

DINING OUT

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HOT, RICH DRINKS

ROBKASPER
TAKEOUT

TECHNICALLY, THERE IS A difference between a cup of hot chocolate and a cup of hot cocoa. Hot chocolate has cocoa butterfat and is rich and complex. Cocoa is made from cocoa powder, has no butterfat and is uncomplicated yet comforting. But when you are outdoors shivering in the winter wind, as I was recently, you welcome both.

BEST SIP

»» THE FILLING STATION

ADDRESS: // 13501 Falls Road, Cockeysville

PHONE: // 410-785-5955

HOURS: // 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday

This former gas station, now a bare-bones coffee shop, serves a tangy Mexican hot cocoa. A 16-ounce cup of this rich, spiced beverage, made with chocolate powder and hot milk and cinnamon, sells for \$3.20 and delivers a smooth, refreshing ride.

BEST BARGAIN

»» 7-ELEVEN

ADDRESS: // 1538 York Road, Lutherville

PHONE: // 410-296-5171

HOURS: // 24 hours daily

This basic, machine-made Hershey's cocoa is hot, with familiar flavors. It may not please a gourmet, but it would make a kid happy. It's \$1.32 for a 16-ounce cup.

ALSO TASTED

»» THE EVERGREEN

ADDRESS: // 501 W. Cold Spring Lane, Baltimore

PHONE: // 410-235-8118

HOURS: // 6:30 a.m.-8 p.m. daily

This is a well-balanced, if slightly sweet (OK, I went for the whipped-cream topping), hot chocolate made with Guittard syrup. It's \$3.25 for a 16-ounce cup.

»» THE STONE MILL BAKERY CAFE

ADDRESS: // Green Spring Station, 10751 Falls Road, Lutherville

PHONE: // 410-821-1358

HOURS: // 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday

A real hot chocolate, made with Valrhona dark chocolate and cream. It's so rich it feels like you are swallowing a piece of European chocolate. The 16-ounce, \$4.41 serving comes topped with a homemade marshmallow. I never thought I would say this, but the large was too much chocolate and cream for me. I should have had the small, 10 ounces for \$3.62.

Know of a good carryout? Let us hear about it. Write to rob.kasper@baltsun.com.



The Filling Station offered a refreshing drink made with chocolate powder and cinnamon.

ROBKASPER [SUN PHOTOGRAPHER]