

Food & Drink



Coffee break

Making delicious, café-quality coffee at home doesn't need to be a chore. **Victoria Brownlee** gets a step-by-step guide from Café del Volcán on how to brew the perfect cup in your very own kitchen

Once you've got all your equipment in place (see right), just follow our simple guide:

Wet the filter

Start by wetting the filter with hot water so you don't have the taste of paper in your coffee, and so your filter stays in place. It will also help to warm up the glass.

Weigh and then grind your beans

Grind and measure how much coffee you want – pick a coffee-to-water ratio of roughly 1:13. For 500ml of water, use about 38g of coffee – or simply go by the indications on your grinder depending on how many cups you want to make. You can also buy a coffee scoop to measure out three scoops per 250ml of water. If you like your coffee a bit lighter, it's fine to reduce the amount of coffee. Stronger? Use more. Once you know the basics, it's perfectly acceptable to adjust to your own preference.

Check your water temperature

Be careful not to use boiling water. If you boil water and then wait three to five minutes, it's going to be about the right temperature (as long as your house isn't freezing). If you're aiming for perfection, get a thermometer and use water that's 88-95 degrees Celsius.

Moisten the ground beans

First, pour out the hot water you used to heat up your drip pot (and don't reuse it as it will now taste like paper). Add your ground beans into the paper filter. Cover the grounds with the hot water to moisten the coffee and let it settle; the increased density will also ensure the water doesn't run through too quickly. If you see a lot of bubbles, it's a good sign: it means that your coffee is fresh. The more air there is remaining in the grounds, the fresher the bean.

Add water

Once you've moistened your grounds, you can begin to pour over the remaining water. Pour slowly in a circular motion and use the water to separate the coffee from the rims of the filter, as this will help maximise extraction. This part of the process takes no more than a couple of minutes. Once you start pouring, keep the coffee covered with water and fill to the rim until empty.

Enjoy

Drink up! As you can see, setting yourself up to make coffee at home can initially appear expensive, but when you break down the price per cup, you can potentially save yourself quite a bit of dough. Once you've got everything sorted, a cup of drip coffee can cost as little as 8.30RMB to make in your own kitchen (as opposed to a chain store coffee, which can set you back upwards of 22RMB).

Learn more

Café del Volcán hosts a weekly coffee club – check cafevolcan.com/pages/coffee-club for more details or else pay a visit to their Yongkang Lu hub.

Café del Volcán 80 Yongkang Lu, near Xiangyang Nan Lu, Xuhui district (156 1866 9291). Open 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-8pm Sat-Sun. ☉ Shaanxi Nan Lu. 徐汇区永康路80号, 近襄阳南路

Price list

Pour over

- Drip pot plus filter cone...**198RMB**
- Filters.....**36RMB**
- Measure spoon.....**32RMB**
- Grinder.....**from 189RMB**

French press

- French press.....**from 168RMB**
- Grinder.....**from 189RMB**

Optional

- Measure spoon.....**32RMB**
- Air-tight storage tub.....**78RMB**
- Stainless steel drip pot..**198RMB**



Coffee novices, start here

Coffee shops in Shanghai are rarely a cheap option when it comes to getting one's caffeine fix. So it makes sense for a coffee lover to invest in the kit to make café-quality coffee at home. Below Lindsay Messenger, co-founder of Café del Volcán on Yongkang Lu, explains how to select your beans and the basics behind making pour-over and French press coffee like the professionals – at just a fraction of the cost.

Choosing your style

'French press and pour over (drip) coffee are the two methods we recommend for enjoying great coffee at home or in the office. In addition to these, the AeroPress is also fine. However, we don't recommend stove top moka pots, because you can't control the water temperature – it gets too hot. The biggest difference between French press and pour over is the texture: French press gives you a very rich texture because it leaves most of the coffee oils in the water, while drip coffee is more clean and delicate.'

The beans

'Pour over devices are nice for fruitier and more lightly roasted single-origin beans – for example our Kenya, Ethiopia and Panama selection. French press is great for our slightly darker Guatemala, Sumatra and Yunnan beans, though people love our Guatemala and Yunnan as drip coffee too. Always aim for the freshest roast possible when choosing your beans and never buy anything over two weeks old.'

Grind

'How your beans are ground significantly impacts the flavour. For example, drip pot and French press require different grind levels. For drip, you should use a finer medium grind, similar to granulated sugar, because the water doesn't stay in contact with the coffee as long; it needs to extract the flavour in a shorter period of time. For French press, because the coffee soaks in the water longer (around four minutes), it requires a coarser grind, to avoid over-extraction which creates a more bitter or sour flavor. For optimal flavour, get a burr grinder (rather than a blade grinder), which grinds more evenly, and always grind your coffee right before you brew it.'