



INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE TO CUPPING



WHAT YOU NEED

COFFEE For sensory-analysis cupping in our lab, we roast the coffee light enough to detect any defects or imperfections. The degree of roast that you use in your cupping will depend on your desired purpose. Do be sure that the coffee you are cupping is no more than a few days off-roast and that the roast and rest are consistent.

SCALE You will need a scale for weighing whole-bean coffee for the cupping. The scale will need to read with an accuracy of 0.10 of a gram. The cupping ratio as recommended by the SCA is 8.25 g of coffee per 150 ml of water.

GRINDER To calibrate the grind size for a cupping is tricky, as the key is consistency rather than necessarily the grind size that makes the coffee taste best. According to the SCA, “Grind particle size should be slightly coarser than typically used for paper filter drip brewing, with 70–75 percent of the particles passing through a U.S. standard-size 20 mesh sieve.”

CUPS OR BOWLS You will need a collection of standard-size bowls or cups in order to eliminate variables in your brew. Our lab uses 5.5-ounce rocks glasses for cupping.

RINSE CUPS In addition to cups for the coffee, you will also need cups for hot, fresh water which you will use to rinse your spoons between tastes of each cup.

SPOONS Cupping-specific spoons are available on the market, but inexpensive bouillon spoons will do the trick.

WATER Plenty of water should be heated before the cupping begins. The water should be between 195–205°F, and should only be boiled once.

TIMER You will want a timer capable of counting up in seconds as well as minutes, and it should be able to work for an hour.

SCORECARD OR NOTEPAD If you are cupping for any professional purpose, you will want someplace to record your results. Most cuppings are conducted “blind,” meaning the coffees