

Delicious or disgusting? Alexander Spatari/Moment RF/Getty Images Editor's Note: This is part of an occasional series, "I Just Don't Get It," a contrarian look at a popular person, thing, activity or cultural phenomenon. CNN — I get that you all love coffee. I get that you think it tastes delicious and that the day only begins after your first cup. It's a hug in a mug! It's coffee o'clock! I get that some people enjoy it so much they're willing to splash at least 17.5% of their disposable income on it. I get that you probably have your favorite coffee shop and your own reusable coffee cup (if you can stop at just one). I get that you have a specific order that rarely changes. Knowing what you're like, you coffee fiend, you probably even have a preferred hectare of rainforest to source your coffee beans from. And I get that too. I wish I felt the same way. Here's the thing: I like a lot of things associated with coffee. I adore the smell of coffee. I like the vibe in some coffee shops. I like those machines with chrome pipes and pressure dials that hiss and splutter out their tantalizing dark liquids. I like the energy of the tattooed baristas who angrily bang out the spent grounds from the previous cup before lovingly drawing a portrait of your face in the foam of your cappuccino. I like the paraphernalia – the French presses, the glass jugs, the filters, the tamps and those delicious little Lotus biscuits that often come on the side. I love it all, I really do. I love it all right up until the moment I take a sip, at which point I confirm once again what I've always known. Coffee is utterly disgusting. Everyone seems to have unfiltered views on which is the world's best coffee. Everyone seems to have unfiltered views on which is the world's best coffee.

fotomaniya/iStockphoto/Getty Images I have tried to enjoy coffee. Evangelical coffee snobs of various stripes have sat me down over the years with the instruction to "forget all the bad stuff you've tasted before, try this!" Gamely, I've opened my mind, dispelled my prejudices and slurped long and deep. And then, more than likely, sprayed it all over the table. Awful stuff. Before you brand me a Philistine, please know I have more coffee cred than the average Joe. (Does a coffee pun win me any points?) I spent a couple of years in the mid-noughties living on the Indonesian island of Java, where Java coffee originates. During my time there, I traveled deep into the eastern reaches, south of Surabaya, where ruby red robusta beans are harvested in plantations on tropical hillsides, then dried and roasted. There, the sense of what the French call terroir – character gained from a particular place – was buzzing in the humid air like escaped caffeine. The red earth was damp and pungent, the sunlight was hazy and heavy. Right at its point of origin, here was a chance to taste coffee as nature intended, unspoiled by industry.

Blergh! Uncool beans? Coffee berries grow at a coffee plantation on the Indonesian island of Java. Uncool beans? Coffee berries grow at a coffee plantation on the Indonesian island of Java. Dimas Ardian/Bloomberg/Getty Images In Indonesia they also have a rare and expensive coffee made from beans that have passed through the digestive system of a civet cat. I didn't try it, but maybe I should've.

I don't see how being swallowed and excreted by a nocturnal forest mammal could make coffee any worse. A couple of years ago, I visited Colombia and was taken to what I was told was one of the city's best coffee shops in Bogotá. Here, in the cosmopolitan capital of one of the great coffee-producing countries of South America, I was told once again: "Forget all the bad stuff you've tasted before, try this!" Abysmal. I'm sorry, I really am. Incidentally, in the cafés of Bogotá, it's also traditional to drink hot chocolate alongside a slice of cheese, which can be dunked in the mug. Now, that's more like it! Of course, I soldiered on with my cup of Colombian out of politeness. As I have in similar situations where

I've been served the "world's best coffee" in Turkey, Greece, Italy, France, Morocco, the Arabian peninsula (cardamom is a nice touch, but still no) and Australia. I don't think it's my tastebuds. I like to eat and drink almost everything else and have an adventurous palate. Sweet, savory, sour, spicy – it's all good. Of course, I am British, so I do have a natural inclination toward drinking tea instead. But Brits love their coffee, too. Coffee houses were a big deal in 17th century London long before tea hit the scene. And today, my UK friends and colleagues love coffee as much, if not more, than a cup of Earl Grey or English Breakfast.