

Filter Kaapi

SERVES
2

Filter Coffee

In other parts of India, *chai* (tea) is king, but in southern India, filter *kaapi* rules. It's called *meter kaapi* because the coffee maker blends and froths the drink by pouring it between cups from a meter high. Chicory isn't always used but high-quality coffee is. Try it with a peaberry (see page 257) blend.

25 g (5 level tbsp) coffee blend:
80 percent medium-roast coffee,
20 percent ground roasted chicory
Grind size: fine

180 g (6 ½ oz) hot water
(93°C–96°C/200°F–205°F)

1 cup milk

Sugar to taste

You will also need:

Indian-style coffee filter (see Notes, below), dabara tumbler and saucer, or two metal cups

Put the ground-coffee blend into the top chamber of the Indian-style coffee filter, distribute evenly, and using the perforated insert, tamp down lightly, then leave the filter in place. Place the whole apparatus over a scale, and press tare to reset to zero.

Add 40 g (1 ½ oz) water—just enough to wet the grounds. Replace the lid on the filter, leave for 15 seconds, then proceed to fill the top chamber with the hot water until the scales read 180 g (6 ½ oz). Cover and leave for up to 20 minutes to allow for the coffee to filter through—this brewed coffee is known as the “decoction.”

Meanwhile, heat the milk in a saucepan. As it begins to foam, remove from the heat and pour from the highest distance you can into another vessel large enough to hold the liquid without splashing too much. This will froth the milk and prevent a skin from forming on top.

Pour some coffee decoction into the *dabara* tumbler, then top up with as much milk as you'd like. Add sugar to taste.

Pour the mixture between the *dabara* tumbler and its saucer, from as high of a distance as you can manage (this aerates the milk, mixes the sugar, and emulsifies it). Repeat a few times until it's blended, creamy, and frothy.

Notes:

No Indian coffee filter? Combine coffee and water in a metal pitcher, cover for 30 seconds, stir, and cover again. Leave for 1–2 minutes, then strain through a cheesecloth or fine sieve. Chicory is a tough root that you won't want to put in your coffee grinder. If making your own chicory-coffee blend, buy roasted chicory, already finely ground. If the coffee filter isn't brand new, sit the top half over a low flame to burn off old coffee residue. Handle carefully because the metal will become very hot.

