

How To Make Perfect Turkish Coffee, and Its Social Importance

Turkish coffee (Türk kahvesi) plays an important role in Turkish society. It was like that in the past, when coffeehouses were the place to meet fellow countrymen and have a conversation about politics, religion, social and even scientific matters. But even today, almost 500 years after coffee was first introduced in Turkey, it still fulfills an important role in Turkish social life.

Social Importance of Turkish Coffee

Traditionally, when a man was about to marry a woman, his parents would ask the permission of her parents by visiting the future wife's house. The bride-to-be was supposed to serve the guests the best Turkish coffee she can — a test to show her skills. Today many people simply decide to get married and announce it to their parents. Yet, the traditional ceremony with the coffee treat is very rarely skipped.

Another well-known and still very common tradition while enjoying a cup of Turkish coffee is fortune telling (fal). This is done by looking at the bottom of a finished coffee cup. Whether you believe the outcome or not, the fact is that it's another nice invention to extend the conversation.

Preparing Turkish Coffee

Sugar — The amount of sugar is up to your personal liking, so make sure to ask your guests before you start making the coffee. Sade is without any sugar, orta is a medium level of sugar — one tea spoon or a cube of sugar, and şekerli is sweet — two teaspoons or cubes of sugar. Brown sugar can be used, yet white sugar provides more foam which is very important for many people.

Water — Only use bottled drinking water, since the chloride in the tap water will ruin the taste and the smell. Measure the amount of water by using the coffee cups — one cup per person.

Coffee Pot — In the past only copper coffee pots (cezve) were used, but these days you can find them also in other metals like steel and aluminum. Any regular Turkish kitchen would have a set of different sizes of coffee pots to have the perfect match readily available for the amount of Turkish coffee to be made.

Making Turkish Coffee

Put the coffee and sugar in the pot first, and then add the water. Set the flame to as little as possible. Put the pot on the stove and stir. From now on, you cannot stir the coffee again! After a minute or so, a layer of foam will start to build up on the surface. When the foam gets thicker in texture and darker in the color, take some of the foam into the cups. Just at the moment the coffee starts to rapidly rise (be quick!), take the pot off the fire and pour the rest into the cups. First equally shared half way in the cups, and then fill up the cups with the remainder of the coffee in the pot.

Serving and Enjoying Turkish Coffee

Serving water with the coffee is important to clean the mouth before drinking Turkish coffee. This to ensure you can enjoy most of its taste. Turkish delight, liquor and chocolate or cookies are also served with coffee as sweet treats to enrich the treat.

People prefer to drink Turkish coffee after dinner, in the company of friends and/or relatives. It is a real good excuse to enjoy each other's company and a good basis for a nice conversation.

Enjoy! (In Turkish "Afiyet Olsun!")