

Butter Coffee and Butter Tea

Revised 8/10/25

Butter coffee was popularized by Dave Asprey. He called it “Bulletproof Coffee.” It is his variant of Nepalese yak butter tea. One of the main reasons I can see to do this is to help your body to learn to burn fat with ease. Being able to easily burn fat when carbohydrates or protein aren’t readily available will keep your energy and performance at a much better level.

Having butter coffee in the morning helps extend your night-time fast. Our bodies don’t consider fat to be in the same category of calories as proteins, sugars, and starches, so the processes associated with breaking your fast don’t come into play when you take coffee, butter, and some variant of MCT or coconut oil in the morning. Specifically, fat does not raise insulin appreciably. Periodic fasting of this type is immensely helpful in decreasing inflammation and pain. Obviously, if you have coffee and breakfast, this is another matter.

Some highlights from Asprey:

- Coffee in the US and Canada is not routinely tested for mold, unlike coffee in many European countries. About one third of the population is sensitive to even small amounts of mold. If the coffee has a bit of mold, it is possible that the person will react to it, thinking that they can’t tolerate coffee. Asprey likes his coffee so much that he decided to import it himself, testing it at each step of the way to make sure that it is of the highest quality and free of mold contamination. Regular organic coffee may be just fine, but if you notice yourself reacting to it, getting gut symptoms of brain fogginess, you might want to try his coffee. If you are sensitive to mold, you can get Bulletproof coffee at Whole Foods.
- Butter coffee can be made with any butter, but butter or ghee (an extract from butter) from cows grazed 100% on grass is much more healthful than butter from cows fed grain. Grass is the natural food of cows, not grain. Look for 100% grass-fed butter.
- The coconut oil or MCT oil that Asprey recommends is called Brain Octane. It is a special extract from coconut and palm oils that our bodies readily convert into fuel for the body and brain. Regular MCT oil is less effective as is coconut oil. Brain Octane is available at Whole Foods. It is somewhat expensive.
- It is best to not use paper filters, as they will trap some of the beneficial oils.
- It is best to not add cream, as the bit of casein in the cream will bind some of the beneficial polyphenols in the coffee, making them unavailable.

My own way of making butter coffee is to bring about 16 ounces of water to a near simmer. Turn off the heat and add two tablespoons of coffee. This is about a heaping dinner tablespoon. Cover the pan while still on the heating element. If you have a gas stove, turn the heat as low as is possible, or reheat it a bit when you are ready to make the butter coffee. You don’t want it to simmer or boil.

After the coffee has steeped for about 5-7 minutes, what I do next is to strain the coffee into another pan using a fine mesh strainer, trying to swirl the pan a bit to float all the

grounds and pour them off. I then add 2 full tablespoons of butter (about 1/4th of a 1/4-pound stick) and two full tablespoons of the Brain Octane oil, measured with a measuring spoon. Typically, I will add ½ teaspoon or so of cacao powder and a pinch of vanilla powder because I like the flavor. I use one of the wand style immersion blenders and blend it very well. The little frother type blenders don't work because they don't have enough horsepower. For travel, I will bring one of the "Stainless Blender Mixing Wire Whisk Balls for Mixer Shake Shaker Cup" available on Amazon or just pack the immersion blender. I put the butter coffee into a Thermos to keep it warm.

Instead of using a pan, you can use a percolator type coffee maker. Just avoid the paper filter type of coffee maker.

I will usually drink this over about three to five hours. It holds me extremely well and has enough calories to tell my body that there is enough fuel coming in, that times are good, so to speak.

If you are just starting this, you can start with 1 tablespoon of butter and one or two teaspoons of the Brain Octane. If you get too much fat too fast before your body has adapted to taking that much in, you might get some gut symptoms, specifically diarrhea. Taking in the butter coffee over 3-5 hours solves much of that problem, but it would probably be best to start slow.

Butter Tea

Butter tea is made the same way as Bulletproof coffee except that you use tea. I hadn't tried this until I went out of town and forgot my coffee. I heated the same amount of water and used a green tea bag, a black tea bag, and a licorice tea bag in the water. I added the butter, oil and chocolate and blended it up. It was delicious.