



Tasting Notes & Coffee Cupping



WHAT ARE TASTING NOTES?

Tasting notes refer to the naturally occurring flavours found in coffee and are typically used to reference how a coffee might taste.

Typically, three distinct notes are picked out to describe an individual coffee. These notes provide the initial impression the coffee gives, often even before you try it.

Exploring tasting notes helps decipher what flavour palate interests you, so you can navigate picking coffees you will enjoy most. Tasting notes are often subtle, ranging from floral to fruity, earthy to chocolatey.

In the western world, we tend to be most familiar with the tasting notes presented within South American coffees: chocolatey and nutty, but in other coffees you can pick out a wide variety of different notes from earl grey to whiskey or tobacco.

There are several factors which affect the tasting notes in coffee:

- Origins: where the coffee is from
- How the coffee is grown
- The ripeness of the berry when picked
- Processing
- Storage
- Roasting
- Brewing





AROMA

Another key factor when it comes to tasting coffee is its Aroma. It may surprise you, but the aroma of coffee gives most of the flavour characteristics that result in that amazing complex cup. Think about it, when you have a cold and your nose is blocked, you can't really taste much. Try out a similar concept when you next drink your next cup of coffee? Hold your nose when you take your first sip, when you let it go, taste the flavour explosion. It's crazy just how important aroma is in relation to our perception of flavour. Your tongue is only able to detect sweet, salty, bitter and sour as well as the general mouth-feel. Anything else, is due to aromatic volatile compounds that make their way into our nasal passage.

There are two ways in which that aroma can activate our noses: by smelling the coffee through our nose, or by drinking the coffee and these aromatic compounds entering the nasal passage, this is known as retro nasal perception.

THE PROBLEM WITH TASTING NOTES

As taste is subjective, you may find when you try a coffee that you don't necessarily agree with the tasting notes given. Everyone's palate and experience of coffee is different, hence why trying a variety of different coffees is a great way to refine your palate and begin picking out the different notes that you typically enjoy.

COFFEE CUPPING @ ABDA

Though a process called 'cupping', you can try out multiple coffees at a time - it's a great way to objectively sample different coffees! You can do this process alone, or it can be a great experience to do with a group.

Interested in a Coffee Cupping session?

We run them here at the shop!

An in-depth tasting session of all 10 of our coffees via the cupping method and a general introduction to how coffee is produced/roasted. Includes all 9 of our Single Origin beans and our House Blend.

5pm – 7pm

£80 for one, £95 for two

(Additional people + £15, Maximum 6 people)

[Visit our Experiences and Courses page to find out more.](#)





STEP BY STEP - TASTING GUIDE

COFFEE CUPPING

Though a process called 'cupping', you can try out multiple coffees at a time - it's a great way to objectively sample different coffees!



WHAT YOU NEED

- Cups
- Spoons
- Kettle
- Coffee of your choice
- Grinder (if needed)
- Scales

BEST FOR

TASTING BLENDS, SINGLE ORIGINS...ALL TYPES OF COFFEE

COARSE GRIND WATER - 90C

RATIOS PER COFFEE

13.5g coffee: 225ml water

BREW TIME

4 minutes

1

STEP ONE

Set out a cup/ glass for each separate coffee you will be tasting. Ensure that there is no remaining coffee in the grinder each time you grind a coffee.

2

STEP TWO

Heat water to 90c. If using a standard kettle, boil the water and then let it stand for a few mins to cool.

3

STEP THREE

Before pouring the water, take a moment to smell the freshly ground coffee and note down any aromas you can detect. Does the coffee have a floral smell, or maybe nutty/ fruity/ smoky?

4

STEP FOUR

Pour in 225ml water and let the coffee steep for 4 mins, feel free to smell the coffee as it brews.

5

STEP FIVE

After 4 minutes, break the crust on top of the water with a spoon and stir three times, making sure to stir each coffee the same number of times so the coffees extract evenly.

6

STEP SIX

Once the coffee is at drinkable temperature, use a spoon to taste each coffee making sure to give the coffee a slurp as you drink to evenly distribute it across your tongue (yes, really!). Start to note down what flavours you can detect and how each individual coffee compares.