



COFFEE MAKERS

by Chris D'Amico

What's your method? Nope, drive thru doesn't count. Your everyday cup of joe has about as many ways to prepare it as it has aliases. We want you to make good coffee at home, and in this article, we'll show you some of the tools at your disposal.

FRENCH PRESS	DRIP MACHINES	CHEMEX
<p>Anyone looking for a more labor intensive approach and the quality that comes from it will be well served with a French press pot. A French press pot is a carafe where hot water is added to coffee grounds, and after a specified time, a mesh plunger is depressed which traps the grinds at the bottom of the pot. French press coffee has a more syrupy mouthfeel than drip or Chemex coffee.</p> <p>PRO The grounds really get to move around in the water giving you better extraction of flavors. You get to push a plunger down like you're dynamiting something in a Looney Tunes cartoon. Four minute steep time is just a little more involved than a drip machine.</p> <p>CON You'll be responsible for heating the water. French press also leaves some sediment in your cup. Unsuspecting consumers are treated to a little cottonmouth on the last sip. A thin wall of glass is the only thing that separates your steaming beverage from ambient temperature, so if you want hot coffee, you might have to do two presses.</p>	<p>Even aliens have seen these things. Some may lurk unused and gathering dust on the counter, but almost every kitchen in America has one. The drip pot is a one-stop shop with a boiler, a method to saturate the ground coffee, and a collection vessel all rolled into one handy dandy electric device.</p> <p>PRO This thing is easy. Grind the beans, drop them in the filter, and press start. Come back to fine beverage a few minutes later. If you have a thermal carafe, your coffee stays hot long enough to savor a couple of cups.</p> <p>CON Machines don't always hold temps as high as they should be, and brew cycles might be too quick to get perfect extraction from your beans. This thing is useless without 110v of electric kool-aid. Pots can keep crud in the corners that you can't clean without disassembling them.</p>	<p>It has lived in relative obscurity for 68 years, but the Chemex process is undergoing a Renaissance in elite coffee houses across America. The Chemex pot is a glass carafe that relies on a thicker conical filter than most you find in the grocery store, and YOU are the most important piece of equipment involved in getting good coffee from it.</p> <p>PRO Manual control of brew without the sediment from French press pots. Easy to clean. For a glass receptacle, they hold heat very well. Also very chic; be the envy of all your coffee drinking friends.</p> <p>CON Some waiting is required between the initial infusion of water (to wet the grounds) and completing the process. A constant pour keeps you on top of the pot throughout the cycle. No putting the pot on and hurrying to get other things done before work in the morning. Not much oil makes it through the filter which reduces some of the complexity of the flavor profile.</p>

MUTINEER TESTED



Bonjour's Monet 8-cup (bonjourproducts.com \$40) gives you the classic design at entry level prices. It features a mesh screen in front of the spout to catch any rogue grounds that escaped the press.



The Bodum Chambord Double Walled (bodumusa.com \$100) gives you the classic look and an extra layer of glass to contain the heat.



The Frieling 0104 (frieling.com \$78) is 18/10 stainless steel and double walled which will keep your second and third cup warm. It beats Bodum's Chambord Double Walled on price and sexy.



The Cuisinart Flavor-Brew 10-cup Thermal (cuisinart.com \$70) is a more moderately priced receptacle with a quicker brew time and a gratis gold mesh filter basket.



The Krups KT4065 (krupsusa.com \$130) has what looks like a showerhead under the hood that helps to saturate the grounds more thoroughly giving you better extraction of the good compounds of the coffee.



Chemex pots are only made by one company. The Classic Series (chemexcoffeemaker.com \$38) has a wooden collar that lets you hold the pot with hot coffee in it. The Glass Handle Series (\$38) is a little more utilitarian. If you want a piece of art that also makes coffee, go with the Handblown Series (\$88) which is in the permanent collection at the Smithsonian.

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