CJ1337 Yemen Hawari Al Qafr Rooftop Dried Natural Crown Jewel

March 13, 2020 | See This Coffee Online Here

Intro by Chris Kornman

Yemen's contributions to the history and culture of coffee are impossible to overstate.

The country is where the crop was first commercially cultivated and popularized. The peninsula lent the arabica species its name and established its own unique consumption trends including *qishr*, a brew made from the dried cherry skins and husks with spices. Innovations including roasting, grinding, the *ibrik* (or *cezve*) coffee pot, the coffeehouse, and even the word "coffee" (from *qahwah*, which the Turkish pronounced *kahveh*) are all gifts from Islam's Golden age. The globe's smoldering appetite for coffee was first stoked by Sufi Imams in Yemen's port city of Aden in the fifteenth century.

Yet modern Yemen is sadly far removed from that Golden Age. The most recent conflict has dragged on for over 5 years, cost almost 100,000 lives (disproportionately innocent civilians), displaced over 3 million, and left two-thirds of the country in need of food or medical aid.

Freshly landed Yemeni coffee is back in our coffers, and always warrants a little celebration. While the odds may be stacked against coffee in general, Yemeni coffee breaks the curve. Beyond the war, the country's climate is dry and unforgiving. Yet Yemen is blessed with unparalleled history, uncommon elevation, and unusual access to a wealth of arabica's genetic diversity. Out of all of this comes a distinctive coffee that defies convention at nearly every turn.

Our finest quality Yemeni coffees have frequently come to us from the Muslot family; Royal has been buying coffee from Ali Hibah Muslot and his children since 1984. For the past few years, exceptional coffees from the Pearl of Tehama company run by Ali Hibah's daughter, Fatoum Muslot, have been especially impressive. Elsewhere on the blog you can read an extended interview with Fatoum to hear more of her story in her own words.

Fatoum Muslot and her company are headquartered in Al Hudaydah, a busy port city that has been near the front lines of the country's civil war. Her perspective on their ongoing business, despite adversity, is refreshing: "With regard to the coffee trade, we can-not stop our activity for many reasons, the most important of which is that we are dealing with a large number of families working with us in the field of coffee cultivation and trading especially coffee farmers in the production areas who do not have any kind of agricultural activities other than coffee. Therefore, we have a great and humanitarian responsibility towards these producing and working groups in the field of coffee."

Pearl of Tehama's access to producers has increased dramatically, increasing their smallholder purchasing programs in most sectors and supplying unparalleled transparency including information on

CJ1337 Yemen Hawari Al Qafr Rooftop Dried Natural Crown Jewel

March 13, 2020 | See This Coffee Online Here

gender equity in the supply chain and extensive detail on processing and handling of the coffee itself. They went so far as to issue a 27-page transparency report, an impressive undertaking.

We're pleased as punch to present this sustainably sourced Yemeni coffee to the American market. It's packed with sweetness, loads of dried fruit (dates, raisins, and berries), honey, and brown sugar notes, chocolatey depth and some lightly nutty and graham cracker notes in the finish.

Grower:	Smallholder farmers from the western highlands of Yemen	**Process:**	"Natural" dried in the fruit on rooftops
Region:	Al Qafr, Ibb, Yemen	**Cultivar:**	Hawari indigenous landrace
Altitude:	1900 – 2500 meters	**Harvest:**	November 2019 - February 2020

Green Analysis by Chris Kornman

Despite high elevations and traditional landrace varieties (such as the regionally named "Hawari" indicated here), Yemeni coffee rarely achieves the high density of similar coffees from places like Ethiopia. More closely resembling Brazilian coffees in appearance than just about any other origin, it's not a huge surprise that a century ago Brazil was transhipping their coffee as "Mokha" to sell dishonestly at higher prices. In addition to low density, we have here characteristically small screen size as well.

While drying practices can vary and the high value of Yemen coffee on the international market can make it tempting to skirt best practices, we have here a well-dried coffee with low moisture and water activity. If unfamiliar with roasting coffee of this origin or in this physical spec, you should expect some surmountable challenges. Check Alex & Evan's notes below, you'll no doubt find them enlightening.

Screen Size	Percent
>20	0.16%
19	0.76%
18	6.83%
17	18.35%
16	28.42%
15	22.94%
14	14.04%
≤13	8.50%

Density

653 g/L (free settled)

722 g/L (Sinar)

Total Moisture Content

9.9% (Sinar)

Water Activity

0.512 @ 21.58 (Rotronic)

CJ1337 Yemen Hawari Al Qafr Rooftop Dried Natural Crown Jewel

March 13, 2020 | [See This Coffee Online Here]

Roast Analysis by Alex Taylor

I was thrilled to have the opportunity to roast this new offering from Yemen! I spent roughly eight years of my life studying Arabic and the Middle East, so enjoying Yemeni coffee is a fun “worlds colliding” moment for me - I just wish it could happen more often!

I know coffees from Yemen can be a little...different, so for variety’s sake I tried (and succeeded, I think) to get two very different roasts out of this coffee, basically inverting my heat application at the beginning of the roast. For the first batch, I stuck with what has become a familiar roast plan for me when roasting on the Probatino: charge at 360F, let the coffee soak at a low heat application for about a minute, then turn up the heat and let it ride through the second stage of the roast, before starting to lower the heat before first crack. The coffee seemed a little sluggish at the beginning of the roast, but held onto energy nicely later on. All in all, it was a fairly straightforward and easy roast, *except* for the fact that first crack came late and soft. I was literally on the edge of my seat, listening for first crack and waiting...and waiting...until finally the coffee cracked, around 398F! There was no crash or sudden instability after first crack, but with the crack coming at such a high temperature, it was difficult to eke out the development time I was hoping for without letting the coffee get roastier than I wanted. I ended the roast with almost a minute post-crack-development, right around 405F. This coffee was quite nice on the cupping table! A soft, pleasant acidity up front with notes of apple, lemon, and grapefruit gave way to a smooth and silky vanilla sweetness and a lasting dark chocolate finish.

For the second roast, instead of starting with a low heat application and turning it up, I started with high heat, and started to turn it down shortly after color change. The coffee soaked up the energy nicely in the first stage, and reacted accordingly when I stepped down the heat after color change. This time I knew first crack would be on the later side but still had trouble letting this coffee get the post-crack-development time I was looking for. I think you could definitely slow the roast even further leading up to first crack, but I was trying to make sure my roast didn’t stall. I much preferred this roast on the cupping table; its acidity was much more complex and nuanced, with tasting notes like lime, watermelon, cherry, grape, and lemon. To round things out, the coffee had a wonderful honey and marshmallow-y sweetness and a soft, clean finish that had me going back for more!

Quest M3s Analysis by Evan Gilman

Unless otherwise noted, I follow a set standard of operations for all my Quest roasts. Generally, I’ll allow the machine to warm up for 15 minutes until my environmental temperature reading is at least 250F, weigh out 150g batch size, and begin roasting when I’ve reached my desired charge temperature. [Read my initial post here] and my [updated post here.]

I’ve had the distinct pleasure of tasting many Yemeni coffees here at The Crown and at Royal Coffee. This origin has undergone intense conflict for at least the last five years (if not more) and coffee

CJ1337 Yemen Hawari Al Qafr Rooftop Dried Natural Crown Jewel

March 13, 2020 | See This Coffee Online Here

producers have a difficult time getting their coffee out of the country, making this lot even more remarkable. If you want some deeper reading on Yemen's culture, I'd recommend reading some of Steve Caton's works - they're a very easy read, and give some great perspective.

But on to the coffee. This lot is relatively dry with a low water activity, so I knew I would need to be delicate with heat application during Maillard and Post-Crack Development. There's a reasonable spread of screen sizes here, so I expected a little resistance to the initial push of heat. Let's see how that panned out.

I started with 9.5A heat application from charge, ramped down to 7.5A at 3:45 / 315F, again to 5A at 6:00 / 370, and to 0A at 7:00 / 385F.

For airflow and fan speed, I started with full fan speed at charge, ramped down to 5 at Turning Point, and back up to full at 2:45 / 284F for the rest of the roast. The airflow was strong with this one.

The result of this early decrease of heat application and increase of airflow was as could be expected: much more time in Maillard stage than in Drying. I was also able to achieve a very low rate of rise going into First Crack, but my final temperature was just a bit low for my taste: 398.5F.

On the cupping table, this coffee was incredible. There really is nothing else like a Yemeni coffee, with its unique floral and fruit notes - to my synaesthetic tongue, this coffee tastes like *history*. Marshmallow sweetness with an oolong tea bite, and plenty of citric and malic acidity. This coffee will reward the roaster with different flavor notes, however you choose to influence it. If you've never had a Yemeni coffee, this lot is a great one to start with!

Ikawa Analysis by Chris Kornman

We've updated our V2 Ikawa Pro machines with the latest Firmware version (24) and run on "closed loop" setting. Our roasters underwent full service in October of 2018 which included replacement heating elements and an updated PT 1000 temperature sensor, and were recalibrated in September 2019.

Really nailing a sample roast of a Yemeni coffee can be a challenge. Common attributes like low density and low moisture content, small and sometimes oblong beans all make for uncommon roasting conditions. Usually a low charge temp with drawn out Maillard reactions and a gentle push through first crack with a little extra time allowed for development can yield solid results. Banking on caramelizing the sugars after first crack can be key -- otherwise the coffees tend to taste grassy, hay-like, and won't showcase their fruit notes.

Making these kinds of choices tends to be easier on the fly, on a traditional, manual sample roasting machine. Flexibility once the roast has begun is not the Ikawa's forte, and with a lack of time this week as the Crown began scrambling to prepare for shutting down and working from home, I simply used my two recent sample roast profiles, expecting that neither would be exactly perfect. I also kept my fingers crossed that the low density beans wouldn't fly out of the roaster into the chaff collector!

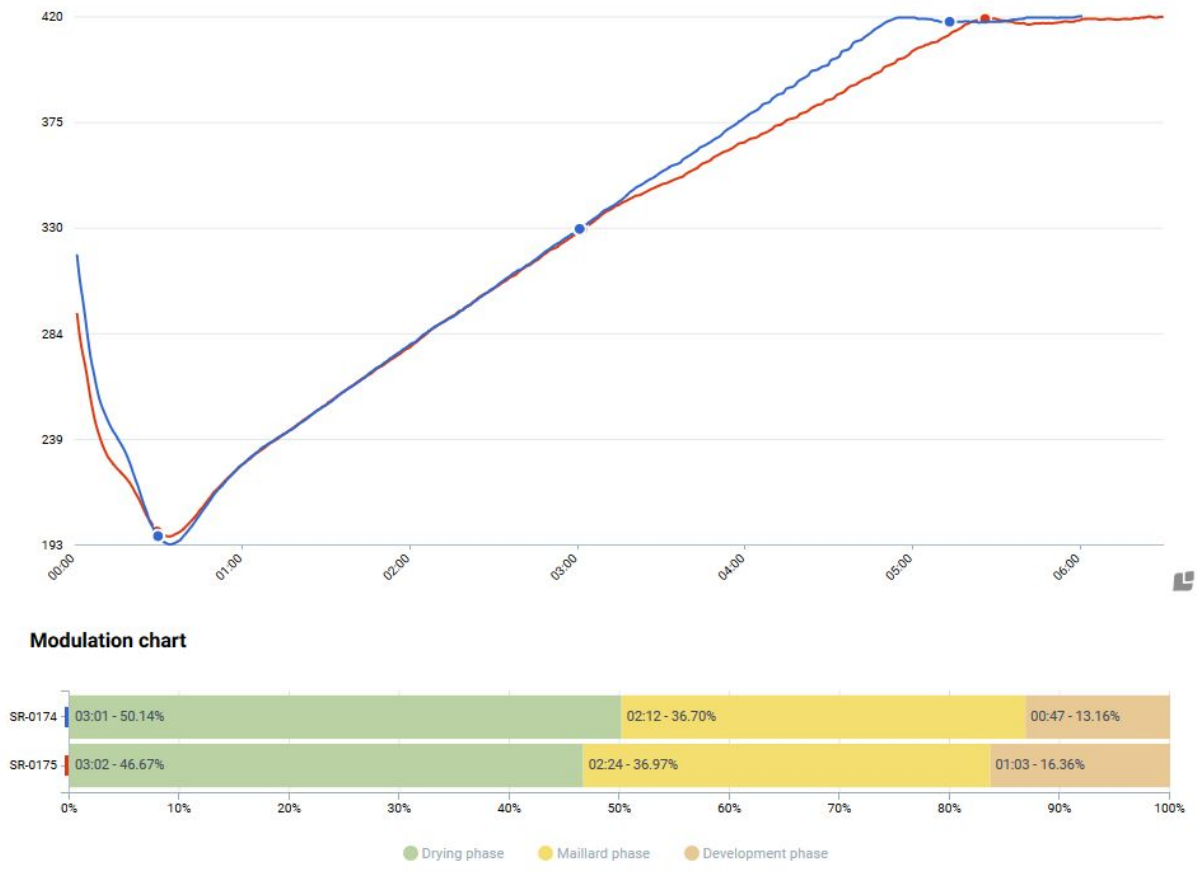
All things considered, the results weren't too bad. Surprisingly, the standard sample roast profile slightly out-performed the lower-charge-temp and longer-Maillard-phase roast. Cuppers noted that the first

CJ1337 Yemen Hawari Al Qafr Rooftop Dried Natural Crown Jewel

March 13, 2020 | See This Coffee Online Here

roast (blue) produced honey-like sweetness, with apricot, dried raspberry, tobacco, nut, and chocolate flavors, while the second longer roast (red) yielded a more graham crackery sweetness with a slight grassy note, and some sweet pastry and bittersweet chocolate flavors with less prominent fruit flavors.

You can download the profile to your Ikawa Pro app here:
Roast 1: Crown Standard SR 1.0
Roast 2: Crown Maillard +30 SR 1.0



Brew Analysis by Alex Taylor

As I mentioned above, I've got a soft spot for coffees from Yemen, so it was a real treat to take this coffee through both our Probatino Analysis and Brew Analysis! This coffee presented me with both a complex acidity that I loved and wanted to taste in a pourover, as well as loads of sweetness that I felt would really make for a stellar immersion brew. So I made both! And then to wrap things up, I made a brew of Evan's quest roast for comparison as well.

CJ1337 Yemen Hawari Al Qafr Rooftop Dried Natural Crown Jewel

March 13, 2020 | See This Coffee Online Here

The v60 made with my Probatino roast (the second roast) was truly a delight. We tasted peach, apricot, blackberry, marshmallow, dark chocolate, and molasses, with a light floral finish. The juicy, yet gentle acidity in this coffee is immensely enjoyable, and should please a wide variety of coffee drinkers! The pourover made from Evan's quest roast presented a lighter flavor profile. The fruit notes up front were a little brighter and punchier (star fruit and strawberry), and the sweetness was more along the lines of caramelized sugar, toffee, and honey, but equally delicious.

Lately I've been including Aeropress brews in the Brew Analysis more often, and I've continued to get really nice results from the recipe I've been using. For my Aeropress brews, I start with a 1:10 brew in the Aeropress, ground fairly fine, but nothing too crazy. I stir vigorously for the first minute of the brew, and plunge when the clock hits 2:30. After that, I dilute with another 75g of water to bring the coffee to a more reasonable TDS (2.22 before dilution, 1.54 after). This brew definitely highlighted this coffee's sweetness over its acidity, but even so, we tasted notes of lemon, peach, and green apple. Every sip I took, though, I tasted even more sweetness: marshmallow, maple syrup, dates, almond, milk chocolate, vanilla, nougat, marzipan, and more!

All this goes to say that if you've been looking to snag a coffee from Yemen, you shouldn't hesitate to jump on this one! Whether you use it as a nuanced, fruit-forward pourover or a super sweet, darker roast, this coffee is a winner!

Roast	Method	Grind (EK43s)	Dose (g)	H20 (g)	Ratio	Preinfusion (g)	Preinfusion (s)	Time	TDS	Ext %
PR-2343	v60	8.5	20	300	1:15	50	30	3:30	1.63	22.46
PR-2343	Aeropress	6	20	200	1:10	Stir 1:00	Plunge at 2:30	N/A	2.22	23.58
Quest	Stagg	6 (EK43)	18.5	300	1:16	50	30	2:55	1.45	22.50