



# The caffeine cult

A coffee connoisseur spills the beans on how to create a cup that will have baristas brewing with envy

**W**ITH Australia's coffee cult developing at a rapid rate, members of the public are taking the art of coffee making into their own hands and homes.

Our coffee consumption has doubled over the past 30 years, from 1.2kg to 2.4kg per capita, according to researcher BIS Shrapnel.

More than one billion cups of coffee are consumed in cafes and restaurants each year, a massive 65 per cent increase in just 10 years.

The home market for gourmet coffee is growing at similar speed, with many leading coffee brands claiming home sales are on par with those of cafes.

Cafe 2U – the world's largest mobile coffee franchise – managing director Andy Simpkin is in the know when it comes to formulating a fantastic cup of coffee. Here he reveals some tricks of the trade.

## Take the plunge

Most people don't let their plunger coffee brew long enough, which makes it weak. Let it stand for at least four minutes.

If you are worried about the coffee losing heat, invest in a plunger cosie or insulated plunger.

Always use clean, cold water and freshly ground beans. This applies to all coffee-brewing processes.

It does pay to own a grinder and to only grind what you need.

A medium grind is best for a plunger – if it is too fine the coffee will seep through the filter and if it is too coarse it will not impart the full flavour.

Stir the coffee as soon as you have poured water on to the coffee grounds to start the brewing process.

Buy fresh, interesting and, for a plunger, mellow coffee. Mocha Kenya medium roast is a good example.

## Stove-top skills

For stove-top espresso, use low or medium heat.

The brewing should take five to 10 minutes.

Remove from the heat as soon as a gurgling sound comes from the pot. Failing to do so will burn the coffee, which will result in a bitter flavour.

Don't tamp the coffee as it will

tamp itself when the water makes the grounds wet.

Be careful not to overfill past the safety valve to avoid accidents.

## Master the machine

Pour cold, clear water into your home espresso machine's water chamber and grind good-quality beans.

A fine grind is essential to ensure full-bodied flavour.

When the coffee starts to flow into the cup it should have brown foam, or crema, on its top.

When the crema becomes almost white in colour, the good-tasting liquid is no longer flowing. Remove the cup immediately.

For a double shot, let about 60ml of coffee pour into your cup in about 25 to 30 seconds through 16g to 20g of coffee grounds.

Always completely fill the handle where you put your coffee grinds and tamp properly.

Make sure the machine, group handle and cup are hot by pressing the brew button and allowing hot water to run through the system into a cup.



Ensure your morning caffeine kick is as good as the pros make it