State "The 4 M's" in Italian or English: The coffee, the grinder, the espresso machine and the barista. | Describe what makes espresso-based beverages special and what the barista's role is in the process (more than just making a drink). | The barista's importance in the chain of specialty coffee is a key component of the SCAA-BGA Certificate program. |

Competency 4

Discuss and perform basics of dosing, distribution, and tamping.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|---|---|
| Discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acceptable range (per definition) of coffee used in espresso, and how distribution of coffee grounds affects extraction. Impact of tamping on distribution, and extraction flow. | Be able to control amount of coffee used in espresso preparation, along with showing acceptable distribution and tamping technique. | A CB1 cannot prepare espresso according to best practices without these skills. |

Competency 5

Identify espresso equipment component parts.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|---|---|
| State functions of basic espresso machine parts. Identify functions of the buttons, valves and gauges and describe how to use them. | Use component parts of espresso machine, including gauges, buttons, and knobs/levers. | A CB1 can use any common commercial espresso machine to prepare espresso within the SCAA designated parameters. |

Competency 6

Prepare espresso according to SCAA definition of espresso and using the SCAA protocol.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|---|---|
| State by memory the SCAA definition of espresso, and how to combine the steps, and technical skills to achieve desired result. | Combine steps and definition of espresso to achieve acceptable beverage. Includes ability to perform all steps and achieve intended results consistently . | A CB1 has competence in the process of preparing espresso with the equipment presented and can do so within the SCAA definition consistently. |

Competency 7

Heat and texture milk to SCAA best practices.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|---|---|
| Explains basics of espresso and milk beverages, techniques used to prepare milk, and the correct temperature/texture of desired product. | Can use the equipment to prepare milk to temperature and texture of industry best practice, Steams milk to the SCAA recommended temperature and texture consistently. | Milk and espresso/milk beverages are a vital part of the CB1 role. A CB1 can prepare milk consistently to standard. |

Competency 8

Identify common café drinks, stating traditional (SCAA recommended) recipes, including weight and volume ratios.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|--|
| List common café drinks, their qualities and presentation. State SCAA recommended recipes and ratios of traditional espresso-based beverages. | Can use the equipment to prepare and present: An espresso A cappuccino A caffe latte | A CB1 should know names of drinks and their recipes by memory and produce those drinks without referencing supportive materials. |

Competency 9

Prepare an espresso, cappuccino and latte according to SCAA standards, showing competence in pouring and drink presentation.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|---|
| States SCAA recommended recipes and ratios of traditional espresso-based beverages. Describes correct milk texture for the different drinks that use milk. States the correct presentation of each beverage, including cup size, saucer, spoon, napkin and water. | Can prepare and present to standard with correct presentation of each beverage, including cup size, saucer, spoon, napkin (and water if available during class/exam): An espresso A cappuccino A caffe latte | Milk and espresso/milk beverages are a vital part of the CB1 role. Presenting espresso-based beverages correctly distinguishes an establishment and gives the appropriate respect to customers and those who have worked to produce the coffee. |

Competency 10

Demonstrate simple, essential equipment maintenance, workstation cleanliness and hygiene.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|---|
| Explains program of regular cleaning and maintenance of espresso machine and grinder. States tools and techniques used in regular cleaning routine. | Demonstrate cleaning of the espresso machine. Describes and demonstrates tidying of station at end of shift. Uses cloths correctly and does not interchange the steam wand, counter and portafilter cloths. | Clean equipment is imperative to the quality of coffee beverages. A CB1 must understand how to clean their equipment. Keeping a tidy work environment is a basic competence for preparing food products to consumers. |

Competency 11

Identify the four primary sensory aspects of brewed coffee.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|---|---|
| State how we evaluate brewed coffee through the senses of aroma, flavor, body and color. | Name the four sensory aspects, and explain how they are exhibited in a particular coffee. | A CB1 must be able to experience and communicate coffee with customers. These sensory aspects are the foundation to that. |

Competency 12

List and explain the six essential elements of brewing.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|---|
| State the basic factors of controlling the brewing process, and basic ways that adjusting variables might change the taste of the coffee. Understanding how/why different brewing apparatus work differently. | Recall the elements, and explain how they can affect the flavors in a cup of coffee. Use terms like under/over-extracted, optimum brewing and strength. | A CB1 is expected to brew coffee, and must understand what the important factors in that process are. Often customers ask about brewing coffee and a barista should be able to explain in basic terms how to encourage consumers to bring out the best in coffee using their own equipment. |

Competency 13

Identify the main stages of the brewing process.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|--|---|
| Describe the wetting, extraction and control of the water flow during the brewing process. | Observe and identify what stages of the brewing process are taking place from start to finish. | Conceptual and practical grasp on coffee brewing. This is needed to diagnose correct and incorrectly brewed coffee. |

Competency 14

Explain the general rule of optimum extraction, and be familiar with the brewing control chart.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|--|--|
| Has grasp of Extraction % and TDS, and how they affect taste of coffee. Can recognize the concept of strength in brewed coffee and is familiar with the SCAA Brew Control Chart as a tool to measure strength and extraction. | Explain the general rule of optimum extraction. State the range of accepted ideal extraction %. Identify the area on the brew control chart that represents optimum brewing. | A CB1 should understand extraction, and can identify coffee that is or is not brewed to optimum extraction. In addition, there is a difference between strength and extraction, and it is an essential basic skill to describe the difference between the two. |

Competency 15

Distinguish by taste the impact of acceptable vs. improper brewing.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|--|--|
| Recall the 6 variables of basic brewing and general rule of optimum extraction, and be mindful of these factors when tasting coffee. | Taste the difference in coffees that have been brewed correctly and improperly. Hypothesize how to adjust the extraction by changing one or more variables. | A CB1 should immediately identify if a coffee has not been brewed properly and not serve it. The CB1 also should be able to adjust any of the 6 variables to brew coffee to optimum extraction. If there is a problem with equipment, the CB1 will be able to recognize it more quickly through competence in this standard. |

Competency 16

Discuss how the coffee extraction process works in these brewing methods: Full immersion, pour over, vacuum, hybrid, and batch brewing devices.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|--|--|
| Steps for preparing coffee with each of the devices. Identifying how extraction works in different brewing methods. | Compare and contrast the extraction methods in terms of basic functioning and difference in steps. | A CB1 has an ability to use various brewing equipment to bring out the best in a specialty coffee. |

Competency 17

Discuss and demonstrate brewing devices within each brewing method and how they can add value to a business/coffee service.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|---|
| Steps for preparing coffee with each of the devices. Discuss ideas on using different brewing methods at work, being knowledgeable in brew time, weight of coffee used and beverage volume yield of each device. | Brew coffee within the range of optimum balance with each brewing method. | Competence at the CB1 level includes the ability to integrate skills into the workplace to add value to the business. |

Competency 18

Recognize the SCAA Cupping Form.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Identify the official form used by the SCAA and the categories of evaluation used on the form. | List the 10 categories on the form. | A CB1 should know the purpose and parts of the SCAA cupping form. |

Competency 19

Identify purposes and professional benefits to cupping.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|--|--|
| Professional application of objective coffee analysis. | Professional, objective taste evaluation of coffee. Describing flavors, aromas, and textures of coffee to customers. | A CB1 can analyze and describe coffee. |

Competency 20

Describe the difference and importance of taste and smell as functions in cupping specialty coffee.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|---|
| Difference between taste and aroma. State the relationship of taste and aroma. | List the 5 basic tastes. Explain how smell contributes to the experience of flavor. | Being able to help consumers appreciate coffees through different aspects of tasting helps advance the specialty coffee industry. |

Competency 21

Perform SCAA Cupping Protocol and etiquette while cupping with a group with 3 unique flights of coffee.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| List steps and procedure for cupping. | Able to setup and participate in a cupping. | Performing the cupping protocol properly is the first step in analyzing and communicating about a coffee with other industry professionals. |

Competency 22

Use terminology from SCAA Flavor Wheel.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|--|---|
| Recognize, read and be able to use the SCAA Flavor Wheel to define a specific flavor apparent in the coffee. | Taste and describe coffee using verbiage from the Flavor Wheel. Using the SCAA Simplified Cupping form, accurately identify at least 4 tastes or aromas from the wheel that apply to coffee being cupped. | Using the common language for describing coffee flavor with professionals, and consumers is a competency for a CB1. |

Competency 23

State general geographic areas in which coffee is grown.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|--|---|
| State the general regions where coffee is and is not grown. List several coffee-producing countries. | List several coffee-producing countries. | Basic knowledge of coffee production is essential |

Competency 24

Distinguish between coffees that have different processing methods (minimum 2).

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|--|
| Recognize the impact processing method has on coffee flavor | Communicate with a customer the general tastes associated with processing | A CB1 must regularly talk to customers about coffee, and make recommendations. |

Competency 25

Distinguish between effective and poor customer service.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|---|---|
| Describe characteristics of positive and negative interactions with customers. | Facilitate fulfilling customer needs in a way that conveys a positive experience. | A barista is the link of specialty coffee to the consumer and must be skilled in communicating with the consumer effectively. |

Competency 26

List common keys to good customer service.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">★ Start Easy, Finish Strong★ Get the Bad Experience out of the Way Early★ Combine the Pain, Dose out the Pleasure★ Offer Choices★ Give People Rituals | Describe aspects of products, atmosphere, work environment and service. Apply the principles (keys) of good customer service. | A CB1's ability to self govern their service performance is vital to their success in the customer service role. |

Competency 27

State the 5 steps to service recovery.

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. LISTEN!2. Don't take it personally3. Offer a sincere apology4. Ask what will make things better5. Never try to deny or explain | Implement new strategies and procedures to improve customer experience in the business. | A CB1 strives to improve their ability to uncover and exceed their customers' expectations. |

Competency 28**Discuss strategies to improve customer service.**

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|--|--|---|
| Discuss challenging customer service situations and brainstorm possible actions to take based on keys of customer service. | Listening and responding to customers. | Improving customers' experiences advances the industry. |

Competency 29**Define the barista's role in the specialty coffee industry.**

| Knowledge | Skills | Explanations |
|---|---|--|
| Discuss ways that the barista interacts with the coffee industry and the public at large. | Explain the role of the barista, and perform the role and techniques of a professional Barista. | A CB1 uses their perspective and position in the industry to expand the reach of specialty coffee. |