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An Occasional Newsletter: Conversations about Coffee



wild
women
coffee



Swiss Water Process Deconstructed

Anyone who drinks decaf coffee has heard that “Swiss water processed” is the healthiest (and tastiest) option. Why?

All decaffeination processes are performed on the green bean before it is roasted. The two solvent methods (direct and indirect) use chemicals to remove caffeine - either from the water that beans have steamed in and been reintroduced to, or from the beans directly. Another process uses liquid CO₂ to force caffeine from the beans; the caffeine is left behind when the CO₂ returns to its gaseous state.

But, the Swiss Water Process avoids chemicals and keeps flavors intact. An initial batch of beans is soaked in hot water long enough for the caffeine, as well as all the coffee’s flavor, to be transferred from the beans to the water. The caffeine is removed from the water via a filter that only captures the caffeine molecules and that first batch of clean, bland beans is discarded. A new batch of beans is then soaked in the decaffeinated water (or green coffee extract). Remember osmosis from middle school science? Since the water is saturated with all the elements of the bean *except* caffeine, *only* caffeine will escape from the new batch of beans into the water. Voila! After soaking, flavor remains, caffeine is gone!

What’s the DeCaf Deal?

Does it really matter?

It seems like everyone has an opinion about the dangers and benefits of coffee. Does decaffeinating the popular drink eliminate the danger while retaining the benefits? Can a decaf brew taste good?

A cup of coffee is a favorite pick-me-up drink for many people—especially first thing in the morning. But for others the drink has been linked to nervousness, jitters and sleep problems.

According to the article *Coffee, Caffeine and Health* in the New England Journal of Medicine, “moderate consumption of coffee or tea can be part of a healthy lifestyle.” While evidence isn’t strong enough to recommend

consuming caffeine for disease prevention, it is true that consumption of 3 to 5 standard cups of coffee daily has been consistently associated with a reduced risk of several chronic diseases. Many cultural traditions involving the consumption of coffee and tea have developed over hundreds of years around the world. Perhaps the most common tradition in the United States is to drink coffee to battle fatigue and increase productivity. According to the same article, “Consumption

of 2 to 5 standard cups of coffee per day has been associated with reduced mortality in cohort studies across the world.” Studies indicate plenty of advantages to coffee consumption.

And yet, caffeine can have a toxic effect too. It would be hard to pull off an intentionally fatal caffeine poisoning with coffee (the victim would have to consume 75-100 cups of brew in a very short time), but for some

people, shakes, insomnia, restlessness, and anxiety come on after just a couple of cups. Reducing caffeine with decaf or half-caf coffee can reduce these unwanted side effects. To get the tastiest decaf choose a light to medium roast and go for a blend rather than a single origin option. The decaf process does not differentiate between good and bad chemical elements, so a mix of beans will provide the best reconstituted flavor and a lighter roast will retain more of it.

All of coffee's benefits
are null if
anxiety and insomnia
keep you from
drinking it!

Put on Your Roasting Hat!

1st in a series on home roasting techniques

(See the demo on Instagram #WWCLogoGirls)

Home roasting is easier than most people think and is a satisfying and fun way to get your buzz on. Here is an easy way to turn green beans into your perfect brew.



Adapt your popper for coffee roasting by replacing the chute portion with a piece of screen to keep the beans from flying out of the popper prematurely. Pour half a cup of green beans into the popper and turn it on.

Many commercial roasters use hot air to heat coffee beans – if you have an air corn popper, then you have a mini-roaster! As the coffee beans heat and expand, you will actually hear them pop! An added benefit of this technique is that it blows most of the chaff (papery covering on the bean) right out of the roaster.

As the beans heat they will turn brown and begin to crackle. Watch the beans carefully! Within five minutes the beans will have gone from green to light brown. After 20-25 minutes they will be dark brown and shiny. Once the roasting starts it moves along quickly. You'll learn to anticipate your favorite roast and remove the beans from the heat just before they get where you want them.



Patience serves a roaster well.

As the beans heat up, moisture in each bean expands and causes it to explode, or crack. To achieve a light roast, turn off the heat as soon as the cracking begins. For a darker roast, wait another few minutes. The darkest roast is reached when the beans become dark brown and shiny with expressed oils and get noisy with their “second crack.” The oil is flammable so BE CAREFUL! Pour the beans into a colander just before they are perfect as they will keep heating even after the popper is off. Shake the colander to quickly cool the beans and remove any remaining chaff. Let the beans rest for a day before grinding.



Climate, Terroir and Coffee

Coffee grows throughout the regions of the world that lay in the “bean belt,” between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. The three main growing regions are Central & South America, Southeast Asia and Africa & the Middle East. Within these regions there are subregions defined by altitude and other geographic characteristics. High altitude cherries develop complex sugars as they ripen slowly in harsh growing conditions. They yield rich, flavorful coffees with nuanced characteristics and identities.

Coffees from the Arabica plant offer various signature flavors depending on where they grow:

Country/Region	Characteristics
Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Colombia, Brazil	Sweet, bright, acidic; chocolate, caramel, spicy nuances; full flavor
Vietnam, Sumatra, United States (Hawaii)	Musty, smoky, earthy
Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda	Fruity hints of citrus and berry, herbal notes, light and dry, hints of chocolate



Valentine Special

Our February Valentine for you! Use the code “market” at checkout for the \$1 per ounce market price all month long.

Did you meet us at a Farmers’ Market last summer? Then you’re likely in the neighborhood! Choose **free local delivery** to save on shipping. On Fridays we zip around Connecticut, emission free, in our little electric car.

www.WildWomenCoffee.com

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Check out Wild Women Coffee selections from around the world!