

Best Brewers

MACHINES THAT MAKE YOU WAKE UP AND SMELL THE COFFEE

By Sam Gugino Photographs by Bill Milne

The quality of home coffeemakers is finally catching up to the quality of the coffee going into them. • The biggest advance has been power. Look for a machine drawing at least 1,200 watts—that's about what you'll need to get water hot enough to make the best-tasting coffee. Three coffeemakers in my testing—the Technivorm Clubline KB-741, the Newco OCS-8 and the Capresso CoffeeTEC (all automatic drip machines)—exceed that threshold.

Another major improvement is the widespread adoption of thermal coffee pots. They minimize exposure to air, which dulls coffee's flavors, and obviate the need for warming plates, which cook coffee rather than keep it warm.

Though bells and whistles on coffeemakers abound, you don't need them for great coffee. With manual drip coffeemakers, such as those from Melitta, you pour hot water—about 195° to 205° F, or just below boiling—over coffee grounds in a cone above a pot or mug. The same is true for the French press pot; after water and coffee are combined in a beaker for several minutes, the grounds are pressed to the bottom with a plunger. Bodum, best known for its French press pots, also makes the Santos, which uses a vacuum system to make very good coffee. Here are snapshots of six of the best coffeemakers available. With the exception of the Melitta One:One, all models were tested for eight cups; a cup is generally about 5 ounces.

Technivorm Clubline KB-741

Right: This is the most powerful coffeemaker I tried, at 1,475 watts. It produced superb coffee, rich and flavorful with exceptional balance. The Clubline was also the fastest coffeemaker, producing eight cups in about five minutes. I also liked its smart two-tower look and its 7-foot cord (most cords were around 3 feet). The only frill is its ability to use a gold mesh filter, which produces an earthier cup of coffee. The Clubline and the Newco OCS-8 are the only two coffeemakers that meet the stringent standards of the Specialty Coffee Association of America. \$184, \$205 with a thermal pot

How to Get It

Boyd Coffee Co. Portland, Ore., (800) 223-8211, www.boyds.com

