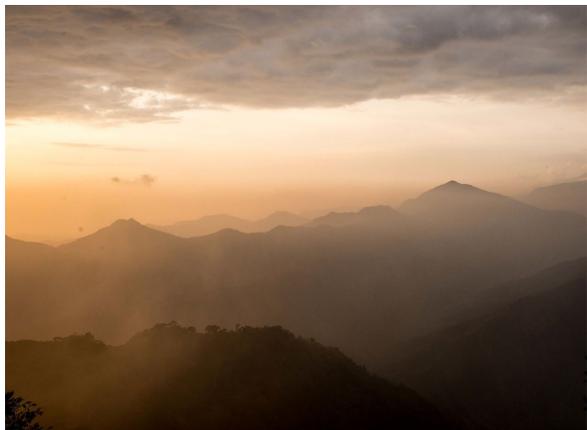




CJO1350 Decaffeinated Colombia Sierra Nevada Organic Crown Jewel

May 15th, 2020 | [See This Coffee Online Here](#)



Intro by Chris Kornman

While Southern Colombian departments like Cauca and Nariño are busy soaking up roasters' attention, northern regions are quietly churning out remarkable coffees with minimal fanfare. The Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta mountains are a compact set of isolated coastal peaks rising out of the southern Caribbean sea in Colombia's northernmost region. The reputation of the food and culture of towns like Cartagena and Barranquilla often overshadows the fact that the region is uniquely suited for specialty coffee production as well.

The Ciénaga, Santa Marta, and Manaure communities where this coffee was grown are actually positioned further north than the growing regions in both Panama and Costa Rica. This lot comes from a small group of 19 farmers associated with our export partner, Inconexus. Adriana Villanueva and her team have made a reputation for introducing roasters to unique and isolated coffee producers who otherwise might not have access to the specialty market despite their high quality. Inconexus has set up a nearby cupping lab and dry mill in Santa Marta, making access to this relatively remote growing region a possibility.

After selection by Inconexus, Royal contracted the coffee for decaffeination in Veracruz, Mexico. John Cossette, our VP of Green Coffee Purchasing personally recommended this lot for the Crown Jewel program. First and foremost it's a velvety-smooth coffee with a rich chocolatey base, but it's the nuanced complexity of baking spice and mild citrus notes that really grab you. It's also an effortlessly sweet coffee, and one that's an absolute pleasure to drink. It makes the perfect substitute for that extra cup in the morning, or a lovely complement to desserts after dinner. We're thrilled to add it to the list of caffeine-free coffees that we can't stop talking about.

We don't analyze decaffeinated coffee all that often, but when we do we're keen to make it a good one. Royal Select is a longstanding brand we proudly purvey, choosing green coffee from the source before sending it for decaffeination. The process for these coffees is always chemical free.

If you care to read a little more about Royal's stance on the use of chemicals like Methylene Chloride, look no further than [this blog entry](#) highlighting recent industry news with a number of useful links, and pick up a copy of the [March/April 2020 issue](#) of Roast Magazine, wherein the Crown's Director of Roasting Candice Madison dissects what it takes to take the caffeine out of coffee.

Grower: 19 Member of Grupo Sierra Inconexus S.A.S

Process:

Fully Washed after pulping and fermenting and dried in the sun. Decaffeinated by Mountain Water chemical free process.



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Region:	Ciénaga, Santa Marta, and Manaure communities of Magdalena Department, Colombia	Cultivar:	Castillo, Colombia, and Typica
Altitude:	1400 - 1900 masl	Harvest:	November 2019 - March 2020

Green Analysis by Chris Kornman

The brand Mountain Water, one of the two major chemical-free decaf service providers Royal Coffee contracts for our water process decaf coffees, is a part of a company called Descamex located in Veracruz, Mexico. Their process results in coffee that, frankly, can look pretty ugly by common green coffee standards. The beans appear brownish and a bit shrivelled. Fear not, however, for these coffees are actually pretty fun to roast. Once the coffee starts to yellow during the Maillard reaction, you'll find the progress through various stages of the roast to be pretty familiar.

In large part this has to do with good drying techniques post-decaffeination. To get the coffee back to a state that's shelf-stable after the process is critical to the quality of the final product, and the metrics here are quite good. The high density of the original Colombian beans is well preserved, and the moisture is quite low, a good sign after the hydration cycle the coffee undergoes during the decaf process.

<u>Screen Size</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Density</u>
>20	2.44%	698 g/L (free settled)
19	6.64%	722 g/L (Sinar)
18	18.57%	
17	25.24%	<u>Total Moisture Content</u>
16	25.96%	8.8% (Sinar)
15	11.79%	
14	6.74%	<u>Water Activity</u>
≤13	2.61%	0.511 @ 21.8C (Rotronic)



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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.

Gone are the days when I'd roast for hours on 90kg capacity machines, but during that stint the common daily practice was to load up a decaf coffee for the first roast of the day in the wee hours of the morning. I'm sure the thinking at the time had little to do with qualitative significance; rather the decafs were seen as lesser-than, and consequently could be roasted on semi-autopilot as the roasters warmed up and the operators caffeinated themselves.

While I certainly can't encourage the practice of considering this sugary, velvety decaf Colombian coffee as inferior, I will say that the lower charge temp and gentler rate of rise type of profile might actually be beneficial. Decaf coffee can be fragile, so a timid approach to heat application is often warranted, and certainly proved true here.

While my first roast (red) was quick and hot, and definitely preserved some of the acidity the beans have to offer, I hesitate to suggest that the coffee's burnt orange zest is its core virtue. Rather, the longer, gentler of the three roasts (yellow) with a lower airflow profile brought out its lush structure, vibrant plum-like flavors, and anchored it in a decadent chocolaty curtain that could only be described as indulgent. Treat this one right in the roaster and the rewards will be well worth the effort.

You can download the profile to your Ikawa Pro app here:

Roast 1: [Crown Standard SR 1.0](#)

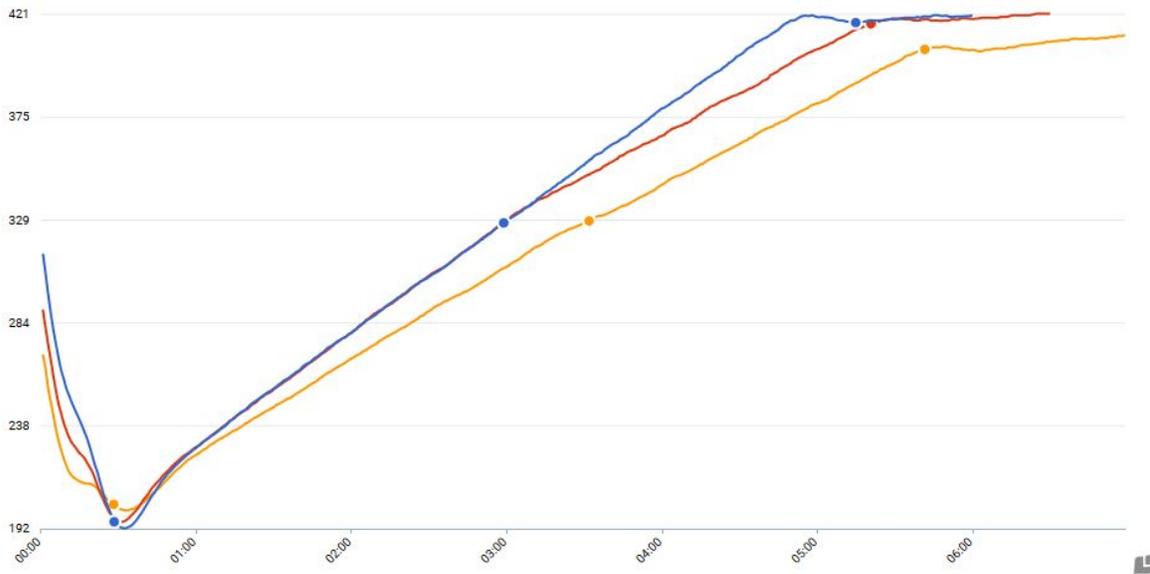
Roast 2: [Crown Maillard +30 SR 1.0](#)

Roast 3: [Crown 7m SR Low AF](#)

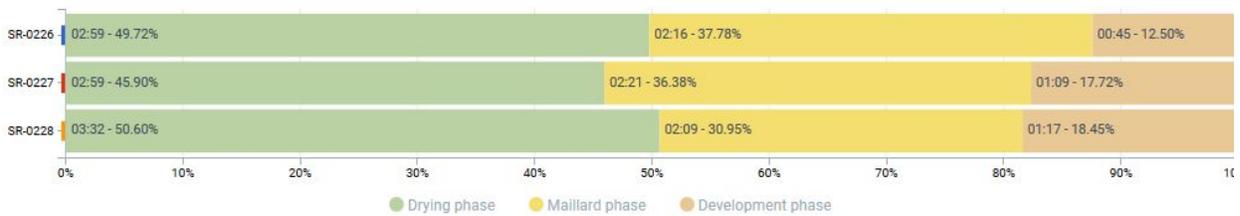


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Modulation chart



Quest M3s Analysis by Candice Madison

I don't know why decaffeinated coffee has the reputation it does, since most coffee professionals I have worked with wished that the coffees they loved had no caffeine - so they can drink as much as they like! I have to say that our last two decaffeinated Crown Jewels have been exceptional, boasting delicious and complex flavor profiles. This new arrival would make its predecessors proud!

With a high density, but low moisture levels - the latter of which is not uncommon for decaffeinated coffees - it is important to roast decaffeinated coffee with care, and a deft and gentle hand when it comes to heat application.

I treat most coffee's initial drying stage in the same way, less heat until the turning point/equilibrium, and then turn up the heat to the maximum just after, stepping down off the heat as the roast progresses. I employed the same approach when roasting this on the Quest M3. I heated the machine to 360 degrees F, dropping in the 150gm batch with 3 on the amperage dial and 0 airflow. Turning up the heat to 9 amps and the air to maximum at the turning point, I watched the RoR and decided to drop the amperage



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to 7 at 235 degrees F, and lowered the airflow to 6 on the dial at 275 degrees F. At 300 degrees F, I dropped the air to 3, as I wanted the coffee to proceed through the Maillard Stage and encourage as much sweetness as possible, without baking the coffee and stalling the roast. A delicate but audible first crack saw me turn the heat down to 3 amps and open the air to the maximum, 9 on the dial. I wanted to preserve the sweetness over the post-crack development stage of the roast, but also make sure that any roast notes from poor airflow didn't appear.

I have no cupping table, but I do have a kitchen one! Using all SCA approved materials and methods, I cupped the coffee alongside a Kenyan coffee (CJ1349), which would have been exceptionally unfair, except for the fact that this coffee performed so well!

Colombian coffees are delicious, but the decaffeination process, whatever the method, can adulterate the flavor profile to be less than desirable sometimes. I haven't found that to be the case for any of the coffees I have roasted for Royal, and that continues to be the case, this coffee is really lovely. Where I come from we have the phrase, "hug in a mug" and that is what this decaf feels like - a velvety smooth, malted milk chocolate with a hint of warming spices, sweetened by caramel. I can't wait until I can drink this as late afternoon cappuccino. But until then, I guess a pourover will have to suffice.

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.](#)

Decaffeinated coffee is always a bit tricky to roast. The slightly lower moisture content and water activity tend to stymie Maillard reactions and sugar browning a bit, so delicate heat application may be needed in order to pull out the sweetness in these coffees. On the other hand, roasting out the 'decaf flavor' is a top priority, and generally requires a touch more time spent in Maillard. [This coffee](#), however, is one of the cleanest decaf options I've tried in recent memory.

For my roast of this coffee, I took all of the above into effect, and tried to draw out Maillard as much as possible on the Behmor 1600 Plus. I started as usual with P5 (100%) power, and hit P4 (75%) at 9:15, well before I believed First Crack would start. I kept the heat application here for the next 45 seconds, and hit P5 at 10:00 as I started to hear the first telltale puffs of First Crack. A very subdued crack occurred at 10:15, and I decided to engage P4 again at 10:40 and opened the door for 20s to abate smoke. I allowed this coffee to develop post-crack for 1:30, and hit 'COOL' at 11:45.

My resulting roast loss percentage was only 11.4%, but I wasn't expecting too much since this coffee started out very dry indeed. On my 'cupping table' this coffee was expressive, with some apple and dark chocolate notes coming through and definitely reminding me of other Colombian coffees I've known and loved. The lighter roast didn't betray any of the 'decaf-ness' of this coffee - a superbly clean cup with an incredibly transparent finish kept me coming back for more slurps.



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But the real proof was in the brew, which you can read about below!

Brew Analysis by Evan Gilman

The great part about brewing decaffeinated coffee is that you can do it any time! I had fun with brewing this coffee, and drinking it outside of my normal coffee hours (I try not to drink coffee after 3pm these days). After making some bread and preparing pizza dough for the next day, I decided to brew some decaf at 8pm and have it with dessert. This was widely regarded as a Good Move.

My first brew really played up the clean side of this coffee. I ground a bit finer for this pot, and brewed at a 1:16.5 ratio. I found that my Chemex took quite a while to drip through, and my final brew time after a 3-pulse pour was much longer than usual at 5:45. I chalked this up to my finer grind setting. The cup was super clean, though - chocolate teddy graham crackers, apple chips, cherry juice, and maybe even a little cinnamon toast flavor made this cup pretty nostalgic for my diet as a 7 year old towhead. This coffee's extraction was pretty light, but still within range at 18.4%.

I decided I wanted my final brew time to be a bit more reasonable, and I wanted to pull out a bit more of the zippy acidic notes that were lying beneath the surface of this coffee. To that effect, I coarsened up my grind, and dosed a little higher for a 1:15 ratio. These specs canceled each other out in efficacy, and I still ended up with a 5:30 roast, even though I poured faster this time around. Some nice tart notes did come through here with lime, caramel apple, and grape juice flavors. The finish was like an oreo cookie, which paired well with the [double chocolate cookies](#) I was having for dessert, but the resulting cup was slightly underextracted at 17.91%.

With my long brew times and low extraction percentages, I was ready to try something radical, so I broke out the AeroPress so that I could have precise control of my extraction times. I also decided to use higher than usual brew temperatures for the AeroPress (I went with 205F, when I usually choose 195F or below). My brew process was this: inverted method, 30g preinfuse water with heavy agitation, 240g water. The result was just as I had hoped - a thorough extraction, and a very thick cup of coffee. Tons of caramel apple came through, and I may have chugged this coffee a little quicker than I should have. I wish the AeroPress came in a larger size...

Maybe I'll have to [try this](#) next time!

Roast	Method	Grind (EK43)	Dose (g)	H2O (g)	Ratio	Preinfusion (g)	Preinfusion (s)	Time	TDS	Ext %
Behmor	Chemex	20	40	660	1:16.5	75	45	5:45	1.27	18.4
Behmor	Chemex	22	42	630	1:15	75	40	5:30	1.38	17.91
Behmor	AeroPress	16	14	240	1:15	30	45	3:00	1.21	21