



Coffee— From Ethiopian goats to a global industry

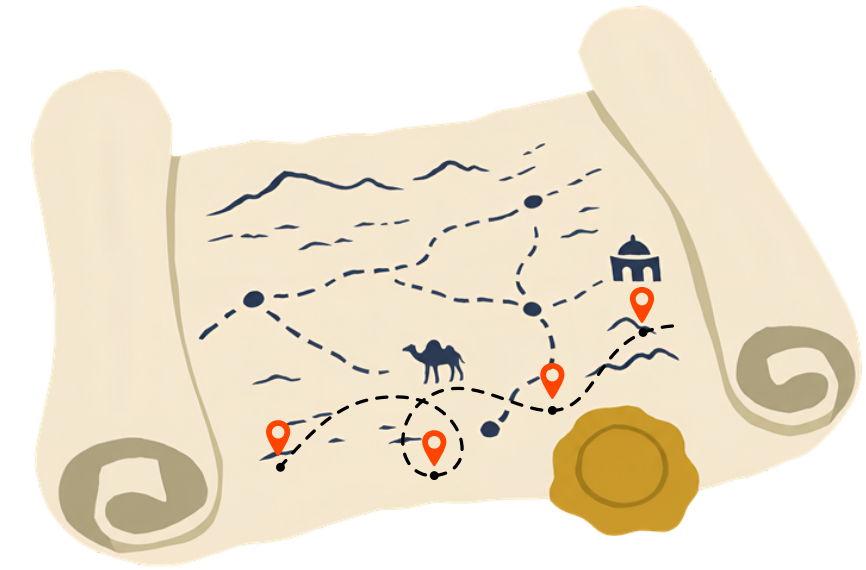
B1/B2 lesson, with TedEx video
listening + speaking



Part 1 -The Legend of Kaldi



The Legend of Kaldi - what's the story?



Let's watch! (up to 00:27)





Vocab practice

Complete the story. Use the following words. What do they mean?

berry | goatherd | nibble | hyper | noticed | legend



According to a famous coffee _____, around 850 CE, a young _____ named Kaldi was looking after his goats in Ethiopia.

One day, he _____ that something strange was happening. After the goats began to _____ on some red _____, they suddenly became very active. The goats seemed unusually _____. Kaldi became curious and decided to try the berries himself.

According to the story, the berries gave him a lot of energy too. Some people say that this was humanity's first experience with coffee — but nobody knows if the story is actually true!

Let's talk about the legend

Discuss the questions.

1. What do you think about the legend of Kaldi and his goats? Do you think it could be true, partly true, or completely fictional? Why?
2. Why do you think people created this story about the discovery of coffee?
3. What do you think Kaldi did after discovering that the berries gave him energy?

The story of Kaldi is a legend. We don't actually know exactly how humans first started using coffee. **What are some other possible explanations?**



Part 2 - The spread of coffee



Before we watch: What happened next?

- How do you think coffee spread from Ethiopia to other parts of the world?
- Which country do you think discovered coffee next?
- How could people have transported coffee hundreds of years ago?
- Who do you think helped coffee spread — travellers, traders, religious leaders, or rulers?
- When do you think coffee first arrived in Europe?



Follow the coffee!

Watch Part 2 of the video (00:27–03:20).

While you watch, make notes about how coffee spread around the world.

- Write down the countries, regions, cities or ports that you hear.
- What happened there?



Let's watch (00:27-03:20)





Match the places and the facts

Places

- A. Paris
- B. Istanbul
- C. Mecca
- D. London
- E. India
- F. Al-Makha
- G. Yemen

Facts

1. During the 1700s, coffeehouses here became meeting places for Enlightenment thinkers such as Diderot and Voltaire. Voltaire supposedly drank 50 cups of coffee a day!
2. Coffee was exported from this port, whose name later became famous around the world as “Mocha.”
3. Coffeehouses became popular here, where people could drink coffee, smoke and enjoy entertainment.
4. A religious leader recommended that people use coffee during ritual chants and dances.
5. Coffee was eventually transported — or possibly smuggled — here, and it later spread further into Asia.
6. The first coffeehouses opened here in the 1650s, and by 1663 there were more than 80.
7. Coffee was actually put on trial here in 1511 because religious authorities debated whether Muslims should be allowed to drink it.





So... what's the story?

Tell the story of how coffee travelled from Ethiopia and became a global drink. Use the prompts below to help you.

Part 1 — Ethiopia → wild coffee → people discovered its effects

Part 2 — Ethiopia → Yemen → religious rituals

Part 3 — The Ottoman Empire → roasting → grinding → coffeehouses

Part 4 — Europe → London → coffeehouses

Part 5 — Paris → Enlightenment → Diderot & Voltaire

Little helpers:

At first...

Then...

After that...

Meanwhile...

As coffee became more popular...

Eventually...

By the 1600s...

By the 1700s...

As a result...



Part 3 - The darker side of coffee



Before we watch

- Do you think the coffee trade is fair? Why or why not?
- Who do you think makes the most money from a cup of coffee — the farmer, the coffee company, the café, or someone else?
- What problems might be connected with producing and selling coffee?





While we watch (from 3:20)

As you watch, check your predictions and make notes about the problems mentioned in the video.

Problem	What does the video say?
Workers	
Slavery / exploitation	
Indigenous populations	
Forests	
Fair / ethical production	
Climate change	
Future of coffee	

Let's watch! (03:20–05:12)



Let's talk

1. Why do you think coffee production became connected with slavery and exploited workers?
2. Do you think the history of coffee still affects the industry today? Why?
3. What could be the consequences of destroying forests to grow coffee?
4. Climate change could make the “Bean Belt” smaller. What do you think could happen if coffee becomes harder to grow?
5. Would you be willing to drink less coffee if climate change made coffee much more expensive?
6. Can coffee ever be completely ethical? Why / why not?
7. What should coffee companies do to make the industry fairer?
8. Who should be responsible for improving conditions for coffee workers? Governments, coffee companies, farmers, consumers, everyone?
9. Is buying “fair trade” coffee enough, or do you think more needs to change?





A cup of coffee is much more than a drink. It is the result of history, trade, human labour and the environment.

Do you agree or disagree? Explain your opinion.

Answer key



The Legend of Kaldi

According to a famous coffee **LEGEND**, around 850 CE, a young **GOATHERD** named Kaldi was looking after his goats in Ethiopia.

One day, he **NOTICED** that something strange was happening. After the goats began to **NIBBLE** on some red **BERRIES**, they suddenly became very active.

The goats seemed unusually **HYPER**. Kaldi became curious and decided to try the berries himself.



Follow the Coffee

Place	What happened there?
1. Ethiopia	People began foraging for wild coffee in the forests before the 1400s. They made tea and cookies. They started drying and roasting.
2. Yemen	Coffee arrived here via trade routes. A Sufi leader recommended using coffee during ritual chants and dances.
3. Ottoman Empire	People began roasting and grinding coffee beans, creating a darker, stronger drink. Lots of coffee houses.
4. Mecca	In 1511, a religious court put coffee on trial and debated whether Muslims should be allowed to drink it.
5. Al-Makha / Mocha	By the late 1500s, people in Yemen were growing and exporting coffee from this port.
6. India & Java	Coffee was eventually transported or smuggled into India, where it took root.
7. London / England	The first coffeehouses opened in the 1650s. By 1663, there were more than 80.
8. Paris / France	Coffeehouses became meeting places for Enlightenment thinkers, including Diderot and Voltaire. People began mixing coffee with milk and sugar.

Answer key



Problem	What does the video say?
Workers	Inhumane working conditions and insufficient compensation
Slavery / exploitation	European empires established enslaved or exploited workforces in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.
Indigenous populations	As coffee production expanded in Latin America, Indigenous populations were displaced to make room for plantations.
Forests	Forests were burned and cleared to create larger and larger coffee plantations.
Fair / ethical production	These problems led to certification efforts promoting ethical coffee production, including minimum wages and sustainable farming.
Climate change	Climate change is expected to make the equatorial “Bean Belt” smaller, reducing the areas where coffee can successfully grow.
Future of coffee	Scientists are researching resilient coffee hybrids that could survive changing and unpredictable conditions and help protect coffee production.

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