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## **THE SMELL OF COFFEE**

We admire the taste of coffee, but the receptors in the mouth are not able to convey the full range of our sensations. The pleasure that we get from this popular tonic drink is formed by its flavor. The taste alone means almost nothing, it all depends on the smell, which actually shapes the taste. If we remove the smell coffee will be just an unpleasant bitter-sour liquid, nothing more.

About 800 substances are involved in the formation of the coffee smell. All of them are perceived by olfactory receptors in different concentrations and with different intensity. The characteristic aroma results from the presence of seemingly insignificant components. To identify these substances in the composition of coffee a method of gas chromatography is used.

An aroma that is commonly described as “roasted coffee” is formed by several sulfur-containing compounds including 2-furfurylthiol. There are also some constituents that on their own might smell pretty unpleasant but in chorus with the other compounds add nuances to the aroma. For example methanethiol, which has a smell of a rotten cabbage, and which is also a significant contributor to the smell of flatulence. Sulfur-containing compound 3-mercapto-3-methylbutyl is brilliantly described as having a “catty” odour in isolation. Other constituents of the coffee smell are aldehydes (methylpropanal, 3-methylbutanal, acetaldehyde), which generally add a fruity, green aroma; furans (furanol), which contribute caramel-like odours; pyrazines (2-isobutyl-3-methoxypyrazine, 2-ethyl-3,5-dimethylpyrazine), which have an earthy scent. Guaiacol and related phenolic compounds add smoky, spicy tones.

Coffee has an excellent ability to neutralize even the harshest odors. For example, to rid the hands of the pungent smell of fish or garlic, it is enough to clean them with some coffee. A cup of coffee grains in the refrigerator or under the sink will kill all odors and will create a feeling of freshness.

By the way, going to the cosmetics store for a new perfume, do not forget to bring your coffee beans. When the olfactory receptors get tired, they hardly distinguish new smells and cease to pick up subtle notes. In order to revive them, just inhale the aroma of coffee.