

WELCOME TO THE COFFEE APOTHECARY

{a wee bit of information about}

{coffee}

{tea}

{food}

{our sourcing ethics}



- WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN HERE -

If you have got as far as opening this up, you must now be at a least a reasonable way into your Coffee Apothecary experience. We hope you are having a great time, are enjoying the surroundings and everything we have put in front of you.

This wee clipboard is here to answer some of the questions that might have been popping into your head during your time with us. If so, awesome, read on. If this has just got you wondering about what questions there could be to ask, have a leaf through and see if anything grabs your attention. If you are not fussed by these gems of information and you just want to deeply exhale and enjoy your time with us, just sling this back in the table and carry on. It's been a pleasure!



COFFEE

We absolutely love coffee and are incredibly passionate about sharing our love of one of the world's most popular drinks.

I'm sure most of us remember a time when we wondered how something that smelled so good could taste so bad. As I hope you have already have found out, it doesn't have to be that way. There is a lifetime's worth of information out there about coffee so let's just scratch the surface here with a bit of information about coffee in general and about how we use it.

BEFORE IT GETS TO US

- SOURCING -

There are numerous different ways that coffee is bought and imported. These can range from tiny lots of less than 100kg bought directly from a farmer, through to huge shipments of tonnes of coffee by large corporate companies.

One way to break it down a little is to split it into two



different categories, coffee that is treated as a commodity and coffee that is not.

Commodity coffee's price is set by the New York stock exchange and fluctuates depending on how stockbrokers 'bet' on its future price. This price has nothing to do with the things that you would expect to make a big difference in the cost, like quality, country of origin, altitude, processing method, etc. Unsurprisingly, commodity coffee leads to coffee farmers only valuing quantity and not quality as this is what they get paid for.

On the other hand there is coffee that is not treated as a commodity. All the coffee we serve falls into this category and so it is what we will focus on.

The high end of the coffee world, in terms of quality, is often referred to as speciality coffee. There are some very rigorous definitions of what this means but they boil down to three objectives. Firstly, the coffee scores very highly on coffee quality analysis tests. Secondly, it is exported, roasted and brewed with the quality of the end result always being the priority and, thirdly, it is traceable.

This coffee can be sourced in a few different ways, for example, by a coffee exporter, or a green coffee buyer of a



particular roastery having a direct relationship with the farmer. Each way has its merits and are mostly dictated by how the country governs its coffee production and exports and by the sizes of the farms involved.

- VARIETAL -

You may have noticed that the coffees listed on the blackboard state the varietal as well as other information. Coffee grows on trees of which there are many different varieties. Each variety has unique properties such as the altitude it grows best at, the yield of the tree and its resistance to disease. Some varieties are known to have distinctive flavour characteristics. This is much in the same way as wine where on each bottle it will tell you the grape type that was used.

- PROCESSING -

The processing method that a coffee has undergone is also important. This will more often than not either be washed or natural, although there are a few other ones that may pop up from time to time, but what does it mean?

Coffee trees produce cherries, inside of which are usually two beans back to back. Once the fruit has ripened it is



ready for harvesting and then processing, which means removing the beans from the fruit. This is not as easy as just popping them out with your fingers as the high pectin levels in the fruit give the cherry a good hold on the beans. The way the cherries are processed can have a huge impact on the flavour of the resulting coffee. What follows are the most commonly used processing methods.

{washed}

This is the most common processing method of the coffees that we serve. First, the cherries have most of their fruit surrounding the beans removed by a machine called a depulper. They are then placed in fermentation tanks filled with water where fermentation removes the rest of the flesh. The length of time that this takes varies depending on a few different factors including the altitude and the heat, and can take anywhere from 8 to 45 hours. When the fermentation is finished the coffee is laid out on patios or raised tables to dry. This is done very carefully with the beans being turned regularly to ensure that they dry slowly and evenly.

This process results in coffees that have a higher acidity, a lighter body and present a cleaner cup.



{natural}

This is the oldest method used to process coffee and, on the surface, the simplest. However, it is also really hard to get right to avoid any negative flavours, called defects, developing.

The picked cherries are laid out to dry on patios or raised tables, much like the final part of the washed process. Again, it is very important to keep the drying process even by constantly turning the cherries. As the fruit dries and breaks down, the beans take on some of the sugars of the cherry. When the fruit has dried sufficiently the flesh is mechanically removed from around the beans.

This process results in a big bodied coffee that has lower acidity, is sweet but can also be slightly earthy and boozy.

{pulped natural}

This is a hybrid process that has different names in different countries. It is the 'pulped natural' process in Brazil, the 'honey' process in Costa Rica and the 'home process' in Tanzania. You may be able to guess from reading the previous two methods that this one borrows the depulping part from the washed process to remove



most of the fruit, before being laid out to dry with the remaining fruit still attached, like the natural process.

Pulped natural processing is great for places that want to try and get the cleanness and consistency offered by the washed process but that may not have the same access to the water required.

This process yields a broad spectrum of coffees depending on how it is carried out but the resulting tastes typically sit between the previous two methods.

- ROASTING -

After growing, harvesting, processing and shipping we come to the penultimate stop for our coffee beans, roasting.

Roasting is an incredibly skilled task that turns the green coffee beans, that have an unpleasant vegetal flavour, into the full flavoured, aromatic coffee we brew. While large commercial roasters use huge automated roasters to mass produce instant or low quality coffee, speciality coffee is hand roasted in small batches with the only goal being to bring out the best in the bean.



Each coffee will go through numerous sample roasts in small roasters with every variable closely monitored and adjusted to create the best possible 'roast profile'. There are whole books devoted to roasting but it is probably enough to just say that changing any parameter of a roast profile will result in a very different tasting coffee. The roaster's aim is to try and bring out the desirable flavours that are hidden in the bean that arise due to its altitude, terroir, processing method, varietal etc., and to not impart any negative flavours that roasting can develop, e.g. smoky, burnt, etc.

ONCE IT REACHES US

After all the hard work and skill that has gone into getting those little brown beans to our cafe, our work to serve them to you begins. We use two distinct methods, espresso and filter, to bring the beans to life in different ways. While espresso is intense and powerful like a dram of a fine single malt, filter methods are longer and gentler, more like a wine.

- ESPRESSO -

A perfectly formed espresso is a sheer delight. Bold flavours, a full but smooth mouth feel and an aftertaste



that can, if lucky, linger for hours begging you for another one. I would guess that most of the UK has never tried espresso and that even less have actually enjoyed one. It is a drink that is thought of as a little bitter evil that goes hand in hand with a huge dollop of sugar and is only good for waking us up. We think that couldn't be further from the truth. If everything comes together: great coffee, and perfect judgement and skill from the barista, the results are incredible. From a chocolatey Latin American offering to a fruity African, the options are endless. Ask us to show you, you may well be surprised and the worst that could happen is that you are more alert!

As a little tip if you do bite the bullet and try an espresso, give it a good stir before drinking it. The espresso brewing process means that naturally the sour flavours will be at the bottom and the bitter ones at the top. Stirring mixes them all up creating the delicious drink you were after!

An espresso is also the perfect base to build a longer drink on top of that can take on a whole new and delicious dimension.

{size}

The terms latte, cappuccino, flat white, etc. don't actually



really mean anything! Think about all the coffees you have ordered under the same name and all the different drinks you have been served. We have chosen our drink sizes to try and complement the espresso used as the base, in what we feel is the best way. Not losing the taste of the coffee in the milk in our latte and getting a strong, while still milky, coffee with a flat white.

{long black / americano}

The term americano was apparently coined in Italy during the war when the American troops asked for hot water in their coffee (coffee in Italy is an espresso) to make it more like the filter coffee they were used to back home. To make a long black, the espresso is poured onto the hot water rather than the other way round for an americano. We then take it a step further and remove the crema that then floats on top of the drink. This is because crema, although it looks good, suspends tiny coffee particles that manage to make their way into the brew; these taste quite bitter so removing them creates a much tastier drink.

{milky}

As standard we use whole milk that is as fresh as possible and steam it to no more than 65°C, to preserve the



inherent sweetness that milk has. Steaming it to any higher temperature causes the proteins in the milk to break down, leading to a loss in sweetness and the development of a nasty eggy smell. The result in keeping the temperature in check is a luscious, sweet, creamy and delicious coffee.

Adding milk to an espresso will also change the flavour of the drink. Maybe more so than you would guess. If you fancy finding out how different, how about trying our black & white tasting board where the same coffee is served as an espresso and as a flat white.

- FILTER -

Single serve filter coffees have taken the coffee world by storm in recent years. Gone are the days of filter coffee being a pot on a hot plate brewed six weeks ago. These longer drinks can delightfully bring out a very different side to a coffee compared to brewing as an espresso. Why not try the '2 ways' tasting board which is the same coffee brewed both ways, to find out how different!

There are more brew methods out there than you can count. They all result in a similar strength drink but what can change is the clarity of the flavours and the way it feels



in your mouth. For instance, the full bodiedness of a coffee brewed in a cafetière compared to the light and smooth nature of a coffee brewed through a paper filter in a Kalita dripper is quite astonishing.

- MILK & TWO SUGARS -

If served a coffee in the UK it is almost instinct to reach for the milk and sugar. This is not without good reason as it is sometimes the only way to make the coffee palatable! The coffees we serve have a natural sweetness to them and delicate flavours that can be masked by adding milk.

The best way to make a sweeter cup is actually really simple and will surprise you. Just let it cool a bit! Our taste buds are a lot more sensitive at around body temperature than they are at near boiling. This means that as it cools a good coffee will taste better and better while a bad coffee will taste worse and worse.

If you want a little further geekery, sugar is mildly acidic and so will change the chemistry of the coffee. Often this will make the coffee taste dry and even increase the bitterness. While this effect is less noticeable in lattes and cappuccinos etc., it can be quite pronounced in some filter coffees and espressos.



Let's take all this with a pinch of salt though. The way that you enjoy your coffee the most is the best way!

- STRENGTH -

Perhaps one of the most misused words in coffee is strength. Supermarket and equivalent coffee will often have a number on the front of the packet that is labelled as strength. This number actually has nothing to do with the strength of the coffee you will brew. This number refers to how darkly roasted the coffee has been and so is linked to how bitter and dark tasting it will be. The strength of your cup of coffee all comes down to how much coffee you use compared to water and how much of the coffee you have extracted. This is measured as a percentage of total dissolved solids, i.e. how much of your coffee is made up of dissolved coffee beans. For instance, espressos are usually somewhere in the region of 7% to 11% and filter coffees are usually somewhere between 1% and 2%.

- THE COFFEE WE USE -

The coffee we serve comes from a roastery in Edinburgh called Artisan Roast. We chose them after hours of research and chats with them about the ethics of sourcing



their coffee and the quality.

The main house espresso blend is called Cobblestone. This is a seasonal blend of two Latin American coffees that has been designed to be equally at home as a straight espresso and the base for milky drinks. If you are interested just ask and we can tell you more.

We also have seasonally changing, single origin beans on filter with one of them also available as an espresso and an espresso based drink. This means that the beans come from either a single farm, sometimes even the corner of a single field, or from a single cooperative. This is the perfect way to explore how coffees from different regions, altitudes, varietals and processes taste. The range out there is massive and would take a lifetime to explore. What are you waiting for! We also always try to have a stock of these beans on the shelf so if you find one you love, come and grab a bag for home too!

If you have had enough caffeine for one day or simply want an awesome coffee without the buzz we have a great decaf coffee too that is decaffeinated using the Swiss water method. This method uses only water and a whole day to take the caffeine out of the coffee. The result is brilliant in all our brew methods and there are no chemicals involved



like other decaffeination methods.

- COFFEE AT HOME -

You may not always be within easy reach of The Coffee Apothecary. What do you do then? There are numerous ways to make a damn fine cup of coffee at home and range from super easy to incredibly tricky. We would definitely recommend sticking to filter coffee though unless you want a new, and very expensive, hobby. Espresso making is very tricky and skilful and so the dream of making a few lattes on a Sunday afternoon for your friends is actually not that simple!

In terms of simplicity grab yourselves a filter brewer, anything from a cafetiere to an aeropress etc., some awesome beans and go for it. We have brew guides for you to take away, beans and an array of brewing gear. If you are already an accomplished home brewer and want to improve, the easiest way to do that is by grinding just before you brew. Coffee loses about 90% of its aromatics within 30 minutes of grinding, so grinding just before you brew will take your coffee to new heights.



TEA

You can imprison tea in a teabag, but sad, dusty tea particles make for a sad cup of tea. How about taking high quality leaves and letting them run riot around your teapot? That sounds better.

That's what our tea supplier, Eteaket, from Edinburgh, think too. They travel to tea gardens all over the world, work with tea masters, support ladies with mental illness in Sri Lanka and know how to make a great brew!

So, what is tea? It's a plant called *Camellia Sinensis* of which there are over 400 varieties. Black tea, e.g. breakfast blend or Earl Grey, is a fully fermented tea. Originally invented to preserve the tea leaves on a long sea trip from China to Europe, black tea now accounts for over 95% of UK tea sales and has the highest caffeine content. Freshly plucked leaves are spread out to wither and then the leaves are bruised by rolling. Rolled leaves are then spread out again to oxidise and heated in an oven to reduce the moisture content. This is in contrast to green tea which does not undergo the same fermenting and oxidising process. This leaves the tea slightly more delicate which is why green tea should generally be brewed at 80°C, to



prevent it tasting bitter.

Herbal teas, e.g. Rooibos, Peppermint or Chamomile, are not actually teas at all. They are infusions which come from herbs or flowers that are not the Camellia bush. On that note, you may have noticed that we don't serve decaffeinated tea. There are so many amazing herbal infusions that are naturally decaffeinated, why not try them instead?



FOOD

All the food that we prepare comes from the philosophy of simple dishes with quality ingredients showcasing the best of local produce.

In the same way that we try our hardest to make sure our tea and coffee etc. is as ethically sourced as possible, we do the same with our food. Unfortunately coffee doesn't grow in Udney but the fact that so many of our ingredients do makes this a lot easier!

- MEAT.... -

The health and well being of everyone involved in providing us with any product is vital to us. This also extends to the animals on the farms that we buy from. It is important to us that they are well looked after, able to run around and be happy. This is why all our meat is free range and we know where it has been and trust the farmers we work with. As a superb bonus it is undeniable that meat cared for in this way tastes infinitely better!

Our main meat supplier is the award winning butcher, Ewan Morrice in Stuartfield. Ewan keeps a free-range herd



of pigs just outside Elgin, from which he supplies us all things pork related, as well as beef and lamb from local farms.

-& TWO VEG -

We get as many vegetables, salad leaves and fruit as we can from suppliers as close to home as possible. As with the meat we are convinced that local, as fresh as possible, and in season tastes so much better. If you think your soup is full of flavour, that's because the vegetables in it probably came out of the ground very recently! Perfect!

- & ALL THE REST -

It would take a long time to list everything we use here so let's give you a quick fly by. All our eggs are free range and get delivered straight from the chicken run a few miles away. Every cake and treat you see in the cafe has been made here using only organic flour and Fairtrade sugar and chocolate. Our jam is made on a farm just the other side of Pitmedden, the lemonade in the fridge is made just outside Fraserburgh and the beer comes from a certain very local brewery!



THE COMPLETE PACKAGE

What would be the point in all the talk of ethics and sustainability of everything we source if we didn't carry that into the rest of how we run the place. We try our hardest to consider everything we do from this same stand point. Here are just a few examples.

The heating and hot water are generated by a biomass boiler system. This uses compressed and dried wood pellets from sustainable forests instead of fossil fuels.

All our business banking is done through a sustainable and ethical bank called Triodos. What this means is that they only invest in real economies, instead of into high return financial instruments that carry much greater risk. Triodos invest their money into businesses that are trying to make the world a better place in an environmental, social or cultural way and are completely transparent meaning that they will happily tell you where every penny they have is invested.

And at the end of a long day it is all environmentally friendly cleaning products that tidy up all the mess!



All our used coffee grounds are bagged and put in a bucket just outside by the phone box for you to help yourself to for your garden or compost or making candles or body scrubs with or..... If you have a Googleywoogley you will find countless more ideas!

THE END

We hope this may have answered any questions that you may have had about what we do here and why, as well as helping you understand a bit more about coffee and tea. If you have any questions, feel free to have a chat with Jonny, Ali or one of our awesome staff.

Want to find out more about coffee? Have a browse through the selection of coffee books at the counter.

We hope you have enjoyed your time here and thanks for visiting us!

