

#History of coffee

After oil, coffee is the most valuable legally traded commodity in the world. We love it, we rely on it, and we drink it in massive quantities. It is estimated that 2.25 billion cups of coffee are consumed every day worldwide.

As with most foods that have been around for centuries, coffee's beginnings are enveloped in mystery and lore. There is a popular Ethiopian legend wherein coffee is discovered by a goat herder named Kaldi, who found his goats frolicking and full of energy after eating the red berries of the coffee shrub. Kaldi tried the berries for himself and experienced a similar reaction. After witnessing their strange behavior, a monk took some of the berries back to his fellow monks; they too spent the night awake and alert. Of course, they were reacting to coffee's high dose of caffeine content. This natural stimulant also serves as an inborn plant pesticide, protecting the coffee berries from insects. ([#Coffee for Health](#))

Before coffee became our morning beverage of choice, it appeared in a variety of different preparations. In its most basic, unprocessed form, coffee is a cherry-like fruit, which becomes red when ripe; the coffee bean is found at the center of the red coffee berry. Early on, the berries were mixed with animal fat to create a protein rich snack bar. At one point, the fermented pulp was used to make a wine-like concoction; incidentally, a similar beverage was made from the cacao fruit, before the advent of chocolate, which goes to show that humans are especially adept at finding new ways to imbibe. Another drink that appeared around 1000 A.D. was made from the whole coffee fruit, including the beans and the hull. It wasn't until the 13th century that people began to roast coffee beans, the first step in the process of making coffee as we know it today.

The word "coffee" has roots in several languages. In Yemen it earned the name *qahwah*, which was originally a romantic term for wine. It later became the Turkish *kahveh*, then Dutch *koffie* and finally *coffee* in English.

The modern version of roasted coffee originated in Arabia. During the 13th century, coffee was extremely popular with the Muslim community for its stimulant powers, which proved useful during long prayer sessions. By parching and boiling the coffee beans, rendering them infertile, the Arabs were able to corner the market on coffee crops. In fact, tradition says that not

a single coffee plant existed outside of Arabia or Africa until the 1600s, when Baba Budan, an Indian pilgrim, left Mecca with fertile beans fastened to a strap across his abdomen. Baba's beans resulted in a new and competitive European coffee trade.

In 1616, the Dutch founded the first European-owned coffee estate in Sri Lanka, (then Ceylon). The French began growing coffee in the Caribbean, followed by the Spanish in Central America and the Portuguese in Brazil. European coffee houses sprang up in Italy and later in France, where they reached a whole new level of popularity. Now, it is de *rigueur* for Parisians to indulge in a cup of coffee and a baguette or croissant at the numerous cafes throughout Paris.

#Types of coffee

Coffee can be roasted or be made from grounded coffee. It is the preparation of coffee that is done differently. Let us have a cursory glance at some of the types of coffee based on the method of preparation.

1. **Filter coffee** . Also called as Drip coffee it is prepared by using finely ground coffee placed on paper through which steaming hot water is passed and the final brew is obtained in the decoction.
2. **Plunger or cafetiere** . Coarsely grounded coffee is placed in a pot over which hot water is added. Coffee and water are brewed for some time after which the mixture is left to steep for a brief period of 4 to 5 minutes. Once done, the plunger is pushed hard to separate the coffee grounds from the coffee infusion.
3. **Espresso** . The coffee ground is very fine, over which pressurized hot water is passed. The coffee obtained is filled inside the cups placed beneath the outlet. The coffee also has a layer of fine and creamy foam.
4. **Swedish/Scandinavian coffee** . Made by boiling ground coffee in water, it is often served without filtering. This coffee as its namesake originated in Sweden and is consumed mostly in the Nordic countries. It is a strong brew of coffee and is kept hot throughout the day for consumption.
5. **Turkish coffee** . This kind of coffee is prepared in a special kind of copper pot which has a long handle. This vessel is called as an Ibriq. In

order to prepare a single cup of coffee in this vessel, two teaspoons of finely ground coffee and one spoon of sugar are added to one cup water. This mixture is then brought to boil on an average of three times. One may add cardamom seed, milk, or various syrups to enhance its flavour and aroma.

#Coffee for Health

A large number of people consume coffee on a regular basis. Equally vast numbers of researches have been conducted on the benefits of coffee on the health. The findings indicate that a consumption of 3-5 cups everyday compliments a healthy and active lifestyle.

#Caffeinate the mind and body

Caffeine is one the major components of coffee. Caffeine acts as a stimulant and when taken in normal doses it helps to improve the mental fitness by making the mind more aware of its surroundings, resulting in better response time and increased concentration.

Caffeine has an ergogenic effect on the body which means that it enhances the overall capacity to do physical work. It is believed that caffeine increases the adrenalin levels in the body which results in an increased blood flow to the muscles and the heart.

Breaking the Myths

Myth - Coffee drinking leads to dehydration

Studies indicate that coffee consumption of up to 5 cups a day does not affect the fluid balance of the body in any way. The body therefore does not dehydrate when coffee is consumed within the normal threshold of 1- 5 cups per day.

Myth . Coffee drinking leads to dependence

There are scientific experiments conducted by the WHO that shows that caffeine in coffee does not induce any kind of dependence. However, cold turkey natured cessation of coffee may result into mild withdrawal symptoms

#Your Coffee Machine and You!

1. Electric Drip Coffee Maker

- Also known as the dripolator, this machine houses a reservoir in the base which is called as the hose.
- Cold water enters the reservoir through a thin metal tube
- The water moves to the heating chamber when machine is turned ON
- Water once heated in the heating chamber moves to the sprayer via the rubber hose. This movement through the rubber hose is achieved via the effect of thermally induced pressure and siphoning effect
- The ground coffee placed on the brew basket is perched below the sprayer head
- Hot and pressurized water passes through the ground coffee and drips down into the carafe of capacity 10-12 cups

2. Espresso Coffee Machines

These machines rose to fame in the 18th century, designed specifically to cater to the bold taste of espresso.

- These coffee machines can use any kind of ground coffee including both dark and light roasted ones
- Modern makes of these machines come with a dual spout that allows two different espresso shots simultaneously
- Adjustable short length provides the desired espresso shot in taste

3. French Press (No electricity needed)

The French Press was developed in the 1850s. This is the oldest and the simplest of coffee making mechanism without the use of electricity. It comprises of a tall glass cylinder, a plunger and a filter.

- The user has to place coarse ground coffee at the bottom of glass cylinder
- Pour boiling hot water into the glass cavity
- Stir the entire mixture with a metal spoon and let the brew sit for up to a maximum of eight minutes
- Press the plunger, slowly letting coffee grounds to seep out of the filter

4. Single Cup Makers –

Pre-packaged coffee pods makes single cup. A coffee pod has coffee grounds and a miniature filter in the pack. These makers are easy to clean and maintain and suitable for small households with few coffee lovers. Quick in operation they allow different users to suit their different tastes by using varying coffee flavours in the pods.

- Hot water is filtered through the coffee pod in the machine slot provided. The action results in a single cup of coffee.