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Can This Glass Actually Make Coke Taste Better?

By [Lizbeth Scordo](#), [Shine Staff](#) | [At Home](#) – Tue, Jul 1, 2014 7:52 PM EDT



Wine connoisseurs insist that you absolutely *must* drink your vino **out of the proper glass** or risk ruining a perfectly good bottle. It means putting that Pinot in one type of glass and sipping Chardonnay out of another. The way the glass is designed, it turns out, can affect the way you smell wine, and the shape of the vessel dictates how the liquid hits your palate, all of which affects how it tastes. Now when it comes to an expensive Cabernet at a swanky dinner party, these rules may make sense. But what about when you're just drinking a plain old can of Coke? Turns out the type of glass might make a difference in that case too — at least according to a company that's created a special glass just for swigging soda.

Riedel is best known for making what it calls "groundbreaking varietal-specific crystal glassware," usually with hefty price tags: Its wine glasses can sell for around \$60 a pair, but certain styles **can go for upwards of \$160** per glass. Now Riedel is targeting teetotalers too, insisting it can help make your pop, well, pop.

Simply named **Coca-Cola + Riedel**, the invention is made of ultra-thin glass and vaguely mimics the shape of the **iconic old Coke bottle** with a narrow base, wider middle, and relatively small mouth. It's "made to enhance the drinking experience," according to Riedel, which sells a pair of the glasses for around \$30. "Developed by a tasting panel of industry experts and Coca-Cola lovers," the company touts on its website, "it was determined that this form captures the distinct spices, aroma, and taste of Coca-Cola and creates a magical sensorial experience."

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The Coca-Cola + Riedel glass.

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in a can tastes different than Coke in a bottle, and soda out of a wax-lined paper cup is much better than Coke out of Styrofoam when you're dealing with a fountain drink, he insists. Thus, the type of glass could have an effect too. "I would think, yes, there is a difference," he admits. "Back in the 1950s when Coke came in six-and-a-half-ounce bottles, it tasted better than the 12-ounce bottles. The size made a difference." But Nese doubts the glass is really *necessary*. "Coca-Cola used their one classic glass for 100 years," he points out, referring to [those 16-ounce, thick glasses](#) that were once a staple in every American diner. "I doubt they need a crystal glass."

Expert aside, there was one way to find out if the thing really worked or not. I recruited a few colleagues and we compared Coke in the newfangled glass to drinking the stuff out of a regular old pint glass as well as straight from the can. Here's what we found:

The can: I can't remember the last time I slurped soda from a can (at least without a straw) and I have to say, I didn't enjoy it at all. Neither did my co-workers. Maybe we were suddenly overanalyzing it, but the flavor was too concentrated and tasted too carbonated. "Bitter" and "strong" were a few adjectives used to describe the flavor, and the metallic taste of the actual can was overpowering.

The pint glass: We added four cubes of ice this time (the same amount of ice Riedel recommends using when drinking Coke from its specialty glass) and declared the drink to be "good," "refreshing" and "sweet." Some of us (well, mostly just me) also found ourselves wishing we had a pizza to go along with our Coke despite the fact that lunch was long over.

The Coca-Cola + Riedel glass: Four out of the five of us decided that, yes, the Coke actually *did* taste better in the Riedel glass. I hypothesized that maybe the curvature of the glass prompted the drinker to hold it a certain way so that, like with wine, it made the liquid hit your palate in just the right place. One colleague insisted that, thanks to the shape of the glass's mouth, he noticed more of those enticing Coke aromas he'd normally overlook. Since it smelled better, it actually seemed more flavorful than usual. Another revelation: The ice cubes (we added four here as well) didn't come crashing down on our faces in this glass like it did in the pint glass. The one holdout among us, however, insisted that, though it was close, she felt that the Coke "tasted more like Coke" in the regular old glass and simply preferred the experience of drinking out of the pint glass, saying it fit her face (namely, her nose) better. Different strokes for different Cokes, I guess.

So should you splurge? Well, that depends. If you're a casual Coke consumer, you can probably live without it. But if you've got 30 bucks burning a hole in your pocket and are a Coke connoisseur, then one might very well enhance your soda-sipping experience and be worth a try. Pizza sold separately.

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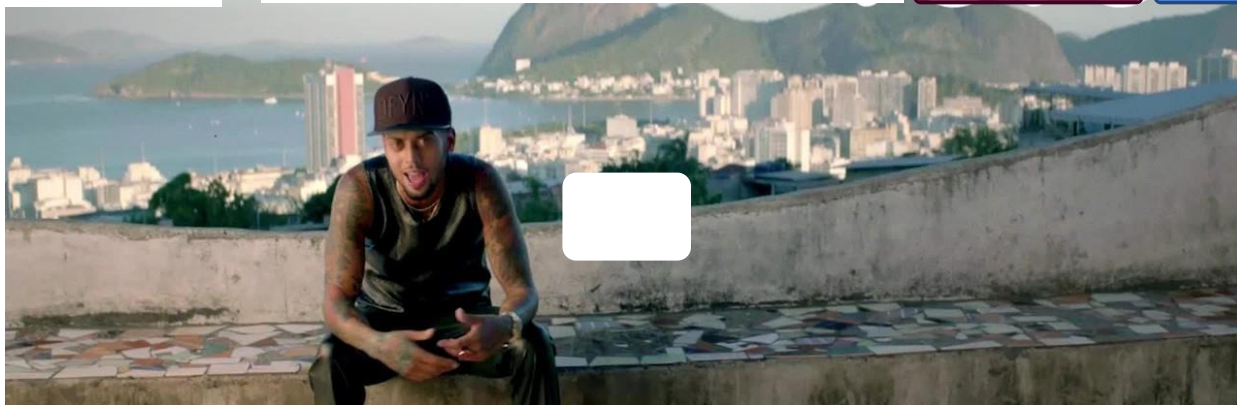
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