

## **HOW TO COLD BREW**

### **What is cold brew?**

Exactly what it sounds like – coffee brewed without heat. (Well, mostly without heat, but we'll get to that in a bit.) The lengthy extraction process doesn't produce a standard batch of coffee but rather a batch of concentrated coffee that can be served on its own, or as part of another beverage, an ingredient in a dish or a sauce, pretty much anything where you can think of using coffee as an ingredient.

### **Does it taste different from regular coffee?**

Sort of! Cold brew tends to accentuate certain characteristics of coffee while downplaying others; for example, a Colombian coffee with a syrupy body and lemon-lime flavours may have the thickness of its body accentuated and the brighter citrus notes smoothed out considerably. Like any other method, cold brew will bring out distinct flavour profiles, though you can get a rough idea of what a coffee will do when you turn it into cold brew by brewing it in an immersion-based brewer – like a French press. Done right, it's smooth, gently sweet, and refreshing in a deeply satisfying way.

### **How do I drink it?**

Typically, cold brew is served on ice, topped up with either water or milk. We recommend equal parts cold brew and whatever you're mixing with as a starting point, and then adjusting to taste. You can also mix it with hot water for a cup of coffee; two parts water to one part cold brew is a good place to start for that. Or mix it with steamed milk for a silky-smooth café au lait. It's very versatile. Do what you wanna do with it, you know?

### **Is it pretty touchy?**

Not really. We've actually tried a few cold brew methods, and the recipe we've reprinted below is one that we think works – but it's not the only one. We just like it as a starting point for your own recipe, and you can easily tinker with it by adjusting your grind size, extraction time, or coffee-to-water ratio.

One thing to watch for, however, is temperature. A little bit of heat is useful at the beginning of the extraction process to break down the soluble compounds in fresh coffee that lend it its wonderful, complex qualities, but too much heat and you risk beginning to dissolve compounds that can give your eventual cold brew flavours you may not want – like the quinine and metallic flavours associated with chlorogenic acid<sup>1</sup>. So we suggest starting with a “bloom” using 20% of your total water at 150F, then finishing with cold water. While starting your brew with water around that temperature definitely brings out highlights in the finished concentrate, we'd suggest that if you don't have a way to measure your temperature, don't worry too much about heating your water. You can still produce a decent cold brew with room temperature water; after all, it'll be lukewarm or cold most of the time anyhow. It'll just take some tweaking and more practice. We have included rough directions for those who want to chance it, though.

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<sup>1</sup> Okay, sorry about how heavy-duty this reference is. Open up <http://www.coffeeresearch.org/science/sourmain.htm> in your browser of choice and brace yourself. Brewing at about 158F vs. higher temperatures presents far less acid content across the board, which means fewer of those acids imparting metallic/quinine/etc. flavours than are present in coffee brewed with more traditional methods. This also has effects on the perceived acidity or brightness of the cold brew, and subsequently has effects on perceived body, hence the “smoothness” of cold brew.

## **CALIBER COLD BREW**

*Yields approximately 1L of coffee concentrate brewed at around a 1:8 coffee:water ratio.*

### **INGREDIENTS**

140-150g coffee (about 1 2/3 cup) medium-grind coffee (particles the size of kosher salt)

225ml water at 150F

925ml water at room temperature or, ideally, lower

### **METHOD**

- 1) If you are using a Toddy brewer, make sure the plug is out of the drain hole. Clean and rinse and pre-wet your filter and place it in the bottom of the brew bucket. Place a standard paper basket filter in the bottom, gently run a little room-temp water into the bucket, and let it drain. Once it's drained, add the plug.
- 2) Bring your 225ml of water to 150F. (Water simmers at 180F. If you can see bubbles but no motion, bring your water off the heat immediately – it's close to the right temperature.)
- 3) Measure and grind your coffee. Add it to your brewer.
- 4) Cover the grinds with the heated water. Stir it gently for 45 seconds to a minute, ensuring all the grounds are saturated. Use a wooden or plastic tool to avoid tearing or damaging the filters.
- 5) Add the cool water. Pour in a gentle circle to ensure even saturation and to lightly agitate the grounds. A little motion here goes a long way during the steep.
- 6) Cover your brewing container and set it somewhere safe on the counter.
- 7) Wait. Go to work, or do the laundry, or read a magazine. Let the coffee do its thing. Two hours seems to be the minimum steeping time, but it can be steeped for up to twelve hours. (For reference, we like to steep ours between four to six hours.)
- 8) If using the Toddy brewer, place your bucket over the decanter, carefully pull the plug, and let your concentrate drain. Watch out – it drains fast. If you aren't using the Toddy brewer, you'll have to rig something up. Line a mesh strainer with cheesecloth. Lay a paper basket filter over the cheesecloth and rinse it so it lays flat in the strainer. Lay another layer of cheesecloth over top of this filter. Place this contraption over a funnel and place the funnel over your decanter. Cross your fingers and empty your brewer into the strainer – carefully.
- 9) Immediately seal your decanter and refrigerate your cold brew. It tastes best within the first ten days.