

Extend Your Listening What's For English

How Much Coffee Do People Drink?

Before listening, what do you believe about coffee consumption?

- All European countries drink about the same amount of coffee? YES NO
- Japan drinks less coffee than any European country. YES NO
- Americans are among the top coffee drinkers. YES NO
- The country that invented espresso (Italy) must consume a lot of coffee. YES NO

As you listen, try to find answers to the following questions.

- What are the English, Irish or New Zealanders likely to drink at breakfast?
- Do the British drink a little more tea than the Irish - or a lot more?
- The countries in which region consume the most coffee?
Scandinavia Eastern Europe Southern Europe United Kingdom
- Do we know what coffee drinkers in Colombia or Brazil consume?
- Do the top consumers of coffee consume a little more coffee than the Germans or a lot more?
- Are Americans or Italians major consumers of coffee?
- When did Americans drink the most coffee? **1961 1991**
- In recent decades have Americans
 - **increased the amount of coffee they drink?**
 - **increased the consumption of premium coffee?**
 - **both?**
- Which country drinks the least amount of coffee?
- Did coffee have an impact on British culture?

Hello. Welcome back to Extend your listening on What's for English dot com. This is the podcast for English language learners who would like to listen to interesting content, spoken in a natural manner but modified to emphasize some of the vocabulary and expressions. I'm really glad that you've been able to come back.

Today we'll continue to explore coffee. I hope by reading and listening to podcasts on this one topic, you're getting more familiar with some vocabulary and expressions. And that it's helping your listening comprehension. Maybe you feel you're catching more of the content than in the earlier podcasts on coffee. If you have any ideas or suggestions, I would like you to leave a comment on the website. Also, please feel free to use the study guide that's on the website. You can download it and use the transcript, and that should help you understand what I'm talking about.

So, in today's podcast, we're going to be talking about trends in coffee consumption. You should learn a lot about how people in different countries consume coffee. But you should also learn more about how to describe information that's presented in tables.

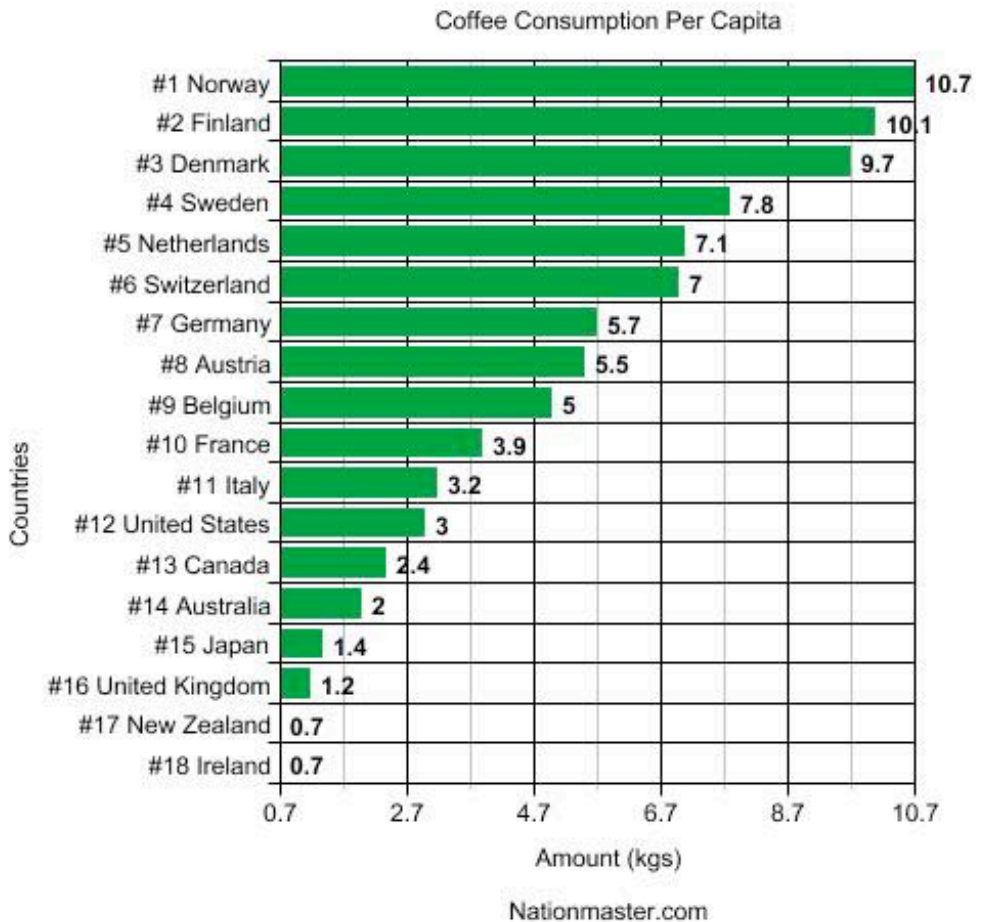
In an earlier podcast, I asked if you start your day with tea or coffee. I **noted** that if you were from Britain, Ireland or New Zealand, you probably got started with a **steaming cup** of black tea. On a list of eighteen industrialized nations, those three countries drank the most tea. The British in particular drink lots of tea - almost double the amount that the Irish consume - and they were number 2.

Note: to point out, to mention, to make a note of...

Steaming cup: a cup of hot liquid.

So what do you think you'd be drinking if you were from Norway or some of the other Scandinavian countries? Not tea, that's for sure -but coffee. And from what I can tell from the statistics we'll be looking at today, they must start their day with coffee and continue drinking all day long.

So the information we're looking at today is a table showing coffee consumption per capita in the same eighteen industrialized nations that we looked at for tea consumption. I'd like to talk about the information in the table tells us, and then think about some of the that arise from the information. Implications - what does that mean? Well, "implications" means some of the ideas we might get if we follow that information a little bit further. In other words, what these figures might tell us if we think more about them.



Again - what is per capita consumption? It's the amount we get if we take the total and divide it up among every man, woman and child in a country. That's per capita consumption.

Originate : to begin, to start,

Key players: a cup of hot liquid.

Again it's a little bit strange that the list doesn't include any of the countries where coffee is actually grown, such as Columbia, Brazil, Kenya or Indonesia. This list doesn't even include the country or countries where coffee **originated**, that would be Somalia and Ethiopia. But among these eighteen countries are a few that were some of the **key players** when coffee began to become more important as a global business. And, in some of these countries, coffee is a very important part of daily life. You could even say a major part of their culture.

I asked some of my Japanese students, which country would **top the list** of coffee consumers. "Top the list:" which country is at the top? They all said it must be the USA. I guess that's because here in Japan, and in Tokyo in particular, they see a Starbucks **on every corner**. I knew that Americans do drink a fair amount of coffee, but I knew they couldn't be at the top of the list. I thought it might be Germany or Holland. Or maybe Italy - Italy is the home of espresso, right?

Let's stop wasting time and look at the numbers. As you've probably seen already, the top three countries are in Scandinavia: Norway, Finland and Denmark. In all three, per capita consumption is around 10 kilograms per person. Specifically, Norway: 10.7 kilograms; Finland: 10.1 Kilograms; and Denmark: 9.7 kilograms. Number four, down a bit from the top three, is Sweden at 7.8 kilograms and then comes Netherlands with 7.1 kilograms of per capita consumption.

So in the **Nordic** countries, coffee consumption per capita is around 10 kilograms per person - **give or take a kilo**. Give or take means something like a little more or a little less.

Is 10 kilograms a lot of coffee? Well... let's find out by comparing consumption in some of the other countries. I said earlier I thought the Germans might be **among the top coffee drinkers**. I've had some experience in Germany. There are a lot of coffee shops in Germany. My mother's German, and the Germans I know do drink quite a lot of coffee everyday. And, Germany is number 7 on the list of 18. That's pretty high, isn't it? But per capita consumption in Germany is 5.7 kilograms. 5.7 kilograms - that is about half of what the Norwegians drink. The Germans drink a lot of coffee - but the Norwegians and the Fins drink 50 percent more. 50 percent more! How can they do that?

Germany, Austria and Belgium are in the middle of the list, around 5 kilograms. Number 10, France, represents another significant drop, to 3.9 kilograms per capita. Italy - home to all that delicious espresso and cappuccino, and such **a major influence** on the founders of Starbucks? In Italy, they only consume 3.2 kilograms, which is just above the consumption in the United States - 3 kilograms. Again - those Norwegians. Think about it: they drink 70 percent more coffee than the Italians and the Americans. How can that be?

This is **what I thought originally** about the American situation. **My thought** was that American coffee consumption was quite a lot higher in the 1950s and the 1960s. The coffee then was weak. In fact, it tasted a lot like water in those days, but they drank a lot. In the 80s, 90s and 2000s **I guessed** that overall consumption went down - but that more and more Americans were switching to higher grades of premium coffee. Well, it's a little bit like that, but not quite. In fact, you could say that I was wrong - well sort of wrong and sort of right. A **high point** for coffee consumption in the US was in 1961. At that time, Americans drank 3 cups of coffee per day per capita. But by 1991, the daily average was only 1.7 cups per person. This information comes from the [Specialty Coffee Association of America](#)

To top the list: to be the most important, the highest, the most significant.

On every corner: everywhere.

Nordic: adjective used to describe things from or associated with the Scandinavian countries - *Nordic skiing*.

Give or take a _____: a way to describe an approximate number or amount. *Tokyo has a population of 25 million - give or take a million.*

Among the _____: in the group of... *She studied among the most talented engineers.*

A major influence: having an effect on a person's behavior or beliefs. *Rock music was a major influence on Tom.*

What I thought originally: what I thought at first.

My thought: my opinion, my idea

I guessed: I supposed, I assumed...

A high point: a time of great importance. *The high point of my life.*

It turns out that since 1991, American consumption of coffee has been growing. In the early 2000s, 50 percent of Americans drank coffee every day and 65% had coffee at least once a week. The American coffee associations seem pretty happy with American coffee consumption -- but it's nothing when compared with the Norwegians and Swedes.

The bottom of this list looks like the Tea consumption list - but in reverse. Ireland is at the very bottom. 0.7 kilograms of coffee per capita. New Zealand: 0.9 kilograms. And the United Kingdom: 1.2 kilograms. Japan, which was number four on the Tea consumption list is now represented as the fourth from the bottom on this list for coffee.

The British will tell you that coffee had a huge cultural impact in England in the 18th century. That was the time of the great coffee houses. In the coffee houses, people gathered to read newspapers, to discuss ideas, to argue. This was the time of the Enlightenment - and, who knows, many of the great ideas that are with us today - ideas about human rights, democracy, capitalism and progress might never have been born without the help of strong cups of coffee.

The British probably drank a lot more coffee back then - perhaps they drank more coffee than tea at first. But tea took over and the British today drink even less coffee than the Japanese.