

Technivorm KBT741 reviewed

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Here at the CoffeeCrew website (and Labs) it's pretty obvious that we are gear junkies. And what I mean by that is - we have so much stuff that it's difficult to get around to test everything in a timely fashion. That said, after doing a major housecleaning we are down to the bare bones in the home lab. In fact, I no longer own an espresso machine if you can believe that. Well, believe it.

I have every imaginable coffee brewer. Everything. Nothing left out. Nothing wanting...

Okay. Maybe there is *one* thing. The perfect coffee brewer - at least, the perfect drip coffee brewer. At home... in my modest little test kitchen.

Several years ago, while perusing the SCAA website (may have also been one of the trade journals...) I noted that there is only 2 brewers totally approved by the SCAA. Two. That is it. Now that might have changed but I am going to assume that it has not. Hence this article!

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The Technivorm KBT741 is one of those 2 brewers. And to be precise, Clubline/Technivorm make a series of brewers, one that brews into a glass carafe and one that brews into a thermal carafe. I have the latter! Yay! Why do I say yay? Well - no offense to the brilliant Dutch engineers at Technivorm, but the glass carafe brewer has several things that are wrong with it:

- It brews into a glass carafe that quickly gives up the heat of the coffee and it exposes the coffee to oxygen, dreaded oxygen.
- The glass carafe sits on a hot-plate. A Hot-plate! Ack! That is almost as bad as re-heating your coffee in the microwave oven! (I hope you read this Brad! You are the last man on Earth that reheats his coffee in a microwave!)

The KBT741 gets ahead of the pack for some very important reasons:

- It has a 1400 watt heater - unlike the common 800 Watt hand-warmers you find in most drip coffee brewers.



- It brews the coffee into a thermos. A thermos that you can slap a cap on (that you can serve coffee through)
- You can serve hot coffee from the carafe for 15 minutes or so -- as hot as the first cup until the coffee starts to stale.

Yes, Virginia - coffee stales within 15 minutes of brewing regardless of the method or storage of brewed coffee.



8 - hole action from the shower-head



Carafe from quality components and pour-cap

Rant: Noone microwaves coffee!

I should mention now that I have the other SCAA approved brewer too! It is the Newco OCS-8 and it is a work-horse like nothing I have ever seen or used before. This thermal carafe drip brewer is also available in Canada - more on those details later.

I originally intended to do this article as a shoot-out with the Newco - but they are very different brewers in subtle ways.

The Newco OCS-8 deserves its own unique review - and that will come in a few weeks.

Back to the Technivorm then. It was with great delight that I discovered that Transcend Coffee in Edmonton, Alberta were importing this wonderful product. Up til now, the brewer has been available through Boyds of Oregon. And although I am not to sure what is going on with that particular vendor, many are getting more hassles exporting to Canada. Sat hello to Fortress America! Anyway - its available in Canada. When I found out, I e-mailed Transcend and they were more than willing to send me a sample. I salute them! Thanks guys.

The Technivorm KBT741 came very well boxed -- double boxed in fact with the usual packing inserts, styro and so on. No worries about the unit arriving in any condition other than pristine.

The Technivorm KBT741 surprised me with the sheer number of bits and pieces that it comes with. This is not your typical coffee brewer. There is nothing about the Technivorm KBT741 that resembles any other drip brewer. The first

nickname I came up for the Technivorm KBT741 was "Chemistry Set" - and that is not entirely fair. Use some of the photos as a guide.

In terms of individual components the Technivorm KBT741 includes the following:

- The "tower" or basestation of the Technivorm KBT741. This is where you pour in the water.
- A carafe and screw cap
- A base that the carafe can sit on - it kind of clips onto the "tower"
- The #4 cone filter holder
- The #4 cone filter holder coffee
- The "tower" resevoir cover.
- An instruction manual
- 5 #4 filters

Now all of this might seem like a lot of stuff (and compared to what the Newco OCS-8 ships with, it is) - but everything has a purpose. It's just (and this is a minor criticism) the whole set-up has a slight chemistry set feel to it. That said, after you power it all up and brew a carafe, you will forget about the minor visual irritants. I did. Like, right away.

Order number one - Read the manual. It is short, sweet and reads well. Reading the manual also explains where everything on the Technivorm KBT741 goes.

Grind some coffee and fill up the reservoir. I think it holds about 40 fluid ounces as does (I think) the carafe. It does not look like it will but I think it does. The NewCo OCS-8 brews virtually an identical amount of Joe.

Place a #4 filter (bleached or no...) in the filter holder and fill 'er up. I used to weigh the coffee that I used to be precise. No more. Now I just use too much... to be safe and all.

Flip the power switch. Note that there is an interlock (white) button at the base of the tower that the carafe has to come in contact with -- no carafe, no brew. Saves a big mess, believe me!

Also note: The #4 filter holder of the Technivorm KBT741 has a 3-position ON-1/2 - OFF brew-interrupt regulator switch. Nice touch! It means that if you are doing a half-batch, you can slow down the rate of coffee saturation in the basket. Sweet.

Anyway, as the brewer starts to do it's thing, you should watch -- because there



is something to see...seriously.

Because the water reservoir of the Technivorm KBT741 is clear and the hot water actually passes through the centre of it to get to the coffee "shower-arm" (over the #4 filter holder) - there is kind of a prancing fluid show going on. It is kind of hypnotic - at least it was for me.

The Technivorm KBT741 pumps the water from its 1400 watt power-plant up through the centre of the reservoir (pretty sure this is insulated...) into a 8 hole shower arm over the #4 coffee filter holder. The shower arm (and all its distribution holes guarantee equal saturation of the coffee grinds) - this is very important. If some coffee gets more water than other sections of ground coffee - that equals bad news or improperly brewed coffee - off or bitter flavors. The Technivorm KBT741 gets the most out of the coffee by getting to all the coffee. That said, do not think you can scrimp on coffee. Every drip batch deserves enough ground coffee to do the job right. I probably use about 3 heaping table-spoons for every 6-8 fluid ounce serving - and my morning batch is about 30 fluid ounces... so do the math,

The Technivorm KBT741 is designed to brew coffee at the right temperature and the right brew-time or dwell as I call it.

The brew basket temperature (determined with a Meterman Digital thermometer - accurate to .1 of a degree F or C) rose to 199 degrees (F) within about 2 minutes of the brew cycle beginning. The brewtime for a full carafe is about 7.5 minutes, exactly the same as the Newco OCS-8. The final brew temperature in the carafe was almost 170 degrees (F) - that is piping hot coffee - about as hot as it should be to be safe from scalds. The final brew temperature for the Newco OCS-8 (if memory serves me correctly averaged 172 to 178 degrees).

Now the manual of the Technivorm KBT741 stipulates that one should pre-heat the inside of the carafe with hot water prior to the brew cycle. This is a good idea considering that a cold carafe steals heat from the hot coffee. I do this with my Newco and it makes a difference.

The Technivorm KBT741 brews coffee directly into an open carafe. The NewCo OCS-8 brews coffee into the carafe through a closed or capped carafe. I will not go into this detail here (but in the NewCo article). This difference explains why the final brew temperature of the Technivorm KBT741 is slightly lower than the Newco. The design of the Technivorm KBT741 does expose a bit more air to the coffee during the brew cycle - but probably less than most or all of all the underpowered brewers out there. Air stales coffee. That is a factor in all brewers. Taste reports ahead!

The Newco OCS-8 uses a pro basket filter for holding the ground coffee - the Technivorm KBT741 uses a #4 filter. The #4 filter is at the upper limit for filter size when brewing this much coffee. I did not have any problems - but if you are using really fresh coffees from certain parts of the globe - some overflow from blooming may occur. I did not notice anything.

How did the coffee taste? It was hot, sparkling and perfectly extracted. The thing that a new user of the Technivorm KBT741 needs to get used to is - the

coffee is hot. It taste better because it is brewed right. But it is hot! Do not burn your mouth!

Summary: the Technivorm KBT741 is a better brewer for a variety of reasons:

- It has enough power to do the job right.
- It brews the coffee in the correct amount of time.
- It is built with quality components... in Holland of all places.

In a market full of cheap coffee makers, it is a surprise that there are only 2 that are truly worthy of a true coffee lover. (Yea, I am one of those people... and you could be one too!)

The Technivorm KBT741 is available from [Transcend Coffee](#) for 240\$ Canadian. We thank Transcend Coffee of Edmonton, Alberta Canada for their sample brewer!

[Discuss this article on the forums. \(6 posts\)](#)

Colin Newell lives and works in Victoria, B.C. Canada - he created the CoffeeCrew website in 1994 and continues to provide timely consumer information for the true lovers of the bean!

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