

Costa Smooth Decaf Lungo: why a decaf capsule should be a lungo

From the teas.co.uk wiki

Costa Smooth Decaf Lungo: why a decaf capsule should be a lungo, in summary:

Built for a long cup of about 110ml rather than a short espresso, this decaf capsule is sold as compatible with Nespresso Original machines, not Vertuo. It stays smooth, nutty and low in bitterness right to the bottom.

Last reviewed by the teas.co.uk team in September 2026.

A lungo is not a weak espresso; it is a capsule ground and dosed for roughly twice the water. That matters more for [decaf](#) than for anything else, because most decaf capsules are built as espressos, and stretching them into a mug is where decaf's thin reputation comes from.

Lungo is a grind and a dose, not a strength

A lungo run pushes about 110ml of water through the capsule, roughly twice an espresso. A capsule made for that job holds coffee ground a little coarser, so the extra water can pass through without dragging out harsh flavours. Stretch an espresso capsule to the same volume and it turns dry and bitter towards the end; cut a lungo capsule short and the cup tastes flat.

Most decaf capsules are espressos. People who drink coffee by the mug run them long, get a thin, bitter result and decide decaf cannot make a decent cup. Decaf capsules built as lungos are much rarer, and that is the whole case for this box: the evening mug is designed as a long drink from the start rather than a short one pushed too far.

How it drinks over a full mug

Costa calls the blend smooth, and the roast stops at toasted, nutty notes with a touch of caramel rather than moving on to cocoa and char. The body is medium and, unusually for a decaf lungo, it holds up through the whole cup instead of thinning halfway down. Bitterness is low, just a soft edge at the finish, and acidity is low too: decaffeination softens brightness and the long volume dilutes what remains.

The aroma is protected at the factory, where grinding and sealing happen together and the oxygen is drawn out before the lid goes on, so it survives until the machine breaks into the capsule. That counts for more in a decaf, which has already lost a little aroma along with the [caffeine](#). The smell is at its best in the first thirty seconds, so drink it fresh.

Machines, caffeine and the Costa range

The capsules are sold as compatible with Nespresso Original machines. Vertuo is a different system: it recognises its own capsules by a code round the edge, so these will not run in one. The asterisk beside the trademark on the box is the usual footnote marker on a compatible capsule, and the disclaimer it points to is printed on the pack.

Decaffeinated is never the same as caffeine free, because a small residue always survives the process. For most people it is a reasonable after-dinner choice, but anyone who reacts strongly to caffeine should check the figure on the current pack. With ten pods in the box, it suits a household having a decaf mug or two in the evening; Costa's Smooth Decaf Blend jar is the kettle alternative.

The packs we stock

- [Costa Smooth Decaf Lungo Coffee, Nespresso Compatible, 10 Pods 52g](#) (barcode 8711000577066)

What to eat with it

- [McVitie's Original Hobnobs Biscuits - The Oaty One, 255g](#): an oat biscuit that sits well with the toasted, nutty side of the cup.
- [Lotus Biscoff Caramelised Biscuits, 250g](#): a caramelised biscuit to match the light caramel note in a long, soft mug.
- [McVitie's Hobnobs Milk Chocolate Biscuits, 262g](#): milk [chocolate](#) and oats for anyone who takes the lungo with a splash of milk.

Elsewhere in the Costa range

- [Costa Coffee Intense Amazonian Blend Beans, 200g](#)
- [Costa Coffee Intense Amazonian Blend Coffee Beans, 1kg](#)
- [Costa Coffee Intense Amazonian Blend Ground Coffee, 200g](#)
- [Costa Coffee Latte, 10 x 16g](#)
- [Costa Coffee Mocha Italia Signature Blend Coffee Beans, 200g](#)
- [Costa Coffee Smooth Decaf Blend Instant Coffee, 190g](#)

The full range is on the [Costa brand page](#).

FAQ

What does lungo mean on a coffee capsule? A capsule ground and dosed for a long extraction of about 110ml, roughly twice the water of an espresso, with a coarser grind to suit.

Will Costa Smooth Decaf Lungo work in a Vertuo machine? No. It is sold as compatible with Nespresso Original machines, and a Vertuo only takes its own capsules.

Can I run it on the espresso button? You can, but a lungo capsule cut short makes a flat cup. Use the lungo button it was built for.

Is there any caffeine left in a decaf capsule? A small trace always remains after decaffeination, so it is not caffeine free; check the current pack if you need a figure.

What does the asterisk next to Nespresso on the box mean? It is the standard footnote marker on a compatible capsule, explaining that the Nespresso name is someone else's trademark. The exact wording is on the pack.

Curator's note: If you gave up on decaf capsules because they taste thin in a mug, put this one through on the lungo button before you write the idea off. Lee, teas.co.uk, Tunbridge Wells.

In short: Costa Smooth Decaf Lungo: why a decaf capsule should be a lungo

Field	Detail
Brand	Costa
Packs we stock	Nespresso Compatible, 10 Pods 52g
Category	Decaffeinated Coffee
Caffeine	decaffeinated
Machine	Nespresso Original, not Vertuo
Button	Lungo, about 110ml
Suits	Mug drinkers who want an evening decaf

More from the tea wiki

- [Costa at Home: The Coffee Shop Range](#)
- [Tea vs Coffee: Taste, Caffeine and Switching](#)
- [Caffeine in Tea](#)
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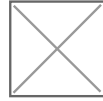
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