

Tip sheet for **Cona Vacuum Brewing** from Sweet Maria's

Cona brewing is a wonderful visual experience that just happens to result in perfect coffee. While these instructions may make it sound like it requires too much time and dedication, after several tries you will find it is only slightly more laborious than other brewing methods, but much more fun! The following is meant to supplement the instructions that come with the Cona --please read them too! More general brewing tips are found on [www.sweetmarias.com/grind.brew.php](http://www.sweetmarias.com/grind.brew.php)

**Before you brew:**

- Fill the spirit lamp with denatured alcohol. This is sold in hardware stores, paint stores, camp stores, marine supply stores, and gourmet food stores. It is also called "camp stove alcohol". In Cona instructions it is called "methylated spirits". Although Liquid Sterno is denatured alcohol, people who have used it experience many brewing problems. Our advice is just get the stuff from the hardware store ... it works great!
- Place the wick and wickholder in place. Allow time for the wick to absorb fuel. (I get about 6-8 uses from one filling of the lamp.)
- Put the spirit lamp in place and the funnel (top glass globe) in its aperture on the stand.

**The brewing process:**

- Fill the bowl (bottom globe with handle) with hot or boiling water to within about 1/2 inch from the base of the neck. Make sure the outside of the bowl is dry. (You can start with cold water -the process will take much longer and I think the results are not as good.)
- Place the glass drainer (the filter) into the funnel. Put the required amount of evenly ground medium to fine coffee (--fine but WITHOUT powder!--) into the funnel. Standard SCAA brewing ratio is 9 to 11 grams (approximately 2 rounded (not heaping) tablespoons) per 6 oz water.
- Light up! When the water in the bowl shows the very first sign of coming to a boil, place the funnel into the bowl and snug the rubber gasket into the bowl neck with a small twist.
- When all the water, with the exception of a small amount which must remain in the bowl, has been drawn into the top, wait 45 seconds to 2 minutes for the coffee to infuse. Some people like to give it a stir with a spoon. If so, don't bump and dislodge the drainer / filter.
- Place the snuffer on the lamp. When all the coffee has drained into the bowl, remove the funnel. (To break the seal between the top and bottom you can rock the funnel side to side lightly, then twist gently). Place the funnel in the aperture on the stand, serve up your wonderful coffee ...you earned it!

**Additional Comments:**

- A note on grinding for vacuum brewing – if your coffee takes a very long time to siphon down to the bowl (longer than 1 to 2 minutes) then use a coarser grind next time. If the coffee siphons down quickly but the flavor is weak, then use a finer grind.
- The only things that will cause the coffee not to siphon back down to the bowl are 1) too fine a grind of coffee blocking the filter (see above); or 2) the vacuum seal did not form properly, so be sure you place the funnel into the bowl snugly, giving the funnel a slight twist into place. You can also try to wet the rubber seal slightly which can help form a better seal.
- Vacuum pot coffee is very clean, and so may taste “weak” if you are used to French press or very strong coffee. You may need to increase the amount of coffee you use relative to the amount of water used as a result.

**\*Please note that the bowl and handle are NOT microwave safe! Do not try to reheat the coffee in the bowl as there are screws in the handle that will cause it to melt!.**