

► The Tango XP super automatic series delivers the same quality as traditional machines.

## Tech-savvy

Images: UNIC.

### Unic explains the key technical and software features of the Stella Epic multi-boilers and Tango XP super automatic series that embody consistency, flexibility and innovation.

**U**NICSTRIVES to set industry standards for innovative machines and intelligent brewing solutions to create quality coffee. Its main goal is to apply the best technologies towards fulfilling customers' expectations.

To achieve this, Unic Research and Development Manager of Coffee Jeremy Coquille says its machines are designed to offer a high-level of technical and design features.

"Unic's Stella Epic and Tango XP espresso machines include versatile softwares that can accommodate the different needs and profiles of users," he says. "This includes the Standard mode for most machine users, and an Expert or Specialty mode developed for and dedicated to expert baristas and specialised coffee professionals."

The Stella Epic is Unic's flagship multi-boiler machine that offers baristas a unique way to profile the ideal espresso shot through its Expert mode.

This gives complete control over the full extraction process, including the pre-infusion pressure ramp, with a built-in

pre-infusion chamber. It allows a slower acceleration to full pressure, infusion and post-infusion cycles.

"The main difference between the two modes is how you can define and set the parameters of coffee extraction," says Unic USA Director of Technical Support and Training Paul Flynn.

The Stella Epic also features Unic's Thermalink technology, which controls the distribution of heat through the different boilers.

It results in thermal stability and optimises energy requirements and consumption.

The Thermal Link System is a software specific algorithm that manages power repartition to avoid variation of water temperature output. Thanks to the 1 per cent precision thermal probe, it gives precise information to the software to deliver power where needed, such as the coffee boilers or steam boiler.

"The Stella Epic offers exceptional workflow performance for high volume cafés by using an intelligent power

management system, resulting in one of the most thermally stable brew groups," Flynn says.

Like the Stella Epic, Coquille says the most important consideration when designing the technical components of the super automatic Tango XP series was upholding quality.

"We decided to use heavy-duty 83-millimetre flat burrs combined with a powerful grinder motor to keep consistency, just like you would see in a high-volume coffee shop," he says.

"We then paired the grinding ability with the ingenious mechanism of the Tango brew group. This unique piece of metal guarantees the stability of water temperature to reach the best consistency in coffee extraction."

Unic's Tango dual infusion chamber brew group is a patented design that has received much industry recognition in past years. It replicates all the steps performed by a barista in combination with the mechanism of the two independent pistons.

This is a result of the internal intelligence of the algorithm. It tamps the coffee, and

calibrates the volume and pressure of the infusion chambers.

There is also free space inside the piston to allow the coffee to expand during the pre-infusion. Coquille says this free space can be adjusted through the software.

“Just like a traditional machine, we have strong temperature control over the coffee boiler and the coffee group to maintain the perfect temperature. All Tango XP components and technical solutions enable you to reproduce the gestures of a skilled barista,” Coquille says.

The Tango XP Duo produces up to 440 espresso cups per hour, delivered simultaneously via the two independent pistons. The Tango Solo is an evolution model that features a new single piston.

The Tango XP series also manages the delivery of milk-based drinks thanks to the one-step integrated pump system, an advanced design that delivers hot and cold foam and milk. It also alters the density or texture of foam by playing with air injection via the speed of the pump through user-customised settings or specific parameters.

“A big advantage of this system is its indirect heating, with no water or steam injected inside the milk. The result is a higher-quality milk foam,” Coquille says.

Beyond the one-step is another optional addition called Steamair, which features a temperature probe inside the stainless-steel steam wand to monitor temperature.

For cleaning coffee units, Unic recommends running cycles with a Unic detergent tablet.

“For most super automatic espresso machines, the cleaner is just dropped in



▲ The Stella Epic is Unic's flagship multi-boiler machine.

the brewing chamber. Essentially, just like a shot, it is brewed with cleaner and doesn't backflush the way a traditional machine does. We have a completely different cleaning system where our tablet is mixed with hot water in a separate chamber away from the brewing group. The solution is then pumped through the brewing group in a counter direction for more reliable cleaning of the brew group and valves,” he says.

Flynn says a new era of customers now gets to experience the qualities Unic has always embraced.

“People are becoming more aware of quality coffee and expect a consistent cup, wherever they go. We partner with small- to medium-sized roasters in the United States that choose our machines because they can trust it will make their coffee taste as good as it's supposed to,” he says.

The company sees a strong market

foothold for traditional machines, which it will continue to support and evolve. However, Unic says it recognises the importance of producing fully automatic machines to respond to current market needs.

“We believe the market is shifting in the direction of fully automatics and automation in general. Our Tango XP machine has been conceived so that it can brew the same coffee quality as a traditional machine, maintaining those high total dissolved solids that make a coffee great,” says Unic General Manager VP Tommaso Fontana Rava.

He adds that Unic customers are in need of a machine that can help the processes of a barista, so expert baristas can concentrate on other things like taking care of customers. According to Fontana Rava, having the possibility to create an excellent cup of coffee at the touch of a button is the main reason the company developed and expanded the Tango XP machines.

“Everything about the series is made to simplify the experience of the person in front of the machine, whether they're a technician, novice or expert barista. If you understand how a traditional machine works, then you can replicate the same workflow to dial in your preferred recipe,” he says.

“Looking into the future, we believe coffee will become a more premium item. Consumer's expectation for high quality is not limited in the cup but extends to the overall customer experience. That's why we believe fully automatic machines will receive greater attention from the market.” GCR



▲ The Stella Epic features an Expert mode for experienced baristas.

For more information, visit [www.unic-espresso.com](http://www.unic-espresso.com)