



KEVIN O'NEILL / STAFF ARTIST

# Comedy & Caffeine

Comedians cruise for coffee and chuckles on Jerry Seinfeld's silly website series

**W**ouldn't it be nice if, when you were bored, you could just pick up the phone and call your favorite comedian to invite him out for a cup of coffee? You then would borrow an exotic car, pick him up at his house, and spend a few hours yukking it up over breakfast, lunch or dinner.

That's what your life would be like if you were Jerry Seinfeld. And if you were Jerry Seinfeld, you would be sure to take along a camera crew so you could share your good fortune with the rest of the world. That's the concept behind Mr. Seinfeld's website

**ComediansInCarsGettingCoffee.com.**

The site features a series of short videos — each one is under 20 minutes — of the famous stand-up comedian/sitcom star driving around and eating with other famous, funny people. It's just a couple of comedians enjoying each other's company while making hilarious observations about life. The videos are unscripted and unrehearsed, but they are edited down to the best 10 or 15 minutes.

## Custom wheels

Each guest is picked up in a different car that's been selected to match his personality. Michael Richards — who played Kramer, the eccentric doofus who lived across the hall from Jerry on "Seinfeld" — is driven around in an old Volkswagen pickup truck that has as much primer and

rust on it as it does finish coat. Elder comedic statesman Carl Reiner is chauffeured about in a Rolls Royce, and "30 Rock's" Alec Baldwin in a Mercedes SL. English comedian and creator of "The Office" Ricky Gervais grips the dashboard in mortal fear for his entire jaunt in an English-built Austin Healey.

## A strong brew

So far, I've watched five of the 10 videos on the site, and they were all funny. The Alec Baldwin and Ricky Gervais episodes were almost non-stop laughs. Even though Mr. Baldwin is not technically a comedian, he's the funniest guy on the site.

The Carl Reiner and Mel Brooks episode was funny and sweet. These two comedy legends have been friends for more than 60 years, and they still get together regularly for dinner and movies over TV trays at Mr. Reiner's house. Originally it was just Mr. Seinfeld and Mr. Reiner having breakfast, but Mr. Reiner invited Mr. Seinfeld to join the two old pros for dinner. Despite having two lifetimes of work behind them, they still tell jokes and mug for the camera like a couple of up-and-comers.

For fans of the "Seinfeld" show, the get-togethers with Mr. Richards and Larry David were like seeing old friends. There is so much of the Kramer character in Mr. Richards that he's a joy to watch. But there are some touching moments when he talks with regret about the unfortunate incident he had a few years ago involving racial slurs directed toward a heckler at a standup gig.

Mr. David is so much like the George character based on him that you feel like you're watching an episode of the sitcom.

## A nice ride

As you'd expect from someone with pockets as deep as Mr. Seinfeld's, the production values of the videos are quite good. They start with artistic quick cuts of the vehicle du jour, which help set the stage for the featured guest. The clips feature a tasteful piano soundtrack that makes for nice audio transitions between scenes. Multiple cameras are mounted in the vehicles so the focus can be shifted between driver and passenger, or both of them can be shown together.

There's usually another series of quick cuts of the coffee being prepared when they arrive at the restaurant. Background footage of the route they travel and their destination is interspersed artfully throughout the videos. Each of the main videos also has several outtakes, dubbed "Spare Parts."

The design of the website is simple and clean. There's very little type on the page, and it has a muted color palette featuring shades of grey. The site is just one page with a large area at the top where the videos are viewed. Below that is a scrollable gallery with all of the other clips in it. You simply click on what you want to watch, sit back and enjoy.

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