

EXPLORING THE CRAFT OF COFFEE

Nº76

Extracted

**How Far
We've Come**



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PUBLISHER

Joseph Robertson

DESIGNER

Michael Mage

CONTRIBUTORS

Jesse Nelson

Eric Bierker

EXTRACTED MAGAZINE seeks to educate, delight, and empower coffee drinkers everywhere bringing you into the world of **craft specialty coffee**. We build connection and understanding that raises the value and the lives of people in coffee around the world, as well as each individual cup that you enjoy.

Even though coffee is consumed by billions worldwide, many are unaware of the significance of the beverage in their cups. Conscious consumption of coffee leads to not only the best tasting coffee of your life, but more powerfully supports the various cultures and peoples that are responsible for that coffee.

Extracted reflects this growing awareness and empowers all coffee drinkers to discover the richness, not only of flavor, but also of the history and relationships of the coffee in your cup.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

Brewing: How Far We've Come

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ALSO IN THIS ISSUE...

▶ **A Decade of Coffee**

Coffee Lovers Radio

▶ **Designing the Perfect Cup, Fungus Eating Snails, and Costa Rica**

Monthly Coffee Chronicles



VIDEO

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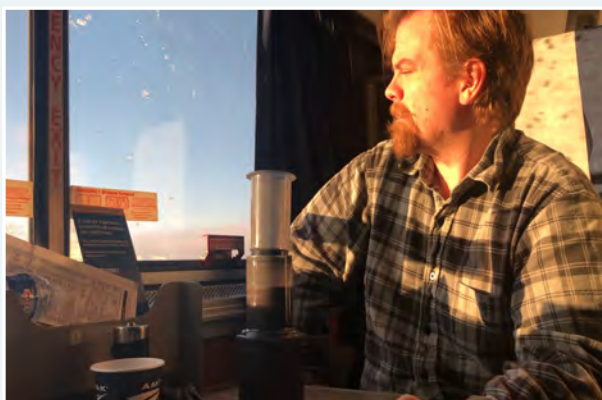
Extracted TV



GUEST ARTICLE

Portland Beers and Brews, Part 2

Eric Bierker



VIDEO

Cold Brew on The Aeropress

Extracted TV



READER'S QUESTIONS

How Do I Pick a Grinder?

Extracted Magazine



FROM THE EDITOR

Where Do I Go Next?

Joseph Robertson



**A PATHWAY TO
BETTER COFFEE**

THE COFFEE ROASTER
OF EXTRACTED MAGAZINE



COFFEE BREWING HOW FAR WE'VE COME

BY JOSEPH ROBERTSON

A LONG TIME AGO (ALMOST 8 YEARS) I was just getting into coffee. I stumbled upon an entire world of fascinating intricate craft and taste. I discovered something which has the power to bring intriguing variability, delight, and appreciation to every day of my life. A thing which is tied into fascinating parts of our modern culture's history.

I decided to make a magazine about this thing - Coffee Lovers Magazine. As you know now, the name has changed to Extracted, and along the way not only has the coffee industry evolved, but I have, and hopefully, you have as well.

With the start of a new decade, let's look back on how far we've come...

In the first holiday issue of the magazine, I shared with you everything about my daily brew, and where I wanted to go in coffee.

Back in 2012, here is what I brewed with regularly:

My brew method was The French Press. This was my first deep foray into the craft of coffee, hand brewing, thinking about the way that the coffee tasted and how different techniques would affect the experience.

I also noted in the issue that I used each day a Hario Mini Mill as my coffee grinder. It was inexpensive and gave me a solid quality grind. Additionally, the hand grinder pulled me further into the brewing process, forcing me to sit with it for

several minutes. It's actually a curiosity to me - I wonder how much of an impact that activity had on me getting further into coffee. Spending a couple minutes doing this relatively boring repetitive action made me exist mindfully with the process and formed the basis for a ritual. I only usually recommend hand grinders to people on extreme budgets - but I'm starting to wonder about other immeasurable values in picking a hand grinder.

In the issue, I also talked about what I wanted to get to upgrade my coffee experience.

The first thing on my mind was a Chemex. Following that, I wanted a better scale for brewing (I didn't mention it, but originally I just used a kitchen scale), and a gooseneck kettle. Then I would upgrade to brew method like the V6o.

Fast forward almost 8 years, let's see how I did...

My evolution in coffee brewing:

For my everyday brewing methods, my evolution over the past 8 years looks something like this:

French Press ► Aeropress ► Chemex ► V6o / Kalita Wave

I've also used many other different brewers that have unique qualities. The Fellow Drip brewer, for example, is most like the



Kalita Wave. There have been a few other drip-style brewers of various character and uniqueness. Most of them end up being far too much effort for the return. Some of them have been disappointing. I always find myself going back to these 5 core brewers when recommending a brew method to anyone.

Coffee, while exceedingly complex and unique, is also a simple thing. Brewing is about water contact over surface area and time. How much of what soluble compounds are you going



to extract into your water, and at what relative levels to each other? You can't be super specific with those variables, but each brew method will produce a different experience with the same coffee as they result in the water and the grounds interacting in different ways.

While there are seemingly infinite variable methods for getting water into and through coffee grounds (just look at the Aeropress for the large number of different techniques), the end goal for each coffee is usually to extract a broad balance of its natural flavors. Often this means there aren't more than a few expressions of a coffee that we want to achieve. Each of these main brewing methods will show you something slightly different due to their nature. I used to think about using different brewers to show different parts of a coffee. Now I look at the different brewers as producing a particular style of coffee that one individual may prefer over all others.

When I first got into brewing and getting new brewers I was exploring. I started with the French Press because it was simple, but also gave me a much uniquely different cup of coffee than I was used to (this is owing entirely to the immersion method plus coarse filtering through metal - all the oils end up in the cup compared to paper filtering).

I aimed for the Chemex next, because I was diving fast into the world of specialty coffee. The Chemex is one of those brewers which has an air of craft and specialness about it - similar to the V60. There are good reasons for some of that. Both of



these brewers require specialized tools, skills, and knowledge to get the most out of them. However, the Chemex is one of the oldest hand brewers that is heavily used today. Really only superseded by the Melitta drip, which is cheap, easy to find, but not used much in specialty coffee brewing (except in a pinch).

After the Chemex came the V60 and Kalita Wave. I acquired these both around the same time. These are the most popular pour-over style hand brewers in specialty coffee. The V60 tends to be looked upon as the pinnacle of hand brewing, as the unique qualities of the brewer give you a high level of control over the variability in brewing. Both of these brewers allow you to manage grind size and quantity of your roasted coffee, along with brew temperature and pour technique. With the V60, due to the large drip hole in the bottom, you also have control over the flow rate (so you can imagine how controlling the speed and flow of water over the grounds will influence what is extracted) - the Kalita Wave has 3 small holes which restrict the flow.

Looking back on the evolution of my everyday brewers, I took on each one with the impression of it being “a level up” from the previous. The Aeropress might be the odd man out since there are seemingly infinite nuanced ways to brew with it, however, once you have a standard brewing recipe, replicating a great brew is a straightforward process. Overall, I think this ‘stepped’ process of exploring coffee brewing can be quite useful. The trick in diving into something like the V60 right off the bat is if you don’t understand on a base level how coffee



brewing works, then you're just guessing at what to do (even if you follow a recipe). If you can give yourself the opportunity to try each method though, you may find that the style of brew that method produces is something you prefer over all others.

What I Use Now:

This leads us to what I use now on a daily basis. My favorite brewer, which I use nearly every day (unless I've run out of filters, or feel like a change of pace), is the Kalita Wave.

The Kalita produces a similar coffee to the V60, in that you can get a full balanced extraction, except that the Kalita typically brews just a bit richer than the V60. There's almost a bit of immersion brewing happening with the Kalita wave due to the restricted flow rate. The flat bottom nature of the brewer (along with the restricted outflow) means the water and the grounds mingle together for a bit before flowing out. This is opposed to the V60 where for the most part water flows down through the mass of the grounds.

In any case, my preference for this brewer mirrors my preference in coffee. I like richer tasting coffees. More on that in a moment below...

In addition to the Kalita wave, I've upgraded to the following tools:

- **Fellow Kettle**
- **Acaia Scale**
- **Breville Grinder**



The Fellow Kettle is my ultimate gooseneck kettle solution. I actually started out with the Bonavita Gooseneck, not too long after I got the Chemex. My original Chemex experience involved brewing in it with a basic water kettle. That pouring experience was very clumsy. So I quickly upgrade to the gooseneck (stovetop version, my counter space is always at a premium).

I was able to brew an enjoyable cup of coffee on the Chemex with a regular water kettle, but the gooseneck upgraded both the quality of the cup as well as the overall brewing experience. With one of these kettles, you have a much more controlled, slow, and precise pour - this is critical for pour-over brewing, as agitation of the grounds in the bed, and flow rate of the water, are influential to the final cup. As far as the experience itself, pouring from a gooseneck is just more enjoyable. Mostly from an ergonomic perspective, but also with the precision and control.

The Fellow Kettle feels like a pure upgrade from the other gooseneck options. It is ergonomically far more comfortable, has an even slower and more precise pour control, and its so solidly built that accidentally touching it while it's filled with 205 degree water probably won't burn you. Check out my review video on the kettle:

The Acaia scale is a very high-quality scale, if a bit overkill on features for most people. It comes with an app connection for tracking/recording your brews and following other people's



recipes. I never use that feature. Without that, it's one of the most accurate and quick reading scales you can get for coffee. It's well built, the battery lasts a long time - and it does have a built-in timer along with measuring if you're into that kind of thing.

The Breville Grinder is my 4th coffee grinder. I started with the Hario Mini Mill. I “upgraded” to the Porlex Mini for traveling (as far as small hand grinders go, I feel like the Porlex makes a better more consistent grind than the Hario, does so a little bit faster, it's also slimmer). Then I got the Baratza Encore, which is one of the most recommended intro-level electric burr grinders for home brewers. Great for brewing any kind of hand brew outside of espresso. Finally, I've landed with the Breville Smart Grinder. This one includes a much finer range for espresso, doesn't go quite as coarse as the Encore (however I can grind coarse enough for French Press), includes a timer for the grinder and espresso portafilter holder addon. Mostly, I find the Breville grinder produces a more even and consistently sized grind than the Encore (possibly it's comparable to Baratza's next level of grinder, the Virtuoso).

So that's where I'm at now with my home brewing tools. Each day is an enjoyable ritual. I can brew well any coffee that is handed to me, with a variety of brewing methods. Though I have all the tools, I almost always stick with one which prepares for me the kind of coffee that I like to enjoy on a daily basis.

VIDEO

Barrel Aged by Boon Boona Coffee

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IKAWA

— AT HOME —

BRING COFFEE TO LIFE



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THERE'S
SO MUCH
BEAUTY
IT COULD
MAKE YOU
CRY

Exploring Portland Oregon **Beers and Brews** **Part 2**

ARTICLE BY:

Eric Bierker

Eric Bierker is a high school counselor by day and writes in his free time about food, beer, culture, and philosophy/theology for magazines and also at <http://bierkergaard.blogspot.com>. He earned a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Temple University and is an expert on the transition to college. He has written a book "On The Edge: Transitioning Imaginatively To College" which is available on Amazon in both a hard copy and Kindle. He lives in Columbia, Pennsylvania.

There is so much beauty it could make you cry. I came across this neon sign in a closed shop in one of my early morning jaunts on the streets of Portland. Me on Pennsylvania time. Portlanders, still sleeping. The sign arrested me by its simplicity and profundity at the same time. It became the motto of sorts for the visit to



Portland. Let me explain. It cut through the early morning fog on the streets and in my mind.

Several years ago, after much trial and error of doing otherwise, I crafted a quote in respect to coffee and beer consumption as a guide. "Drink coffee with the rising of the sun, drink beer with the setting of the sun." Reversing this order for most people is

rarely a good thing. Alcohol brings people down, caffeine lifts them up. And rather than tangle with the sun to reverse course, better and wiser to abide by the natural order of creation. As far as I can ascertain, that is a Bierker original. Both coffee and beer are beauty in a cup and it could make you cry. The poet William Blake would likely see eternity in both.



So, coffee is a companion in the morning, beer is a buddy of the night. In between, is life and all the things we do like work, raise kids, screw around both literally and figuratively. I rarely drink without it being some type of reward.

Particularly with beer, I need some prior exertion to create space for consumption. Coffee perhaps is a reward for just getting out of bed for another day. A small yet significant act of courage.

When we speak of specialty coffee or craft beer, what essentially does it come down

to, the underlying ethos? It is the beauty of what is in the cup. The taste of loveliness. The sip is as a thread from an illustrious garment. Many hands have weaved what has found a home in your cup and a place in your soul? Should taste matter? Is beauty really worth crying about? Does nihilism poison the cup of existence? These are deep questions.

As an end to itself, beauty becomes empty as a destination. However, as a pointer to what is truly Good, the overarching Platonic ideal,



which unifies all things into an aesthetic, it has great meaning and purpose. And this neon sign reminds us that beauty is everywhere and it can make us cry. It is not just the taste of coffee and beer that should make us cry in gratitude.

Although the taste is the apex of the experience, a process that dehumanizes people, lays waste to the land in pursuit of ungodly profit, crashes into that cup of beauty and shatters it is profoundly ugly and worth crying about, also.

So, craft should reward its producers with a large piece

of the pie so to speak and not just an empty pie tin with crumbs. Both specialty coffee and craft beer celebrate diversity of region, style, color, roasting, and culture as a whole. The coffee bean is complex despite its simple appearance. Where was the Arabica been grown? Who picked it? How did it get here? How to brew it? How does it taste? Was the payment that brought it from the ends of the earth fair? The same questions can be asked of craft beer.



Big question: Are both specialty coffee and craft beer truly sustainable over the long haul and not just the short-term commodities market? People and culture matter and if we don't consider this great issue, we should not be surprised if quality suffers and no amount of quantity can make up the difference. We can't have Arabica affections, the beans which require a lot of care, but Robusta instincts and recompense. Something has to give—and it is cold hard cash to the growers first, not the middlemen and marketers,

and certainly not the corporate shareholders. If the growers are treated with dignity and living wages employing sustainable agricultural practices, then we can enjoy the cup with a clear conscience.

This sustainable question lurked in the back of my mind and followed me like a shadow as I walked Portland's streets in search of the perfect cup.

VIDEO

Coldbrew on the Aeropress

Extracted TV



The background of the entire page is a soft-focus photograph of several wrapped gifts in brown paper, some with black ribbons, and sprigs of greenery like pine or eucalyptus. The gifts are scattered across the frame, with some in the top left and bottom left corners, and others more centrally located but blurred.

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READER QUESTIONS



*How Do I Choose
a Coffee Grinder?*

THIS QUESTION IS AN EXCELLENT ALTERNATIVE to the perennial “what grinder should I get,” in which I provide several options based on your brewing method and preferences.

By the way, subscribers to the magazine can **enjoy the most recent gift guide to the magazine**. My recommendations in there are not holiday dependent and are good throughout the year.

So, how do you choose what grinder to buy?

I’m going to take you through a series of questions to ask yourself, and how your answers will affect your decision.

Before we dive in, I’m going to assume you want to be able to improve the quality of your brewed coffee, and just say that you must get a burr coffee grinder (as opposed to a blade grinder). So we start our search in the burr coffee grinder range.

The questions we are going to ask to determine what grinder to get:

How will you be preparing your coffee?

What is your budget?

Within your budget, what is your specific brew method and what do you want to be able to brew?



To begin, how will you prepare your coffee:

French Press? Pour Over? Auto Drip? Espresso?

To break this into two categories, we can say brew or espresso. If you are primarily preparing espresso, then we need to consider a higher class of grinder - so more on that down the page.

If you are brewing coffee, then we can get into the base level/ starting range of burr coffee grinders.

All Brew Methods NOT Espresso:

Narrowing this down, do you have a budget?

Generally, if your budget is under \$100, and you insist on an electric coffee grinder (as opposed to a hand coffee grinder), you will end up sacrificing quality both in the grind of the coffee itself, but also of the tool you buy, and your overall experience. Base level electric burr grinders of quality start about \$100-140 (the Baratza Encore being the most recommended here).

If your budget is below this, you can get a quality hand-powered burr coffee grinder. Just be aware that this is a labor-intensive process. However - as you read in this issue's throwback article - I started with a hand coffee grinder, and it can be quite an enjoyable experience. Stick with top brands Hario and Porlex - most others are knockoffs. There are some higher-end hand-

batch brew 3.5
pour over 3.5
cold brew 4
spirit tea 3.5



powered grinders which are very excellent, but they can easily be \$100+

Let's say you have a budget in the \$150-300 range. Now it's time to ask yourself what brew methods you are going to use. What's important here is to understand the range possible of a grinder. A higher price doesn't necessarily mean a higher range. The grinder I use is the Breville Smart Grinder, which retails about \$200. This grinder produces a much more consistent and uniform grind size than the Baratza Encore, BUT, it can't go as coarse as the encore. It is difficult to brew a standard French Press or Cold Brew with this grinder (which is fine for me, I don't do those).

If you're brewing primarily pour-over filter coffee (Kalita Wave, V60, Melitta, Chemex) then you're going to be fine on grind range with any burr grinder. Generally, the more you invest, the higher the quality of the grind. For simplicity, you can move up Baratza's product range. The Virtuoso comes after the Encore and will be a nicer experience.

Grinders for Espresso:

When it comes to espresso, one of the most important factors is your coffee grinder. As a general guideline, it is often recommended that you spend half the price of your espresso machine on your coffee grinder. I've found this to be a pretty decent guide.

Example: I have the Breville Bambino espresso machine - a



pretty impressive little machine, with a fantastic boiler and steaming capabilities (same tech as the Breville Barista Touch, just without all the flash or built-in grinder). This machine retails for about \$480. I have paired with it the Breville Smart Grinder, which retails for about \$190. This so far has been an excellent pairing.

With that being said for my example, were I into espresso a whole lot more, I'd find the grinder to be somewhat limiting. While it can do a pretty decent espresso grind, the ability to make very fine adjustments is important. Espresso enthusiasts also probably want a grinder that uses a FLAT burr, versus almost every consumer burr grinder which has a CONICAL burr. A flat burr grinder with excellent control for espresso will probably start at about \$500, and quickly go up from there.

Conclusion

I've been trying to avoid writing this as a "get this grinder" recommendation. What I really want is for you to think through the brewing process that you use, and how likely you are to want to improve. These two ideas are going to be the most important things to understand in your search.





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CLR-E151: A Decade of Coffee

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Happy New Year to all you wonderful listeners, welcome to 2020! In this show we reflect on 2019, and the 2010s – looking back over the decade and how far we’ve come along. We also share our thoughts going forward into 2020, and our new years resolution.

Hosts

Joseph Robertson, Extracted Magazine

www.extractedmagazine.com

Jesse Nelson, Conduit Coffee

www.conduitcoffee.com

Where Do I Go Next?

So in the feature article for this issue I talked all about how far I'd come in my own coffee making and enjoyment, but I didn't get into where I'd like to go.

As far as brewing the actual coffee, there's not much further to go from a technical perspective. I've got the coffee brewing equipment I like best, and don't see a need to 'upgrade' it (or rather, there isn't really an 'upgrade'). No doubt I'll enjoy collecting various different brew methods that I find and playing around with new things ... who knows, maybe I'll find something I enjoy better on a daily basis than the Kalita Wave / Chemex / V60 / Aeropress / French Press options which I currently have.

The one place I could see making a significant change is swapping to always have my own crafted water for brewing. Right now the extra steps of making batches of water every day or two (easy as it may be), is a bit too much when I can just filter my water here. That being said, crafting water can make the absolute best coffee tasting experience. I reckon I'd do it in 5+ gallon batches were I to have the



option regularly. In this case I'd need a steady supply of distilled water, and the ability to store and easily access 5+ gallons (which is not the case currently).

Beyond brewing at home...

There's an entire world of specialty coffee I can expand into. I am quite intrigued by the Q Grader certification. However, this certification is aimed at people serving the production side of coffee. Q Graders determine the official certified quality score of a coffee, and are integral to the economics of coffee production.

However, they really have no direct bearing on the coffee drinker's experience. What's the difference to you between an 86 and an 89 point coffee? You almost certainly have no idea how to answer that question. And that's ok. You aren't meant to know. But that's also exactly my point ...

What I'd really like to see is the industry engage more directly with the coffee drinker, to build systems which support their exploration of the drink. Right now, the industry is at the high levels super into 'specialty coffee' and treating coffee as more than a commodity. But on the consumer level, they drop the ball. There's a disconnect.

As far as Q Grader, I'd like to see a program become well adopted which has a similar approach, but for the consumer experience. Perhaps somewhat like a sommolier. The idea would be to create a certification which has the same level of rigor (it's very difficult to actually pass the Q Grader exam), but which clearly communicates to the regular coffee drinker 'this person knows their stuff, they are the ones I should pay attention to as far as taste and experience in coffee.' It would be great to have something which ANYONE can strive for.

Anyhow, those are some of my thoughts on where I'd like to go next in coffee. I've got more ideas, but perhaps they can be shared in a future issue.

-Joseph Robertson

Monthly Coffee Chronicles

A white ceramic mug filled with dark coffee sits on a light-colored surface. To its left is a folded newspaper, showing columns of text. The background is a solid light beige color.

How To Design The Perfect Cup of Coffee, According to Science

Normally I don't go in on these kinds of 'according to science' articles. But this article actually gives you a pretty good insight into the scientific nature of brewing coffee, along with what parts of the process affect a good cup the most. ▶ [Read More](#)

This Weird Snail Eats the Fungus That's Decimating Coffee Crops

This is pretty cool. One aspect to coffee production which most people don't realize is that you cannot use pesticides AND have good quality coffee. So farmers who are trying to produce and sell to higher priced specialty markets have to grow without any kind of pesticide use. This leaves them quite vulnerable to bugs and diseases which ruin coffee crops. ▶ [Read More](#)

Savoring Costa Rica, Sip by Sip

This a delightful read about a trip touring a coffee farm in Costa Rica. If you've ever been interested in check out the coffee farming level, your easiest bet is probably a tour in Costa Rica like this author experienced. ▶

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