

Cold Brew Factory

What's A Good Coffee?

(From Coffee Bean To Brewing, Detailed Explained)



(#Part I - Coffee Bean Selection)

— A Better Way To Recharge —

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What's a good coffee?

Speaking about good coffee, what's in your mind right now? What's the best coffee you have ever had? How do you know it is a good one? Do you have any standard about rating a cup of coffee?

Today I will be talking about something more academic – how should we cherish a cup of coffee? From seeing the coffee bean, smelling the coffee ground, brewing the coffee, and finally to consume the coffee. Each and every steps detailed explained of how should a good coffee be.

Worth a read, you can explain and discuss with your friends afterwards. Let's get started!



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Criteria of a good coffee

Let me define what a good coffee should possess, once you have an idea of how it's like, you will understand what I am talking about later on easier.

Criteria of a good coffee:

- 1) A high altitude (1,000m or above)
- 2) A “better” bean variety (what I called “better” means more complexity)
- 3) A good green bean process
- 4) Cupping score
- 5) Correct roasting curve used
- 6) Level of roasting defect
- 7) Sufficient resting after roasting
- 8) Right grind size for brewing
- 9) Right temperature for brewing
- 10) Right water for brewing
- 11) Right extraction
- 12) Right temperature to consume

That's almost all of the criteria, it's quite a lot to talk about, so I split it into three parts – coffee bean, roasting, brewing. Stay tuned if you are interested.

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Part I – Coffee Bean Selection

From the moment you have chosen a coffee bean, it has already determined whether you will be drinking a good coffee or not, why? From different regions, different altitude, varieties, and process, all of these factors has determined the outcome of a coffee. To choose from numerous choices in market, you should have the following ideas for choosing the right coffee for yourself.

Altitude

A high altitude of 1,000m or above is an ideal environment for growing coffee, a frost free climate with average temperature of 15-22 degree whole year, moderate amount of rainfall full year with sufficient amount of sunshine. These cool conditions make everything slower, which the coffee has a longer growing cycle with longer development of the coffee cherry.

More complex sugar is formed and as a result of higher complexity. Also, the soil is usually highly fertile and volcanic, providing extremely nice flavor for the coffee.

Most of the amazing coffee are grow in altitude of 1,200-1,800m which giving a floral and fruity notes most of time.

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Part I – Coffee Bean Selection

Region 1,000m or above – El Salvador, Colombia, Honduras, Ethiopia, Panama, Kenya, etc.

One important point is that, the more fruitiness or complexity of a coffee, it tends to be higher altitude; the nuttier or more herbal of a coffee, it tends to be lower altitude than 1,000m, e.g. Brazil, Indonesia, etc.

Yirgacheffe

Bright with strong floral notes along with citrus and berry-like flavor, significant sourness and tropical fruit note.

Kenya

Dried-plum, dark-colored fruit, sweet and thick body, cocoa, peanut, toasted bread

Tanzania

Herbs, black tea, toasted nuts, chocolate, malt, slightly sour, thick body

Costa Rica

Strong floral, significant sourness, rum, passion fruit, pineapple, toasted nuts

Guatemala

Floral, caramel, smooth body, roasted nuts, maple syrup, thick body

Panama

Orange, toffee candy, caramel popcorn, sweet melon, nuts, thick body

Honduras

Lychee, honey with fruity note, floral, orange, dried mango, berry, malt

Brazil

Nuts, malt, herbs, chocolate, dried fruit

Ecuador

Black currant, roasted nuts, rum, orange

Colombia

Strong floral, lychee, caramel, juicy, honey, plum, thick body, slightly sour

India

Roasted nuts, herbs, rice straw, wood

Indonesia

Herbal, woody, caramel, toasted nuts, dried fruit, cocoa, honey, malt, smoke

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Part I – Coffee Bean Selection

Coffee bean variety

Variety really matters as some of the varieties are having very fruity note and some not, you have to choose the right variety for the taste note you are looking for. Let's discuss some of the common varieties to let you know more about the differences. Most of the regions has its own varieties of coffee, so when speaking about some origin, some common taste note has already appeared in you mind, right?

Bourbon – vanilla, caramel, honey, hazelnut, cocoa, citrus,
SL28/SL34 – black currant, plum, grapefruit, tropical fruit, cherry, blackberry
Caturra – almond, chocolate, vanilla, hazelnut, walnut
Heirloom – floral, citrus, berry, lime, lemon, peach, black tea
Geisha – Jasmine, lychee, papaya, grapefruit, cherry, raspberry, mango
Ruiru 11 – blackberry, red grape, black currant, lemon
Batian – red grape, raspberry, lemon, berry
Castillo – caramel, brown sugar, almond, cocoa
Catimor – black tea, chocoa, cherry
Catuai – plum, mango, tropical fruit, pear, almond, chocolate
Typica – nuts, chocolate, vanilla, cocoa, almond, walnuts

When you have a certain taste note preference, next time instead of choosing a certain region, try choosing variety instead, it should give you a more accurate expected outcome.

For a fruity and complex, I will choose SL28, SL34, heirloom, geisha, catuai, bourbon, most of the time it gives a “better” coffee.

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Part I – Coffee Bean Selection

Coffee bean process

Process decide the acidity, mild/strong flavor, character, certain taste note (special process, e.g whisky). Choosing different process means that you are looking for a certain result, like when you choose washed process, the acidity tends to be higher; anaerobic tends to produce certain taste note which is very strong and noticeable. Here are some common process that you can see in the market.

Natural - sweet, strong flavor, taste a bit more complex

Washed – higher acidity, clean cup, mild flavor

Honey – sweet, honey, peach

White honey – maple syrup, nut, caramel

Yellow honey – vanilla, hazelnut,

Red honey – cherry, blackberry, cocoa

Black honey - raspberry, cranberry, apple

Slow dry – bright acidity, strong flavor

Anaerobic – lychee, molded, strong flavor, modified flavor

Carbonic – winery, red grape, raspberry, modified flavor



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Summary - Coffee Bean Selection

The whole process for choosing a “good” coffee for you should be like the path below when you enter a shop.

For example, the shop has 1) Ethiopia Yirgacheffe Heirloom Washed, and 2) Honduras bourbon Natural

1) Ethiopia Yirgacheffe Heirloom Washed

This one you should be expecting a bright acidity, clean cup, with floral, lemon, black tea taste note.

2) Honduras bourbon Natural

This one you should be expecting a strong flavor, complex, with dark chocolate, citrus, brown sugar taste note.

When you have these things in mind, you are likely to choose a “better” coffee for yourself. When you have these ideas in mind, what you will be served should have a certain expectation in your mind.

This next part will be about roasting, whether the roaster has chosen a great roasting curve for the coffee bean or not? Any defect? Any problem about the roast? We will further discuss about it in the next part, stay tuned.

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Summary

After all, it is all up to you, I am just sharing some of my opinion and experience in here. I suggest you try it first before you believe in me or having any conclusion reading up until here.

What you taste and how you feel is more important, you are the one who enjoy the coffee, just give it a try.

Let's end this topic here and we will discuss more in our next e-book. Follow us on IG and stay update with us.

Stay update and get notice on our Instagram. (@coldbrewfactory)

I will see you in the next book. Cheers!

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