

# Ranking chai lattes:

## The best of the St. John's Wood High Street

As the temperature drops and the trees shed their leaves, Features Editor: Print Eden Leavey and Lead Culture Editor Clara Martinez look for the best place to buy hot chai lattes, a celebrated winter beverage.

**Eden Leavey /**  
Features Editor: Print

**Clara Martinez /**  
Lead Culture Editor

### Starbucks

Once passing through the never ending crowds of Grade 6 students filing in and out of the door, the familiar smell of coffee beans and glucose syrup greets every customer walking into Starbucks. Their chai latte was the lightest in color, perhaps because the tea flavoring comes from a syrup rather than brewed tea. While this is not authentic to the flavor of a typical chai latte, it does make for a sweeter flavor that is enjoyable on occasion.

However, if you are looking for a milder flavor that does not taste like a substitute for a sweet treat, we recommend you look elsewhere for brands that use real tea. A grande is £3.85, landing on the pricier side compared to other cafes.

### Gail's

Gail's prepares their chai lattes unlike any other High Street company. They pour milk into the cup first, adding the tea on top.

While the drink is usually mixed well, about one in every four orders warrants unbalanced flavors where all of the milk gathers at the bottom. In addition, granules of sugar tend to collect at the bottom of the cup, making us wonder how much sugar is added is really in each cup. The hot latte seems to be mixed more consistently, which is

likely due to the heat of the beverage.

Gail's also recently opened a new indoor extension to the St. John's Wood High Street location. However, drinking a chai latte inside will jump the price from £3.50 to £3.70.

### Pret A Manger

The Pret drinks menu lists a chai latte as its own item, but we have found that the drink lacks flavor to differentiate it from a normal latte. In addition, the flavor that is present is more similar to cinnamon than chai.

It has a mild taste and an overpowering presence of milk, but this is nice on days when you are craving a gentle drink that keeps your hands warm.

But for £3.35, your money is better spent elsewhere as the drink is not particularly memorable.

### Orée

Seasonally decorated with snowflake cups and a wreath poster on the shop window, Orée's marketing suggests their chai latte is strong candidate for the best on the St. John's Wood High Street. Upon lifting the drink to one's lips, the silky consistency and hint of cinnamon are made instantly clear.

Unfortunately, the first waft is merely a customer tease as the beverage lacks a depth of flavor and sufficient sweetening. In addition, we noticed the cup was not particularly warm to the touch, and the contents of the drink could have been heated more thoroughly.

Remember that students who provide their school IDs at the Orée checkout will receive a 10% discount on their £3.50 chai latte.

### Laurents

There is truly nothing to criticize when it comes to Laurents' chai latte. Sweet, spicy, creamy and

delectable, this beverage is ideal for someone looking for a way to warm their insides on a chilly winter's day. We recommend you ask your barista to sprinkle extra cinnamon on top as a final touch.

With £3.30 for a regular or £3.70 for a large, chai lattes from Laurents are by far the holiday drink standout.

### Notes

Much to our dismay, Notes' chai latte fell flat in more ways than one. The primary issue with this drink was its utter lack of flavor. If you are looking for a full-bodied beverage infused with spices and sweetness, a chai latte from Notes is not your best bet.

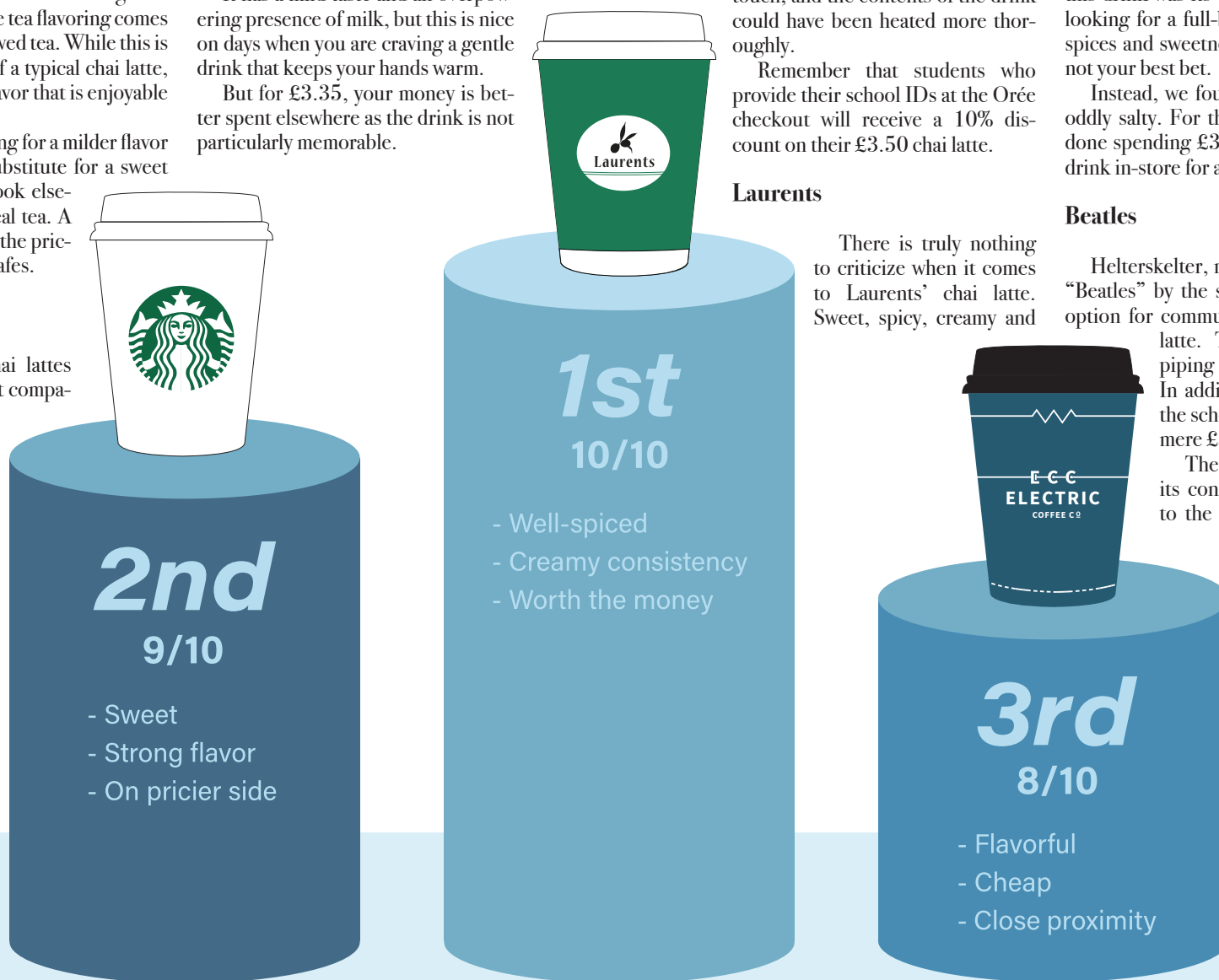
Instead, we found the drink to be weak and oddly salty. For these reasons, we cannot condone spending £3.40 for takeaway or £3.60 to drink in-store for an underwhelming chai latte.

### Beatles

Helterskelter, more commonly referred to as "Beatles" by the student body, provides a safe option for community members craving a chai latte. This staple beverage comes piping hot and packed with flavor. In addition to its close proximity to the school, Beatles's chai latte costs a mere £3.00.

The drink's one vice, however, is its consistency. Instead of adhering to the traditional creamy texture of a chai latte, this beverage bears resemblance to an ordinary brewing tea or coffee.

Nonetheless, a chai latte from Beatles is both the cheapest option available and in the closest proximity to the school, rendering the beverage one of your best bets.



2/10

- Watery
- Oddly salty
- Lacks flavor



4/10

- Room temperature
- Creamy consistency
- Student discount



6/10

- Weaker brew
- Too milky
- On the cheaper side



7/10

- Balanced
- Inconsistent taste
- Price not worth quantity