

Check the Ashtray: Using Ashes to Determine the Quality of Your Cigar

How to tell if your cigar is of the highest quality? Check the ashtray—the ashes left behind can speak volumes about the quality of your cigar. Here a few simple tips to determining the quality of your cigar.

First, note how fast your cigar burns. A cigar that seems to burn too quickly or disposes ashes that break apart easily is probably a lower quality cigar. If the ashes seem too messy, and don't break apart together, this may also indicate a lower quality cigar. Also, check the color of the ashes. If the ash color seems to change, the tobacco leaf mix may be of poorer quality.

The highest quality cigars, those that are well packed, will burn very slowly and burn stiff ash. The 'stiff ash' can remain intact up to two to three inches long, and remain on the cigar without breaking apart. A high quality cigar can be burned down to the nub. Even high quality cigars may vary in taste, especially when they are smoked down to the nub. Many times, you can usually get 'burn past' these bitter spots by letting the cigar burn on its own for a few minutes.

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