

Crema



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FOR COFFEE-LOVERS

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DEUTSCHLAND 7 €
ÖSTERREICH 7 €





UNICA PRO SWISS MADE

{MASCHINENTEST}

First of all, the Unica Pro doesn't fit into any category of the common single or dual boiler espresso machines. The Swiss manufacturer claims to have reimagined the espresso machine, and this is evident in the technical details we'll explore. Even if these innovations aren't immediately visible from the outside. The machine exudes an elegant, clean, and organized appearance. What immediately catches the eye is the large display on the brewing group. The machine is available in various colors. Ours stands on beautiful wooden legs and is encased in a sleek stainless steel housing. The Unica Pro is tilted forward, meaning the front legs are shorter than the rear ones, creating a harmonious design rather than a slanted look. It comes with a double spout portafilter and, quite unusually, with a bottomless portafilter, excluding a single spout version. Onboard, there are four baskets: single, double, bottomless, and a blind filter. A beautifully crafted tamper with a wooden handle and a plastic brush are also included in the package. The machine is operated solely through the touch display.

FIRST IMPRESSION

The manufacturer highlights the speed of the heating process, which we can confirm 100%. It heats up incredibly fast; in 1 minute and 43 seconds, it reaches our desired brewing temperature of 94°C and steam temperature of 126°C. The pump is remarkably quiet, the quietest we've ever encountered. In terms of operation, the machine offers what's called recipes on the touch display. Standard options include espresso, hot water, Americano, and several more, all of which can be configured and personalized. In total, there are 24 options available, more than sufficient. The only thing that struck us as a bit inconvenient about this machine was the water tank. It has sharp edges and a metal cover, positioned behind a cover at the bottom, making it challenging to remove and replace without getting your fingers wet or spilling water. Also, the main switch located below the power cable is not easily noticeable. Tipping the machine to search for it isn't an option, as it would cause water to spill from the tank. These are the only two aspects we'd suggest improving; otherwise, the machine is incredibly impressive in every aspect, as we'll see shortly.



OPERATION AND ESPRESSO QUALITY

After filling the water, we press „Espresso“ on the touchscreen, then choose the double option and place our cups underneath. Since the first espresso turned out quite watery, we checked the settings. And yes, that was our mistake; the machine was filling each cup with $2 \times 25 = 50$ ml of water. In other words, the machine had brewed two double shots (Doppios), but we hadn't ground enough coffee. After realizing this misunderstanding, we repeated the process with the „single“ selection, admired the real-time extraction curve on the display, and enjoyed our excellent espresso afterwards. It can hardly get better; the machine produces top-notch espresso right from the start. Additionally, it displays a clear „grind size analysis“ on the screen after extraction, confirming our ideal grind setting. This is impressive and tastes great. There's more to say about operating this machine, as that's where its uniqueness lies. It features a complex and, in the home environment, rare volumetric dosing and flow control. This provides the ability to adjust the amount of water passing through the coffee at any given moment independently of the back pressure. This flexibility allows for limitless variations in espresso flavor and extracting aromas. Naturally, you can also select the temperature freely. Each parameter is self-explanatory and can be easily inputted through the touch display.

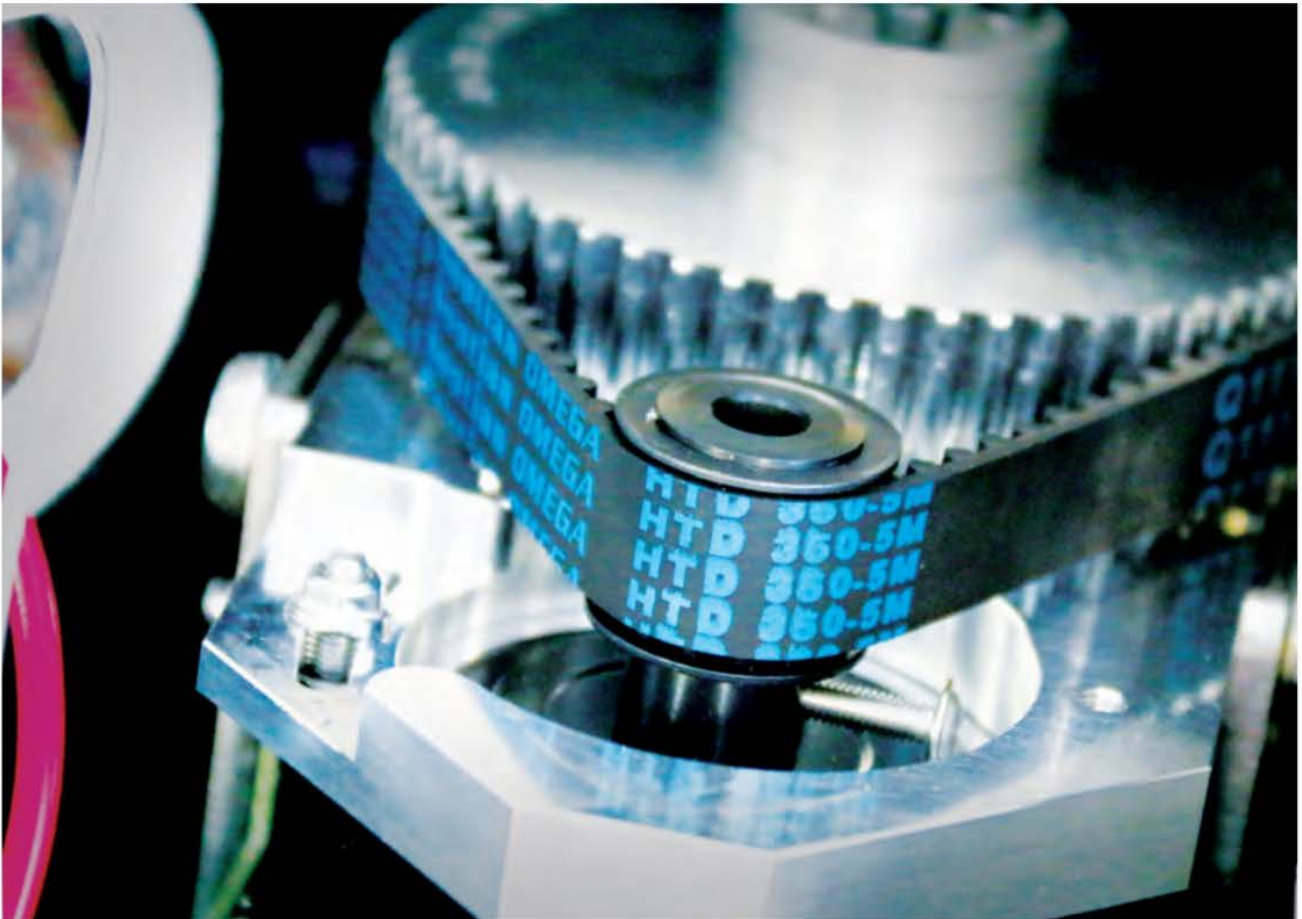
As the machine displays the extraction curve in real-time during the brewing process with analysis, even beginners have no limits to experimenting. The manufacturer states: In addition to precise temperature and reproducible extraction time, reproducible dosing is essential for coffee flavor. Thanks to the accurate volumetric dosing of water, the Unica Pro can precisely control this critical variable of coffee extraction. Simply set the desired brew ratio in the recipe, fill the desired amount of coffee into the portafilter, and the machine takes care of the rest automatically. Indeed, it's exactly like that, and the taste is impressively unique.

Of course, it's almost needless to mention that language settings, rinsing and cleaning programs, various eco and eco-friendly modes can all be selected and practically everything can be programmed. This machine has no limits when it comes to settings. Additionally, it can be accessed via Wi-Fi and Bluetooth.

TECHNICAL DETAILS AND INTERNALS

According to the user manual, „...this machine gives you the ability to independently define the amount of water passing through the coffee at any given moment, regardless of counter-pressure...“ - this is a feature you rarely find in a home machine. This statement requires an extremely sophisticated control system and a pump with a water system without limitations. We could see this after opening the machine. We saw a pump like this for the first time in a home machine. A massive piston pump with an external motor connected by a rubber belt. This is what you would typically find in motorbikes and expensive bicycles as a „beltdrive.“

The pump and motor combination takes up half of the machine's space and was undoubtedly created using high-quality machining. It's pure metal craftsmanship at its finest. This system has to withstand significant pressure, which the plastic hoses, as cleanly laid and secured as they are, undoubtedly manage. In addition to the enormous pump, there's the relatively small boiler and an incredible amount of electronics and heating components. Even the cup warmer has its own electrical heating element and can be programmed. Such a machine requires various sensors, electronics, and a central brain to control it all. And indeed, it has all of these, meticulously and tidily installed. This is the first machine we've seen that doesn't use any copper; it's made entirely of stainless steel parts and hard plastic hoses. This machine is a high-performance computer that conjures exceptional espresso. Repairing it would undoubtedly require an authorized specialist dealer equipped with the necessary measuring instruments, spare parts, and circuitry.



CONCLUSION

This machine is unique, defying classification. You'll hardly find a machine with more potential for experimenting with espresso flavors. The machine leaves a lasting impression, even on the price tag (7,499 CHF), which is understandable in this case. It's a machine for enthusiasts and adventurous coffee lovers.

FACT SHEET UNICA PRO

Dimensions

[Width/Depth/Height]:
432 x 284 x 448 mm

Weight: 25 kg

Power: 2,300 W

Boiler: 0.5 liters

Water Tank: 1.8 liters

Features:

- Quiet and high-quality piston pump
- Volumetric and flow control
- Exceptional build quality
- Vast experimentation possibilities
- Outstanding espresso quality

Price: Approximately 7,499 CHF

Manufacturer's Website:
unica.coffee

Tested with:

Grinder: Mahlkönig EK43

Espresso: Perle de cafe - Specialty coffee, small batch roasting of specialty coffee. At perlledecafe.ch

