

Italians to send ISSpresso machine to ISS

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(Phys.org) —A pair of Italian companies in cooperation with the Italian Space Agency (ISA) has announced plans to send an espresso machine to the International Space Station, (they're calling it the ISSpresso machine) allowing astronauts to sip hot drinks while conducting research. Lavazza, a well known maker of espresso machines has joined forces with Italian aerospace engineering company Argotec to design an espresso machine capable of withstanding the rigors of space travel—one that can also dispense the liquid in a way that allows astronauts in low gravity to drink products without making a mess aboard the space station.

Representatives for Lavazza told the press that the company has been working on the idea of a [space](#) ready espresso machine for several years. The news that the two companies are near to actually completing such an assignment comes not long after comments made by Italian astronaut Luca Parmitano bemoaning the lack of espresso while aboard the ISS, last year. The new machine will use a capsule system (instead of a full ground system) and will be capable of making not just espresso, but several other hot beverages including caffè lungo and coffee. The company notes that the plastic tube that usually conveys hot water inside a normal espresso machine has been replaced by steel tube, making the unit capable of withstanding very high pressure. They also added multiple redundant systems (and likely resistance to vibration) to ensure continued service for many years to come. The changes have meant increased weight however—it's expected the final machine will be approximately 20 kilograms. The liquid product made by the machine is dispensed into a plastic bag—the astronaut will be able to enjoy his or her beverage by sipping it through a straw.

The ISSpresso is still undergoing testing but engineers on the project fully expect it to be ready for launch this November as part of a long-term mission by the ISA. The same mission will also include Samantha Cristoforetti, the first Italian women to be sent into space, and perhaps the first on the ISS to enjoy the pleasure that only a good espresso can bring.

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