

# Sweet Maria's

## Hot Air Popper Tip Sheet

Roasting coffee with a hot air popcorn popper is one of the easiest ways to get great results. Roast times are subject to the type of coffee, your home's voltage and the ambient temperature.

- Start your popper. Add green coffee until the rotation slows to a near stand still. Usually between  $\frac{1}{3}$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of beans is a good starting point.
- Replace the plastic hood. After some usage, your hood may get warped from heat. There are tutorials online covering options for the hood, or you can do without it. It's not necessary to use the hood, although it does provide some insulation and can help channel the chaff out into your desired receptacle.
- Starting off, shaking the popper can help the beans to circulate. An alternative method would be to use a wooden spoon to stir the green coffee until it loses some weight and the air flow can agitate it enough for even roasting. The popper's exterior doesn't get overly hot, but using oven mitts is recommended.
- We can't stress enough the importance of watching your roast. Don't step away as roast stages progress very quickly. Listen carefully for the distinctive cracking sounds the coffee makes as it roasts. The difference between a dark roast and a fire can be just a few moments!

### **Here's what you should expect and look for as the coffee roasts:**

- As the coffee begins to change from green to yellow and into light brown, you will notice a grassy smell and see chaff coming out of the popper. Chaff is a thin paper-like skin that leaves the beans during roasting. Some coffees produce more chaff so roasting outside or having something to collect the chaff is a good idea. Chaff falling onto your workspace can get sucked up into the machine through the vents underneath. Make sure to avoid this, as an abundance of chaff inside the popper can eventually burn.
- A few minutes in (usually around 2-5), listen for the "first crack". It will sound a bit like popcorn popping or twigs snapping. Once first crack happens, you can stop your roast at any time, depending on how dark you want to roast.
- If you choose to roast darker, listen for the "second crack". It will sound more like a clicking sound. We don't recommend roasting beyond second crack since you will be at risk of replacing your coffee's wonderful flavor with the flavor of ashy charcoal.
- Popcorn popper roasts can last anywhere from 6 to 15 minutes. Since popcorn poppers are not manufactured for a precision application like roasting coffee, sometimes their function is inconsistent. Faster roasts are okay, just harder to control. Plugging into an extension cord/power strip can help in extending your roast time. Conversely, plugging directly into the wall, roasting on top of a slightly damp towel, or placing the popper in a cardboard box can help get the popper more heat.
- Use an oven mitt to handle your popper and empty the roasted coffee into a metal colander or anything that conducts heat away from the beans. Stir the beans around until they cool off.
- After cooling, store the beans in an air-tight container. We think mason jars work very well. You can also use tins or bags with 1-way valves. It's best to wait about a day before grinding/brewing since coffee needs time to rest after roasting.

**Please note that using your popper to roast coffee voids the warranty of the machine.**