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## Did Miami Dade College ban Cuban coffee coladas? Only kind of



Miami Dade College is not banning Cuban coffee coladas, it said, after an internet post showed a sign posted in one of its study labs. Credit MDC Social Media Department



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For Miami.com

“Coladas are not allowed” began the internet post that gave Miami a coffee headache.

To many, it was a ruder wake-up call than drinking Cuban coffee *sin azucar*. And yet that little bit of knowledge is all the internet needed to prematurely whip itself into a rage frothier than a cappuccino.

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The first flecks of falling sky came after the humor site Only in Dade posted a sign from Miami Dade College that read, in bold, black letters, “Coladas are not allowed inside the study rooms,” above a picture of the classic colada, the Styrofoam cup of Cuban coffee meant to share with a stack of thimble-sized cups.

“A warning will be issued after the first infraction,” the sign continued. “Any time after that, the room reservation will be cancelled and the room will be made available for another study group.”

Social media did a spit take.



The post was shared more than 1,500 times on Facebook and more than 3,400 reactions on Instagram in the first 20 hours.

“I better not see Becky in there with a frappe,” one Facebook user, Eladio Hernandez, wrote.

Another, Chris McDiesel (I’m sure that’s his real name), added, “You can thank the Savages (sic) that leave coffee and sugar all over the table BECAUSE THEY ARE SCRUBS THAT ARE WELL INTO THEIR 20’S AND STILL DON’T KNOW HOW TO POUR A COLADA without spilling it everywhere.”

Chris whatever-his-name-really-is isn’t wrong.

But no, Miami Dade College is not banning coladas. It’s simply reminding students not to enjoy them inside rooms with carpets and expensive computers.

“Grab a shot on the way in — we’ll join you! — but not inside the study labs,” said Juan Mendieta, Miami Dade College’s director of communications. His social media team even went as far as shooting a video to dispel the misunderstanding.



The signs are an only-in-Miami extension of the college's policy against food or drinks in its computer labs and study halls, where there are expensive computers.

"Here in South Florida, we have to be more specific sometimes," Mendieta said. "The spilled coladas don't go very well with computer equipment and carpets."

Cuban coffee, made with sugar whipped into the first few drops so it forms a simple syrup while brewing, gets viscous and sticky when cold. When spilled — particularly on a keyboard — it rivals a BP catastrophe.

"If you have an amateur who doesn't do it right, you can have some spillage," said Mendieta, who knows you have to pinch a tiny peak into the edge of the Styrofoam cup so the coffee pours smoothly into the thimble-sized cups for sharing.

Plus there's the expert-level shake while pouring, which ensures each tiny cup gets a dollop of frothy, tan crema. That shake? "Another reason for the colada-specific signage," Mendieta rightly added.

Miami Dade College actually encourages Cuban *café*. At least two of the campuses — InterAmerican on Southwest Eighth Street and the Medical Campus in the health district near Jackson Memorial — have *ventanita* walk-up windows, with coffee, croquetas and pastelitos.

This is a town where even Starbucks has a *ventanita* (<https://www.miami.com/miami-restaurants/starbucks-just-opened-a-coffee-ventanita-in-miami-and-your-abuela-is-crying-187118/>).

They would never try to ban Cuban coffee, Mendieta said. They know better.

About 15 years ago, the state health department tried to ban *ventanitas*. Miami-Dade laughed in its face.

"Faced with a political and cultural brouhaha from lovers of Cuban coffee, the state of Florida backed down Wednesday, telling its health inspectors not to enforce a regulation requiring Miami-Dade coffee stand owners to install air curtains or closed-up service windows," a 1998 Miami Herald story read.

So coladas forever, Miami — just not near the keyboards, Dade students.

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