



CJ1256 Ethiopia West Hararghe Kubsitu Cooperative Raised Bed Natural Crown Jewel

December 19th, 2018 | [See This Coffee Online Here](#)



Intro by Chris Kornman

Flying in just under the wire, this late arriving Ethiopian coffee caught our attention on the cupping table. Bursting with ripe blueberry notes, [this coffee grown just west of the city of Harar](#), hits all the high notes from memory and melds them seamlessly with the clarity and brightness you'd expect from a meticulously harvested and dried specialty natural. Ripe berry, Syrah, pipe tobacco, deep dark chocolate, super viscosity: they're all here. It's like they got the band back together.

West Hararghe is a zone in Oromia, located east of Addis Ababa and west of the walled city of Harar. Produced by around 400 smallholder families who are organized under the Kubsitu Cooperative in the Guba Koricha District, the coop is a member of an independent union called Chercher Oda Bultum, that dates to 2005 and currently supports nearly 20,000 coffee farming families. In addition to coffee quality improvement projects, the union also supports various other agricultural and livestock systems including haricot beans and cattle.

Coffees from eastern Ethiopia, like this gem, have long been marketed under the name of the ancient walled city of Harar. That economic and cultural hub reached its apex in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, around the same time as the first Sufi imam would have ventured in and subsequently introduced coffee to Yemen.

We've seen a resurgence in quality investment in the region this year, an encouraging sign, since for the last 20 or so years, Harar has been little more than a dusty, faded memory of an iconic origin. As this historic coffee region regains ground, we're proud to offer [one of the early rising stars](#) as a Crown Jewel.

Grower:	Smallholder farmers organized around the Kubsitu Cooperative	Process:	"Natural" dried in the fruit on raised beds
Region:	Guba Koricha, West Hararghe, Oromia, Ethiopia	Cultivar:	Hararghe Landrace Varieties
Altitude:	1780 avg. masl	Harvest:	October - December 2017



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Green Analysis by Chris Kornman

An interesting coffee, in that beyond the typical dry readings, the coffee is a bit larger in size than a typical southern Ethiopian dry process, also remarkably low in density. Take care when roasting not to scorch, you'll likely need to be a little gentle with your heat application to draw the best out of these beans.

In [A Reference Guide to Ethiopian Coffee Varieties](#), Getu Bekele and Timothy Hill speculate that the likelihood of distributed cultivars from Ethiopia's agricultural research center in Jimma (JARC) is low in and around Harar. Farmers in the region recognize upwards of 22 unique landraces of coffee. Most of the indigenous iterations in this region are drought tolerant, as the area's rainfall remains historically lower than other coffee growing zones.

<u>Screen Size</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Density (freely settled)</u>
>19	1.62%	0.653 g/mL
18	8.72%	
17	27.23%	<u>Total Moisture Content</u>
16	36.78%	9.8% (Sinar)
15	21.06%	9.1% (Kett)
14	4.26%	<u>Water Activity</u>
≤13	0.32%	0.51 @ 21.4C

Ikawa Analysis by Chris Kornman

Working with this lower density coffee, I opted to use two variations of an older profile, where the main difference was the charge temperature: low (Roast 1, blue) vs. high (Roast 2, red). The lower charge temperature seemed to respond a little better to heat application, resulting in a more even color development and longer post-first crack development time.

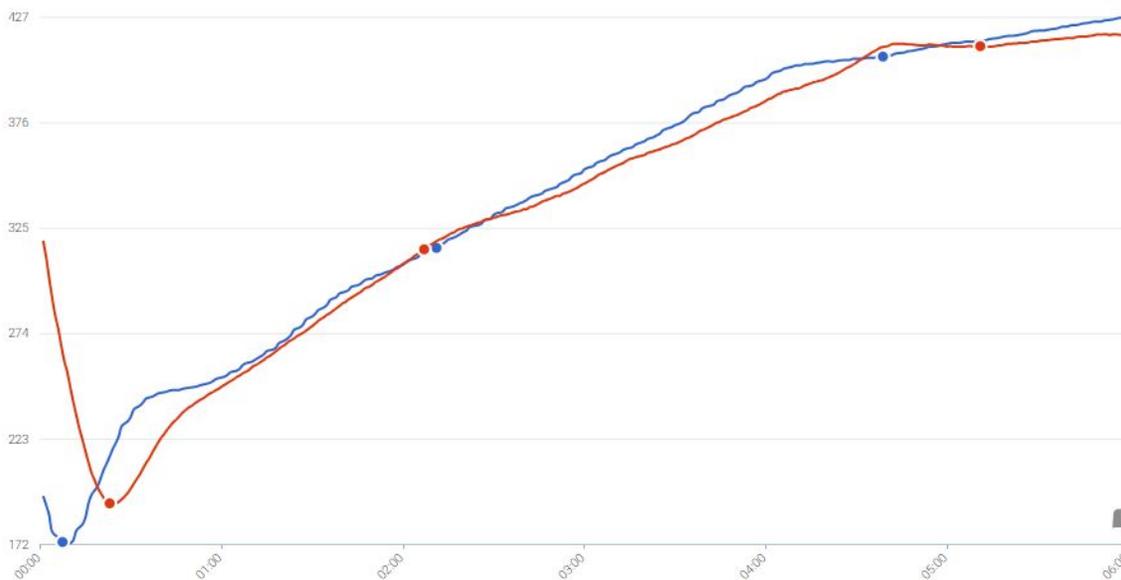
Cuppers preferred the lower charge roast by a small margin, noting a little better complexity, more citrus in addition to the grape and berry flavors, and a syrupy, floral finish. The higher charge resulted in a slight toasty flavor layered with some herb and a lot of chocolate, but some of the more nuanced fruit flavors were slightly obscured.

I don't always walk away from an Ikawa roast knowing quite what to apply to production, but this seems like a readily scalable solution that should translate to larger roasters easily.

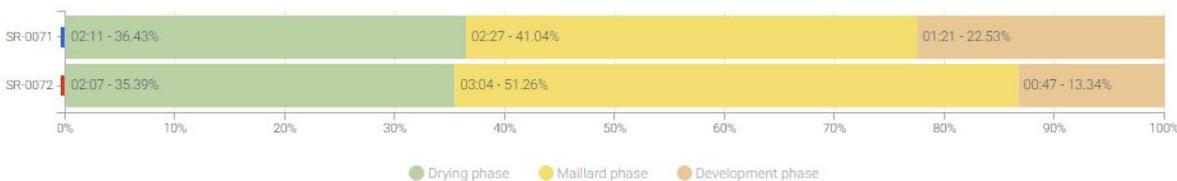


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Modulation chart



Behmor Analysis by Evan Gilman

Unless otherwise noted, I follow a set standard of operations for all my Behmor roasts. Generally, I'll use the 1lb setting, manual mode (P5), full power, and high drum speed until crack. [Read my original post and stats here.](#)

Harar holds a special place in the lore of Royal Coffee, and in the minds of specialty coffee aficionados who have been in the game longer than my own paltry 17 years. This mark was a classic offering on the menu of any specialty cafe worth their salt before my time, and Bob and Max will relate fond memories of their experiences with Harar coffee. It used to be that whenever we received this coffee, we would put it on the cupping table with two distinct roasting styles: one just past first crack, and the other developed until just after second crack. Each of those roasts brought entirely different flavor profiles out



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of this storied and versatile coffee, and we knew our customers were looking for the unique versatility that this coffee brought to the table.

Well, I'm hoping to continue the tradition by offering two different profiles of this coffee on the trusty old Behmor. We are in the midst of preparing to move into the Crown, and it was in this state that I decided to roast on a more portable setup.

Roast one follows my usual protocol on the Behmor, which you can find in my post linked above. Essentially, I hit the coffee with as much heat as possible right off the bat, and modify the temperature later in the roast. In this first instance, I decided to engage P4 (75% power) right at first crack and ride out the roast for 1:30". The result was a lighter roast with 12.2% roast loss which displayed some nice sweetness, as well as some fruit and clear rose florals on the cupping table. There was a bit of 'oatiness' that I would attribute to a slight lack of development, but this was a passable roast.

For the second roast, I took the coffee further past first crack, and I think I may have even heard the very beginnings of a second crack happening. This was the 'classic' profile that I was looking for. Thick chocolate, heavy molasses and toffee sweetness, and a coating mouthfeel that reminded me of buttery French cooking. If I were a resolute fan of dark roast, I would be enamored with this roast. Who am I kidding, even the Third-Wave section of my sensorium loved it. I waited 30 seconds after first crack to engage P4, and allowed the coffee to develop for 2:30" after first crack - definitely one of my longest roasts yet at 14:00" solid. It was worth every second.

I'm absolutely sure that fans of both the old school and new will love this coffee. Certainly, it's not a typical Ethiopian. But there is an ethereal quality to this lot that will stretch your curiosity and your taste buds. Highly recommended.

Brew Analysis by Sandra Loofbourow

As you may have gathered from the writings above, this coffee delighted us from beginning to end. It's dynamic, clean, and flavorful, and holds up to a variety of brew methods. To illustrate this I used both a pour over device and our single group espresso machine to do analysis. Evan's lighter roast popped full of blueberry, cherry, and cocoa on the cupping table. The C70 from Saint Anthony Industries has narrower walls which lead to a deeper brew bed and longer contact time for the water and coffee, which seemed ideal for [this natural from West Haraghe](#). Without much dialing, I found a recipe that presented incredible high notes like bubble gum, mango, gummy candy, and peach, with heavier sweet notes of fig jam, cardamom, brown sugar and brownie. Yum.

On the GS3 I used the roast that had been pushed past first crack and had plenty of development. Unfortunately, the batch size on the Behmor is small enough that after cupping and Colotrack analysis there was very little coffee left; I had to dial in deftly and efficiently lest I run out of beans. My first dial was a 1:1.5 ratio shot that was super thick and heavy, with the faintest hints of raspberry jam and sweet



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lime. By pulling out to a longer extraction of 1:1.75 I found cleaner berry flavors, some citrus and mild pear while maintaining a rich chocolate base.

Roast	Method	Grind (EK43)	Dose (g)	H2O (g)	Ratio	Preinfusion (g)	Preinfusion (s)	Time	TDS	Ext %
Behmor 1	C70	9	25	400	1:15	60	30	4:24	1.30	19.23
Behmor 2	GS3	Mazzer	16.8	24.5	1:1.5	-	-	00:44	11.43	17.36
Behmor 2	GS3	Mazzer	16.0	28	1:1.75	-	-	00:38	9.78	17.83