

I Hate You a (pumpkin spice) Latte

By Ansley Chambers, copy editor

Think of your basic, rich, Johnson County, teenage girl stereotype, yoga pants, Uggs and a pumpkin spice latte from Starbucks, paid for with their credit cards, thanks to mom and dad. Pumpkin flavoring is everywhere in the fall months. As soon as the temperature dips below 65 degrees or one orange leaf falls off the first tree, the world goes bonkers, craving the taste of cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and allspice mixed together and labeled as “pumpkin spice”.

Whether or not pumpkin flavored things taste good is not what’s up for debate. Everyone likes different things. Some people enjoy the taste of brussel sprouts or hate chocolate, and while that is arguably wrong, it’s not anyone else’s place to judge. We all have incredibly unique sets of taste buds. Trying to debate how something tastes is as pointless as debating whether or not water is wet; it’s irrelevant and nobody is going to change their mind or taste buds. That being stated, the fact that everyone goes insane over a drink is a bit much.

PSLs are overpriced and overrated. It’s just a seasoned cup of coffee that everyone pretends to be obsessed with in hopes of proving that they have more fall spirit than any other basic JoCo teen. Everyone loves a good pumpkin pie on Thanksgiving, a pumpkin cookie or scone on a brisk autumn day or a pumpkin bagel just for the heck of it in October. The hype over pumpkin spice is too much though. Does seasonal flavoring mean things are cooler? Why do pumpkin flavored things get so much love in the fall, while around the Fourth of July you never hear about firecracker flavored things or egg flavored things for Easter? I would love an explanation for the pumpkin spice addiction. Is it something you try out of peer pressure? Are there social PSL drinkers that then become addicted to fall festive caffeine? Pumpkin spice is the autumn specific drug of choice for basic teens everywhere.

The media forces teenagers to worship the almighty PSL. Every other Snapchat story in September features a Starbucks cup, overflowing with whipped cream and sprinkled with the light brown spice, and a soft orange filter with stickers of leaves and pumpkins. All you see in October on Instagram is pictures of pretty girls snuggling their plastic cups and a caption reading, “I’m falling for you,” or, “I love you a {pumpkin spice} latte,” and a cute heart emoji followed by a ghost, leaf or pumpkin. All of their loyal followers leave a like on the post and comment, bragging about how much pumpkin flavored caffeine they’ve consumed that week. The entire world falls at the altar of the PSL.

These kids see the inadvertent advertisements by their peers everywhere they look. They go and excitedly dish out over half of their weekly allowance at a coffee shop counter, camera ready to document the trendy moment. They take the first sip and the disappointment sinks in when they try a pumpkin flavored beverage that is just mediocre at best, having hyped up expectations higher than its potential to fulfill them.

Order whatever seasonal beverage you want. During the fall and winter months, there are tons of potential drinks besides just a PSL. Nobody should feel pressured into ordering any drink just because it's "trendy". If you prefer the taste of a peppermint milkshake, spend your money on that. If you love the comforting feeling of a classic hot chocolate on a cold day, then break out the Swiss Miss. If you prefer any other number of seasonally festive drinks, then you do you and enjoy whatever beverage you want. If you truly enjoy the taste of pumpkin flavored things, then feel free to order all the cheap, pumpkin flavored junk food that your heart desires.