

Coffee



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

essay: Coffeessay? 80%, 1000, coffee, a tree, its seeds, and the beverage made from them. The coffee tree, a small evergreen of the genus *Coffea*, has smooth, ovate leaves and clusters of fragrant white flowers that mature into deep red fruits about 1/2 in. (1.

27 cm) long. The fruit usually contains two seeds, the coffee beans. *C.*

arabica yields the highest-quality beans and provides the bulk of the world's coffee, including c. 80% of the coffee imported into the United States. The species is thought to be native to Ethiopia, where it was known before AD 1000. Coffee's earliest human use may have been as a food; a ball of the crushed fruit molded with fat was a day's ration for certain African nomads. Later, wine was made from the fermented husks and pulps. Coffee was known in 15th-century Arabia; from there it spread to Egypt and Turkey, overcoming religious and political opposition to become popular among Arabs. At first proscribed by Italian churchmen as a heathen's drink, it was approved by Pope Clement VIII, and by the mid-17th cent. coffee had reached most of Europe.

Introduced in North America c. 1668, coffee became a favorite American beverage after the Boston Tea Party made tea unfashionable. Coffee owes its popularity in part to the stimulative effect of its caffeine constituent.

Caffeine, a bitter alkaloid, can also contribute to irritability, depression, diarrhea, insomnia, and other disorders. Decaffeinated coffees, developed in the early 1900s, account for c. 18% of the U.

S. market. For those without the time or the inclination to brew their own, there are instant or soluble coffees, introduced in 1867, which account for c.

17% of U. S. coffee sales. Coffee Plant CultivationThe coffee plant prefers the cool, moist, frost-free climate found at higher altitudes in the tropics and subtropics.

Optimum growing conditions include: temperature of about 75°F (24°C); well-distributed annual rainfall of about 50 in. (127 cm) with a short dry season; and fertile, deep, well-drained soil, especially of volcanic origin.

While coffee can be grown from sea level to c.

6, 000 ft (1, 830 m), and *C. robusta* is produced at low elevations in West Africa, the better arabica grades are generally produced above 1, 500 ft (460 m). Strong winds limit coffee production; coffee is often grown in the shelter of taller trees. A coffee tree yields its maximum sometime between its fifth and tenth year and may bear for about 30 years. Preparation and Types of CoffeeAfter the outer pulp is removed, coffee seeds are prepared by roasting, which develops the aroma and flavor of their essential oils. Longer roasting produces darker, stronger coffee. The variety of recipes and prescriptions for roasting, brewing, and serving coffee reflects the diversity of consumer tastes and cultural preferences.

All techniques begin with properly roasted, freshly ground coffee; freshly boiling water; and absolutely clean utensils. Turkish coffee, a strong, unfiltered brew of finely powdered coffee and sugar, is popular in Greece, Turkey, and Arabia. Italian-style espresso, or espresso, is brewed by forcing hot water under pressure through finely powdered, often darkly roasted coffee. Most other coffees are filtered. Cafe au lait, coffee mixed with scalded milk, is a traditional French breakfast drink, as is cafe con leche in countries

where Spanish is spoken. Coffee flavored with chicory is a specialty of New Orleans.

Connoisseurs pay dearly for Mocha from the Yemen region of Arabia, Blue Mountain from Jamaica, Kona from Hawaii, or other so-called specialty coffees from Africa, Indonesia, or Latin America” all premium arabica varieties. Coffee in Commerce Varieties of *C. arabica* are important export crops in many countries, especially in South America and East Africa. Brazil is the leading producer. The only other species of commercial importance is *C. robusta*, a West African native also widely grown in Central Africa and Asia. Fluctuations in supply and demand have historically played havoc with world coffee markets and with the economies of individual growers and exporting countries. Efforts to stabilize the markets began with a 1940 agreement, administered by the Inter-American Coffee Board, allocating U.

S. coffee imports from Latin America. A global agreement under the International Coffee Organization, a body of 70 coffee-producing and -consuming countries, expired in 1989. In many cultures throughout its history, coffee has been served in coffeehouses, cafes, and other places of public refreshment, often as an aid and accompaniment to political or artistic activity, gambling, or gossip, or to solo rumination. Coffees popularity in the United States peaked in 1962, when three-quarters of people over 10 years of age drank at least a cup a day; in 1992 only about half did. Beginning about 1990 U. S.

consumers became increasingly interested in premium coffees and stronger, richer brews.