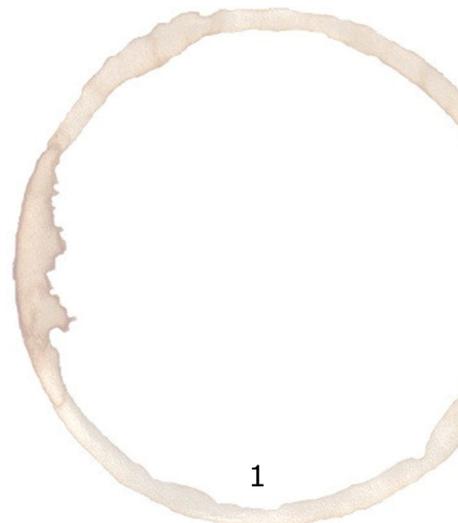




# **But First: A Fake Report on Coffee**

Oklahoma ABLE Tech



## What is Coffee, Anyway?

We all know it. We all love it. But what exactly *is* coffee? Just some sort of hot bean water? Or the nectar of the gods?

Wikipedia defines coffee as, "a brewed drink prepared from roasted coffee beans, the seeds of berries from certain flowering plants in the *Coffea* genus. From the coffee fruit, the seeds are separated to produce a stable, raw product: unroasted green coffee. The seeds are then roasted, a process which transforms them into a consumable product: roasted coffee, which is ground into fine particles that are typically steeped in hot water before being filtered out, producing a cup of coffee."

The word "typically" stands out to me here. Like, who is out there just eating raw coffee grounds? Strange. Let's continue our coffee origins journey at the logical place, the beginning.

## Coffee's Superhero Origin Story

According to the National Coffee Association USA's History of Coffee, "no one knows exactly how or when coffee was discovered, though there are many legends about its origin."

See the article at: <https://www.ncausa.org/About-Coffee/History-of-Coffee>

## These Goats Aren't Fainting Anymore

Legend has that an Ethiopian goat herder named Kaldi noticed that his goats became so energetic that they couldn't sleep after eating berries from a particular tree.



He shared this discovery with a local group of monks who brewed the berries into a drink. This drink kept the monks awake and allowed them to pray all night.

From there, the news of this miracle drink spread east, eventually making it to the Arabian Peninsula.

## Schools of the Wise Guys

Coffee really took off once it hit the Arabian Peninsula. The climate was perfect for cultivating the beans and the location was a center of worldwide trade at the time.

A precursor to the modern coffee shop full of millennials (from a different millennium, of course), coffee was enjoyed by many people in public coffee houses called *qahveh khaneh*. These coffee houses became known as "Schools of the Wise" and were a very popular location for lots of different kinds of social activities like:

- Drinking coffee (duh!)
- Trying to talk over loud music
- Playing popular games like chess, or "Is this my cup?"
- Watching performers that nobody asked to perform
- Secretly judging the terrible way people park their horses

Eventually, everyone's favorite hot bean water made its way to Europe through travelers to the holy city of Mecca.

## Europe Catches Coffee Fever Thanks to the Pope

No, I'm not making that clickbaity heading up.

Coffee started to become so popular in the 17<sup>th</sup> century that people were suspicious that the unusual dark black drink was the "bitter invention of Satan." These fears were so high that the drink was banned by the local clergy of Venice in 1615. Eventually, Pope Clement VIII had to intervene. Thankfully, he found the drink appealing and gave it papal approval, paving the way for coffee to truly take over the world.



Throughout Europe, coffee houses continued to spring up and become centers for social interaction and baristas spelling people's names wrong. It's clearly spelled "Geoughf", not "Jeff". Try to get it right next time...

At the time, beer and wine were the choice of drink for breakfast. And that really explains a lot, doesn't it? Surprising nobody, people who switched to drinking coffee instead of alcohol felt more alert, had more energy, and were more productive at work. This is why modern offices have a steady supply of the delicious liquid on hand all the time. A caffeinated workforce is a happy workforce. Wait, no, that's not quite right. A caffeinated workforce is a jittery but more productive workforce. You can sleep on your own time, Jeff. Oh, sorry, Geoughf.

## The Boston... Coffee Party?

Thomas Jefferson once said that coffee is "the favorite drink of the civilized world."

But it only became this in the American colonies after 1773. Up until this point tea was the preferred drink of the New World, and its dominance was only overturned after King George III decided to impose heavy taxes on tea. The American colonists revolted against these taxes by dumping thousands of pounds of tea into Boston Harbor. This became known as the Boston Tea Party and coffee emerged forever victorious in the aftermath.

## The Other Black Gold

Entire nations owe their existence to coffee. The 18<sup>th</sup> century saw coffee emerge as one of the world's most profitable exports. Crude oil may be number one, but coffee could be considered the other Black Gold just behind it. Just look at all this totally-not-made-up data:

Time Period	Crude Oil	Coffee
1600's	5	10
1700's	10	100
1800's	1000	999

## Conclusion

Hopefully by now you can see just how wonderful coffee really is. It is so much more than hot bean water. It is that which gives life meaning. Truly our species will never attain a higher prize than this glorious... cough! Hm? Too much? Fine. Coffee's OK or whatever.