

How often brew?

COFFEE



EVERYTHING YOU
NEED TO KNOW
ABOUT COFFEE—
FROM ALL CORNERS
OF THE WORLD.

by **DONNA SOZIO**

the quest

to discover the holy grail of caffeine — that perfect cup of coffee — can take you on a global adventure through the tight, winding vicolo of Rome to the bustling streets of Hanoi and the jungles of Costa Rica.

Since the discovery of this magical bean many centuries ago in Ethiopia, coffee has always been the domain of passionate people — from the dedicated farmers who meticulously grow and hand-pick the best beans, to the coffee roasters in search of the world's most exquisite flavor profiles, and finally to you, the coffee connoisseur, who savors every drop.

HOW THE WORLD DRINKS ITS COFFEE

Today, it's estimated that we consume 3 billion cups of coffee daily worldwide, which has inspired numerous hot and cold preparations and a range of flavors.

Vietnam is famous for its dessert-worthy Cà phê Trứng (egg coffee). Unlike anything else, a creamy, custard-like dollop of sweetened condensed milk and whipped egg yolk sits atop a traditionally strong Vietnamese coffee. Rose Lattes are all the rage everywhere from the French patisserie Ladurée to neighborhood restaurants like Stationery in the quirky artist colony Carmel in California. And at Lofty Coffee Co. in San Diego, you can feel the heat with an Aztec Mocha that has dark cacao, cinnamon and cayenne.

In Italy, baristas serve a Caffé Marocchino. Not too sweet and poured in a tiny glass, it's gone in three sips as heavenly layers of bitter cocoa powder, espresso and hot frothy milk melt in your mouth. Spain's signature Café Bombón is a national obsession that combines strong espresso with sweetened condensed milk in equal parts. And the Turks boil fine coffee grounds with sugar and cardamom in an ibrik and serve it in a demitasse cup.

When temperatures rise, a Vietnamese Cà Phê Dừa (coconut coffee) or Hawaiian Iced Coffee may hit the spot. The former contains frozen coconut cream, condensed milk, ice and strong coffee. The later is a full-bodied ice coffee topped with lightly browned shredded coconut and a sprinkle of dark sugar.



In the summer, Italians cool down with a Caffé Shakerato. Baristas mix espresso with ice in a cocktail shaker and serve it cold in an elegant martini glass. And finally, there's an obsession brewing in California: Philz Coffee Iced Mint Mojito pour-over. Made with fresh mint and subtly sweetened, it makes coffee purists skeptical — until they taste it.

COFFEE DRINKERS, UNITE!

Coffee was never meant to be hastily sipped solo in a to-go cup. All over the world, coffee culture creates community. It's an invitation to appreciate meaningful, albeit brief, moments together with neighbors, family and friends.

Yalem Kiros, lead roaster and co-owner of NABS Deli and Coffee Shop in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, says she roasted beans daily as a child growing up in Ethiopia. "Everyone, regardless of status, lights a small charcoal stove to roast coffee. If you lived alone or couldn't afford coffee, there was always an open invitation into a neighbor's home."

In Naples, the heartfelt tradition of Caffé Sospeso



Specialty craft coffee roasters take a refined culinary approach to selecting beans.

(suspended coffee) is a simple yet profound act of generosity that can bond people together forever. A patron buys two coffees: one for themselves and another for a stranger, thus leaving a coffee "suspended" to give to someone who can't afford it. The emotional Netflix documentary *Coffee for All*, about this ritual, shows how the simple act of buying a stranger a coffee can be deeply and positively affecting.

BREW IT YOURSELF

From grinding and brewing to pouring and serving, elevate your homebrewing experience with expert tips that make all the difference:

After choosing 100-percent arabica beans, whether you use a Moka pot, espresso machine, Unimatic or prefer pour-overs, the best cup of coffee comes down to the grinder, says Bobak Roshan from Demitasse Coffee in Santa Monica, CA. "From everything I've played with, a performance grinder makes the biggest difference in terms of the quality of the cup." Inferior blade grinders are a coffee lover's worst nightmare. Above all else, Will Shurtz, co-owner of Methodical Coffee, in Greenville, SC., suggests a Baratza burr grinder for quality and consistency.

While nothing is carved in stone, there are expert recommendations on brewing. Giorgio Milos, Italian barista champion and illy's North American master barista, advises matching the flavor profile of your favorite coffee to a brewing method for best results: Delicate single-origin beans with floral notes, Milos says, require a gentle pour-over method. A Moka pot is best for beans from Brazil, Guatemala and India that express stronger notes of caramel, chocolate and honey. The Italian espresso brewing method is recommended for blends to taste a complex variety of flavors. And the French press — Milos' favorite way to brew coffee — works for all types of beans.

For delicious froth, Milos recommends using organic whole milk; the fat content makes a rich, creamy foam with a lovely mouthfeel. But adding milk isn't always the best option. For coffee with delicate citrus or floral notes like jasmine, Milo advises drinking it black.

However you enjoy your coffee, one thing remains true: the absolute divine pleasure in a good cup. Coffee reminds us to stop for a moment and enjoy a simple pleasure. To modify the famous W.C. Fields quote about beer every-so-slightly, "Everybody should believe in something. I believe I will have another coffee." □