

sweet maria's

French Press Brewing Tip Sheet

Now that you can buy a french press at K-Mart or Target, brewing with one has become popular. I love french press brewing for it's simplicity! The advantages are many:

- There are no paper filters to absorb aromatic coffee oils or to impart a "paper taste" to the coffee
- You have total control over water temperature and brew time.
- It's simple, quick and easy to clean up.

...**but** there are some issues specific to french press brewing that need to be managed.

- French press brewing allows more sediment into your cup which adds to a thicker mouth-feel. The key to managing sediment is an even grind. A burr grinder will do the trick, or if you use a whirling blade mill, you can install an additional nylon filter to reduce the sludge. Personally, I would not brew with a french press if I had only a whirling blade mill.
- It's best to enjoy your brewed coffee while it's fresh. Don't let your coffee sit in the press because even in the plunged position the coffee will continue to extract.
- For the above reason, I discourage the "travel press" design in which the press doubles as travel mug. If you need hot coffee to go and want to use a press, decant the coffee into a thermos after brewing.

Recommended French Press Brewing Method

1. Use a grind just a few notches coarser than a filter drip grind. If the coffee tastes thin, try a finer grind. If there is too much sediment, try grinding a little coarser.
2. Remove the lid and plunger from the beaker. Put one scoop (7.25 grams) per 6 oz. water, into the beaker. Many presses measure cups as a 4 oz "tasse". A 3 tasse press makes 12 oz.
3. Slowly pour the correct amount of 195-205 degree water into the press. Avoid creating a dry island of grounds. Allow the coffee to float to the surface.
4. Place the lid and plunger into the press with the handle fully extended. Do not start to push down on the coffee at all. This will keep the heat in. Leave it for 1 minute.
5. Remove the lid and stir the coffee with a spoon or carefully swirl the press to agitate the brew and make the grounds sink.
6. After a total infusion time of 4 to 6 minutes, begin to plunge. Hold the lid and carefully push the plunger, pushing the grinds to the bottom. Check that the filter disc is not crooked. A crooked disc will allow a flurry of grounds to escape. If disaster strikes, remove the plunger and lid, rinse them in hot water and start over.