Coffee

Every morning, people all over the world start the day with a cup of coffee. Nearly 2.25 billion cups of coffee are consumed around the world. Coffee is an integral part of the day for many people. Even after waking up in the morning, people drink it throughout the rest of the day. Ever since it was first introduced a few centuries ago, coffee has served a major social function in society, and in many cities all over the world coffeehouses and cafes are as popular now as the have ever been.

The origins of coffee aren't entirely clear. There are a few different accounts of its discovery. One particular theory involves a ninth-century Ethiopian goat herder named Kaldi, who noticed that his goats became extremely energized after eating bright red berries from a bush. Kaldi then decide to eat the berries himself and experienced a similar reaction. His body was reacting to caffeine, which is the active ingredient found in coffee that provides a jolt of energy.

While the early history of coffee may be ambiguous, more is known about the path it began to take starting in the fifteenth century. Around this time, coffee was first cultivated in southern Arabia; it continued to spread to other areas, including parts of Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and the Americas. Over time, coffee's popularity continued to grow rapidly. Today, it is one of the most-traded commodities in the world.

Coffee plants are grown on plantations, and farmers harvest the coffee "cherries", typically by hand. Although we often think of coffee beans as brown, they are actually green when they are picked. These beans are separated from the outer shell of the "cherry", and the dry beans are then roasted. It is in this stage that the beans release the coffee's aroma and the beans turn from a green to brown color. The beans are then shipped to be sold, either whole or ground. Once purchased, they are finally brewed for consumption in kitchens, restaurants, and, of course, coffeehouses and cafes.

The production of coffee involves millions of people in several countries, most notably Brazil, Vietnam, and Colombia. In order to ensure that coffee beans are of good quality, farmers often receive assistance from management companies that train farmers to employ modern, professional practices. These companies also teach farmers how to keep operation costs low while still maintaining profitability.

Coffee has played an important role in society for a long time. **(A)** Coffeehouses, also known as coffee shops or cafes, were established in the seventeenth century as public places for intellectuals and professionals to gather, exchange ideas and debate various topics, such as art, politics, and trade. **(B)** Artists, thinkers, and writers frequented coffeehouses for the open discussions that were encouraged. **(C)** Today, coffeehouses are extremely common in major cities around the globe. **(D)** They still serve as gathering places for people to talk, read, and work –and, of course, to enjoy the varieties of coffee that have been developed over the years.

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