

CHRIS KING®
PRECISION COMPONENTS



Coffee Set
Instructions

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Congratulations!

Whether you are an iron-stomached pro, just climbing back on the wagon, or new to all this crazy truck and noise, you are now prepared to embark upon an exciting adventure with Chris King's Precision Blend Premium Coffee. Accepted throughout the world as a 'nice vice', coffee is universally worshipped as a powerful and mystically paradoxical beverage. Gleaned from simple, unobtrusive beans, coffee is the ritual that jump-starts our biggest cities and launches our wildest explorations. It is a catalyst for relaxed, intelligent discussion and, at the same time, the fuel for fruitful, up-all-night-on-a-deadline hyperactivity. It's found equally welcome in the castles of Europe, at a desert truck stop along route 66, in the dark recesses of ivy clad academic offices, and among the hippest, trendiest artists in the heart of New York City. If you are new to coffee these concepts can seem obsessive, even overwhelming at first. But as we grow and live within coffee, we all come to realize that it is one of the most accessible universal common denominators shared by so many people throughout the world.

Your purchase of Chris King Precision Blend Premium Coffee has bought you and your friends a ticket to a world of connoisseurship and pleasures as rich as that of fine bicycles or wine, yet at a fraction of the cost. Both our standard and deluxe coffee sets promise the belly-warming comfort of perfection and satisfaction that you have come to expect from all of Chris King's products. Participate with pride in the enjoyment of your very own mug of this most highly coveted beverage.

The history of coffee

The most famous legend relating the origin of coffee is that of a lone goat herder from the land of Arabia Felix and a monk at a nearby monastery. As

the story goes, one night around 850 A.D. this herder's normally responsible goats failed to return home from their evening graze. He set out to round them up and discovered his usually composed and sober herd dancing with unabashed delight among the shiny dark leaves and red fruits of a bush we now know as *Coffea arabica*. Intrigued by the festivities, the herder joined in the partaking of the red berries and remained late into the night dancing gleefully under the summer's moon with his goats. Sometime during that legendary night, a monk from the local monastery, out walking, weary from his evening prayers, came upon this unusual sight. The monk, a curious, academically motivated man, filled his pockets full of the magical fruit and stayed up all night, each night, for the next month, experimenting with various applications, decoctions, and occasional abuses of the berries. The most effective and enduring treatment he discovered included parching and boiling.

Thus began modern history.

For nearly eight hundred years the Arabs protected 'their' discovery, allowing no fertile seeds to cross their borders, insisting that all traveling beans first be fully parched and boiled. However, as history seems to show, secrets of this magnitude are doomed for exposure. In 1650 A.D., a Moslem pilgrim from India named Baba Budan strapped seven raw seeds to his belly before his return trip home. Finally free, coffee soon overtook the world. Transplanted plants sprang up as far away as Asia and Brazil, while in England and Denmark coveted plants in specially insulated gardens enjoyed care usually reserved only for the royalty. Coffee quickly became a favorite pleasure of all the world.

Preparation

Storage

DO NOT STORE YOUR COFFEE IN A REFRIGERATOR OR FREEZER. The delicate substances responsible for the flavors in coffee are water soluble and very easily diluted by moisture and tainted by odors, both of which abound in most refrigerators. Freezing is not recommended as it tends to gel the oils on the surface of the beans which then degrade and separate when thawed and brewed. For best results, store your coffee in an air tight jar in a cool, dark, and dry place and use within 1 to 2 weeks of roasting.

Cleanliness

How many times have you been standing in line at the local coffee house and witnessed the young college freshmen student ask arrogantly for the most recently brewed, freshest pot of coffee only to fill a mug coated with months of scaly residue peeling from its sides? Clean equipment is one of the most important and yet frequently ignored factors in coffee's flavor. Overlook no component when cleaning your coffee preparation equipment. Many of today's more enlightened connoisseurs even run 'blanks' of hot water and baking soda through the paces of their chosen brewing method as part of their regular cleaning regimen.

The water

Coffee is over 99% water making the quality of the water of utmost importance. The water should act only as a tasteless vehicle for the flavor of and not impart any flavor of its own upon the bean. At Chris King we recommend using only the highest quality purified mountain spring water. In the event that fresh, rock filtered water born of high, innocent altitudes is not available, water cleaned using a high quality filtration system may be sub-

stituted. In any case, (with the rare exception of the most extreme deadlines or other emergencies), do not use standard tap water. Tap water has minerals and chemicals dangerous to the flavor of your coffee and, potentially, your health. Additionally, use caution when selecting from among the many unscrupulous and misleading bottled waters, most of which are really little more than weakly filtered tap waters imported from such unexotic places as the suburbs of New Jersey. (One famous brand read backwards spells "naivE"...go figure).

Brewing: A discussion

Basics

The basic concepts in brewing coffee are universal. Most simply put: Coffee is soaked in water until the water tastes good. This basic process involves three main variables with literally thousands of variations leading to potentially lengthy discussions of many fine methods and machines to choose from for brewing your coffee. From the most basic blackened-kettle-on-a-campfire cowboy coffee to the elegant and elaborate Italian espresso extraction techniques, brewing is where the true art and style in coffee is defined. Each method offers a different coffee experience and all have their do's and don't's. This manual offers basic information to assist with choosing a brewing method for regular (not steam extracted or espresso) coffee, and includes some key points and recommendations on procedures. It is in no way intended as a definitive work. Many books and any number of cafe philosophers have spent much time deliberating on the subject for those interested in studying brewing's finer points more deeply.

The three main variables

1. **Water temperature:** The generally accepted temperature for most American and European coffee brewing methods is 195-200°. Never

use boiling water on your coffee as it will vaporize much of its subtle, flavorful essence while extracting too many of the more bitter-tasting chemicals. Important to note is that cold water will produce much the same, if not slightly milder, results as hot water with the only real difference being that it takes several hours longer to prepare. Since reheating often destroys coffee's best flavors, cold water coffee should be made concentrated and mixed with hot water to achieve the desired temperature.

- 2. Mixing the water and the coffee:** There are two basic ways to get water to your coffee. Purists, and those with both patience and time to spare, heat the water and, in various ways, carefully manually combine it with the beans while personally monitoring the entire process. Those with less aversion to the affectations of modern society or who find themselves burdened by busier schedules, children, or unsympathetic employers often place their trust and their coffee's fate in the hands of any number of automated contraptions while they see to their other distractions.
- 3. Separating the coffee from the spent beans:** This next and final step in coffee preparation is responsible for the remaining half of all brewing debates. Considered important for reasons of taste, aesthetics, ceremony, and style, variations can range from the primitive and iconoclastic habits of not separating your grinds, simply letting them settle out or drinking them, to the utilization of complex, advanced, and often indulgently bourgeois inventions.

A summary of popular brewing methods

Every coffee drinker has an opinion on the best process for making the finest cup of coffee. Yours may differ. Do not feel repressed by tradition or the local cafe's technique-du-jour. Experiment with these we offer, con-

sider their variations, and try any new ones you may come up with. Just remember: Regardless of which you choose, the primary goal is your enjoyment of your cup of coffee.

Cowboy (or open pot) coffee

Grind: Coarse to fine to taste

Coffee replaced tea in the 1700's as America's unofficial hot drink of choice in a likely act of rebellion against the monarchs of England and their stuffy, blue blooded ways. No method epitomizes this statement with the classic American gusto and in-your-face ingenuity better than Cowboy Coffee. This most basic and rustic method requires only water, some vessel to serve as a pot, and your chosen amount of ground coffee. Making cowboy coffee is as easy as heating water, mixing in the bean, and enjoying your creation. Artists favor this method for its creative opportunity, challenging simplicity, and iconoclastic aura. Rough-and-tough-riders-of-the-range might drink their's heavily laden with sediment, casually chewing through the chest-hair-sprouting texture, while those more academically driven and scientifically curious individuals list a multitude of high-tech ways they strain or clarify their personal concoctions before drinking.

French pressed (or plunged) coffee

Grind: Coarse

Essentially the same as Cowboy coffee, but with an ever so much more civilized image, French pressed coffee has gained respect as the adventurous sibling to the other high class methods. Plunger pots, as they were originally called, originated in Italy in the 1930's but, for whatever reason, never caught on. Several decades later, the French adopted these simple contraptions as a favored apparatus for everyday home brewing and thus they became known as "The French Press". French presses are now commonly promoted as a clever novelty in stuffy cafés and are available in most specialty kitchen stores. They are steadily gaining popularity in up-

per middle class America, presumably for their undeniable utility as cute after dinner conversation pieces.

Percolated coffee

Grind: Coarse

Ah, the sensuous sounds and smells of the percolator...brings back those memories of the '70's: Bridge parties, disco, the Brady Bunch -- unfortunately, (particularly for today's retro styled hip,) perked coffee suffers from a fatal flaw: When most percolators are working correctly, they boil the coffee, vaporizing the flavored oils, reducing the whole operation's function to that of a sophisticated potpourri set-up. If you must perk coffee, for nostalgic reasons or the like, use the newer electric units as they usually have thermostats that help keep your brew from being boiled too severely.

Drip and filter methods

Grind: As fine as the filter will allow

The various drip and filter methods are the most common ways to make coffee today. Since the variety of machines is literally endless, we will leave the details to the respective instruction manuals and concentrate on a few important general points one should consider.

The biggest issue with any filter made coffee is with the filters themselves. Paper filters are too slow, making the coffee bitter and some time even necessitate additional warming before drinking. In addition, many paper filters impart various chemical and/or cardboard-like flavors into the coffee. Cloth filters, perhaps a more environmentally friendly option, are difficult to clean and often extract too much oil and flavor from the coffee. Permanent filters, such as the gold plated metal ones, are probably the best option as they are reusable, easily cleaned, leave behind no flavor, and are often precisely designed for use with the specifications of various machines.

Various drip and filter machines

The most traditional drip apparatus, classically known as Flip-Drips or Neapolitan Macchinettas, are essentially two compartments separated by a filtering or straining receptacle that holds the coffee. The important points to consider are: (1) Avoid the cheaper models made from aluminum as coffee tends to pick up aluminum's flavor and (2) set-ups with some insulation are handy as keeping the water hot is one of the biggest challenges with this slow process. Lastly, always stir the dripped coffee before drinking, as the first coffee to drip out is usually the most dense and will stay near the bottom.

Automatic filter-drip machines, with the help of modern technology, have taken over among all but the most skeptical and traditional coffee connoisseurs. Many good looking, fine coffee making machines are worthy of consideration. A few names that stand out as good starting points include Krups, Braun, Cappesso, and Melitta.

Vacuum pots

Grind: Medium to fine

One of the most stylish, inspiring, and exclusive ways to make coffee is with a vacuum pot setup. The alchemical display of filter pots, pipes, plugs and springs are guaranteed to impress friends and relatives while also making a darn good, if not nearly perfect, cup of coffee. While the popularity of vacuum filter pots peaked back in the 1920's and 1930's, several models can still be found today. Vacuum filter coffee requires patience and precision and is therefore best saved for those who value academic novelty and ceremony as much as the corporeal pleasure of a fine cup of coffee.

Adjustment: Cream and sugar

Though most Americans have a categorical aversion to adding cream and/or sugar to their coffee, most of the world typically finds little fault in it. We recommend using cream and sugar as necessary based on your personal preference and as dictated by the individual flavors of your specific blend of beans and brewing choices.

Note: Honey is not recommended as a sweetener for hot coffee as it tends to break down at higher temperatures, producing an overly sweet flavor.

Other adjustments might include variations in temperature, brew strength, and selected alcoholic additions. Don't be afraid, for fear of breaking tradition or garnering ridicule from the less open minded, to experiment with customizing your personal cup of coffee. Remember, we pour coffee to drink coffee and thus, the true tradition of coffee is in that search for the ultimate pleasure and enjoyment hidden in its rich, dark, liquid depths.

Specifications

Our coffee is made from carefully selected, first quality, imported beans roasted and packaged locally on a regular basis right here on the central coast of California.

We currently offer two roasts: 'Rocket Brew' (a dark French roast) and 'Machinist's Brew' (a milder European styled French roast blend).

To reorder

Visit your local bicycle shop and ask for "Chris King Precision Blend Coffee" by name, call our coffee hotline at 800.523.6008, or check out our web site at <http://www.chrisking.com>.

(Replacement bags of beans are available. See page 12.)



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