



CJ1376 Kenya Nyeri Rukira Triple Washed Peaberry Crown Jewel

August 28, 2020 | [See This Coffee Online Here](#)

Intro by Charlie Habegger with Chris Kornman



Othaya is the name of a large cooperative society and a critical Kenyan partner for Royal coffee. Since 2017, certain member factories (washing stations) have been participating in what we call the [Red Cherry Project](#), a program that reinforces strict adherence to quality standards and rewards farmers with second payments for the additional work.

This peaberry from the Rukira factory is a well-rounded (pun intended!) entry to our Kenyan offerings this season, a beloved flavor profile that maintains a balanced despite its complex flavor profile. Blackberry, pineapple, pomegranate, plum, and green apple fruit notes are joined by heirloom tomato, vanilla, and salted caramel. Savory and sweet, bright and balanced, the coffee is complicated enough to capture the interest of the picky sensory student, yet easy-going enough to cold brew or take camping with you. It's certain to leave an impression either way.

Mt. Kenya, at the helm of Kenya's Central Province, is the second tallest peak on the continent of Africa and a commanding natural presence. The mountain itself is a single point inside a vast and surreal thicket of ascending national forest and active game protection communities. The central counties of Kenya extend from the center of the national park, like six irregular pie slices, with their points meeting at the peak of the mountain. It is along the lower edge of these forests where, in wet, high elevation communities with mineral-rich soil (Mt. Kenya is a stratovolcano) many believe the best coffees in Kenya, often the world, are crafted.

Nyeri is perhaps the most well-known of these central counties. Kenya's coffee is dominated by a cooperative system of production, whose members vote on representation, marketing and milling contracts for their coffee, as well as profit allocation. Othaya Farmers Cooperative Society, the umbrella organization that includes Rukira Factory, is one of Kenya's larger societies, with 19 different factories and more than 14,000 farmer members across the southern Nyeri region. The Rukira Factory has 800 members, 600 of whom are actively harvesting and delivering to the processing center. The factory's total cherry intake tends to hover around 150,000 kgs, meaning the average member of Rukira is farming enough coffee fruit for roughly one 30kg unit of exportable green.

The economics of smallholder systems are consistently difficult, and in Kenya in particular the number of individual margins sliced off an export price before payment reaches the actual farms is many, leaving only a small percentage to support coffee growth itself, and most often this arrives many months after harvest. However, Kenya coffees are sold competitively by quality, which means well-endowed counties like Nyeri achieve very high average prices year after year, and the smallholders here with a few hundred coffee trees at the most, plus additional land uses available and local job markets, are widely considered to be middle class.



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Kenya is of course known for some of the most meticulous at-scale processing that can be found anywhere in the world. Bright white parchment, nearly perfectly sorted by density and bulk conditioned at high elevations is the norm, and a matter of pride, even for generations of Kenyan processing managers who prefer drinking Kenya's tea (abundantly farmed in nearby Muranga county) to its coffee. Ample water supply in the central growing regions has historically allowed factories to wash, and wash, and soak, and wash their coffees again entirely with fresh, cold river water. Conservation is creeping into the discussion in certain places--understandably in the drier areas where water, due to climate change, cannot be as taken for granted—but for the most part Kenya continues to thoroughly wash and soak its coffees according to tradition. The established milling and sorting by grade, or bean size, is a longstanding tradition and positions Kenya coffees well for roasters, by tightly controlling the physical preparation and creating a diversity of profiles from a single processing batch.

Grower:	600 producers organized around the Rukira Factory	Process:	Triple Washed: Cherries floated prior to pulping, fermenting, washing, and soaking, then dried on raised beds.
Region:	Rukira Village, Nyeri County, Kenya	Cultivar:	SL28, SL34, Ruiru 11, and Batian
Altitude:	1700-1890 masl	Harvest:	October-November 2019

Green Analysis by Nate Lumpkin

This coffee from Kenya comes to us with above average density, somewhat below average moisture content, and somewhat below average water activity. Its screen size is clustered around size 15, which is to be expected for a peaberry. The majority of the fall falls into sizes 14 through 17, with very small amounts falling outside this. You may find a coffee of this density resists heat during a roast, especially early on, so consider using a higher charge or increased energy early on. Its low water activity should help it maintain its quality during storage under good conditions.

The varieties that comprise this coffee are classics of Kenyan specialty coffee. SL28 and SL34 were both selected by Scott Agricultural Laboratories in the 1930s for their drought resistance. SL28 is known for its excellent sensory qualities, and SL34 for its high production and adaptability to low altitudes. Ruiru 11 is a composite hybrid of two parent plants, both themselves complex hybrids of a number of varieties, including SL28 and 34. It is known for its acidity and body, over its sweetness and flavor profile. Because it requires manual pollination, Ruiru is time consuming to breed. Batian is an F5 selection of Ruiru, named for the highest peak of Mount Kenya, and exhibits excellent cup quality and a very short span between planting and harvest: a full harvest of fruit can be gathered only at the third year after planting.

<u>Screen Size</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Density</u>
>20	0.19%	691g/L (free settled)
19	0.92%	729g/L (Sinar)
18	5.13%	



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17	13.55%	<u>Total Moisture Content</u>
16	24.95%	9.7% (Sinar)
15	33.49%	
14	19.25%	<u>Water Activity</u>
≤13	2.53%	.532 @ 23.29C (Rotronic)

Ikawa Analysis by Nate Lumpkin

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.

This is the first of two Kenyas I had the pleasure to taste this week, and I was pleased to find it really delicious, though it definitely favored a hotter, faster roast.

Our Maillard +30 profile was my least favorite. It spent a little long in post-crack development, about 90 seconds, and it showed in the cup. Though the coffee still held pleasant notes of grapefruit juice, baker's chocolate, tomato jam, and brown sugar, its body was a little thin, and it had a sort of strange astringent note to it, like paint-thinner. Don't recommend.

The longer, lower airflow profile ended up being really pleasant. Though not as complex as my favorite, it still had some really nice notes of honey, lime, grapefruit, brown sugar, dark chocolate, and the familiar note of plum tomato.

Our standard profile was far and away my preferred roast, with notes of maple, heirloom tomato, plum jam, lemon, and dark chocolate, with a pleasantly syrupy body. Though its post-crack development was a little long, I think the heat and shortness of this profile helped bring out its complexity.

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

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

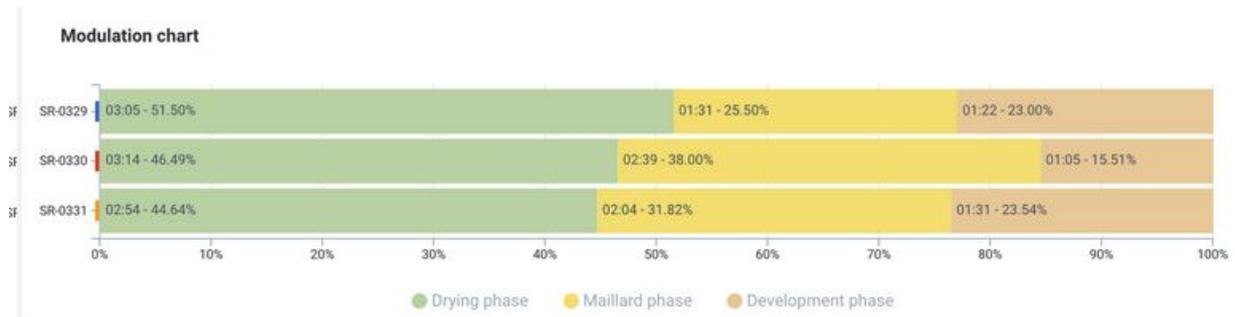
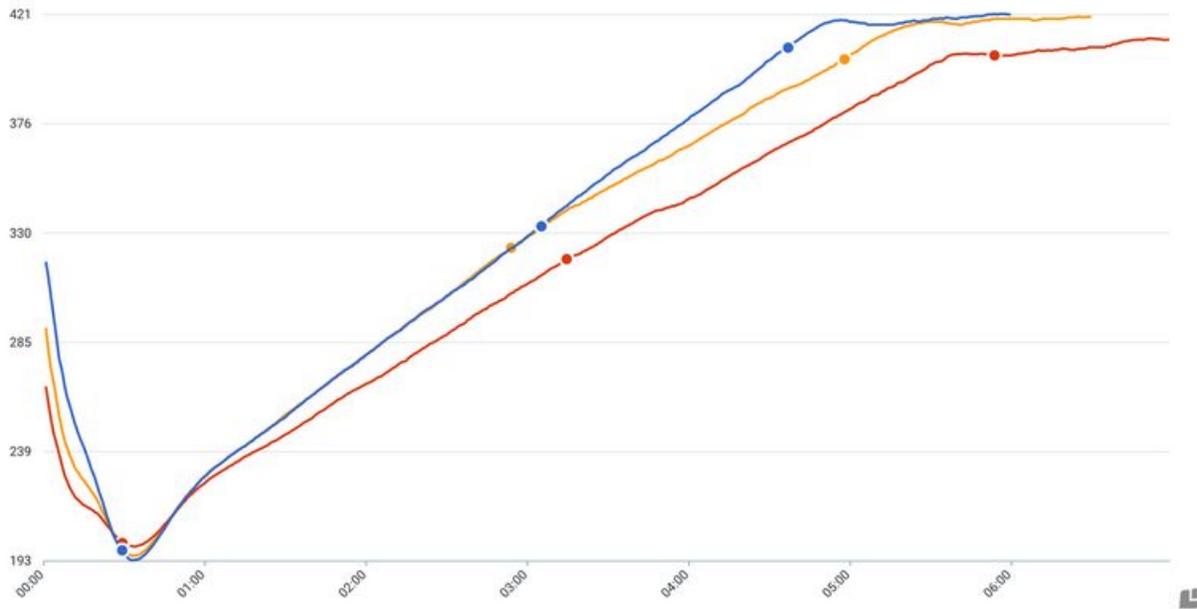
Roast 2: [Crown 7m SR Low AF](#)

Roast 3: [Crown Maillard +30 SR 1.0](#)



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Diedrich IR-5 Analysis by Alex Taylor

Classic Kenya peaberry here: above average density and excellent prep lead me to expect this to roast quite nicely. I roasted this coffee immediately following CJ1377, another dense Kenya, so I had a bit of a preview as to what to expect. I started with a higher than usual charge temperature (380F) after the previous roast lagged a little at the turning point, and my initial gas setting at 3 instead of the usual 2. Just wanted to make sure I gave these dense little beans enough energy to push them up the hill, so to speak.

I was happy to note that the higher charge temperature did just that! Unlike the previous roast, this coffee didn't seem to drag at turning point. The coffee breezed through the first phase of the roast nicely, and as I began stepping off the gas after color change, the coffee responded promptly. Even with the little voice in the back of my head reminding me that the previous roast (CJ1377) cracked early and slowed down too quickly, I still couldn't bring myself to leave the gas up through first crack (380F), out of

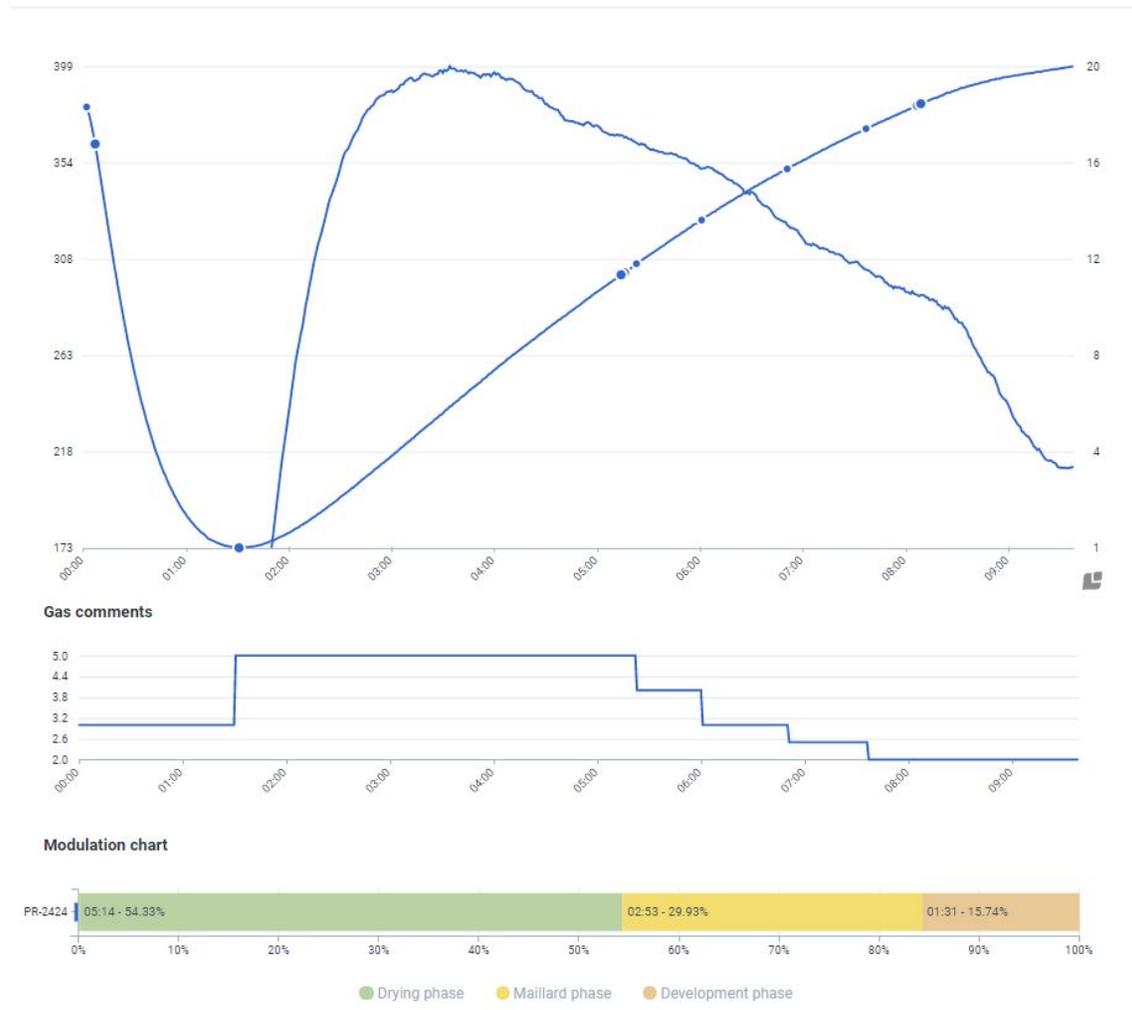


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fear that the coffee would take off after cracking. Again the coffee didn't crash horribly and flatline, but I found myself wishing I had left the gas just a smidge higher, or turned it down later. All in all, I was satisfied with the roast; end temperature of 398.9F and 1:30 post-crack development (admittedly a bit more than I would have liked; although it's up to me, so I only have myself to blame!) in 9:38.

On the cupping table this coffee was quite a delight! Classic lemon and grapefruit acidity up front, followed by some nice plum, molasses, and vanilla notes. Throughout the cup, but especially as it cooled, I found a really decadent brownie sweetness that lingered for days on the finish. While this coffee did have significant acidity, I found it to be more sweetness-driven than a lot of the other Kenyas I've tasted recently. If you really want that acidity to pop, you could certainly tweak the roast profile to achieve that, but the highlighted sweetness could make this coffee a real people pleaser across the board!





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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.](#)

My goal for this week was to really see how light I could take my Behmor roasts while still developing the sugars enough to make for a sweet cup. What better coffees to do that with than fresh crop [Kenya](#) and [Ethiopia](#) lots?

Unlike the Ethiopia that I roasted just prior ([CJ1375](#)), I decided not to leave P5 (100% power) on through the entire roast. As soon as first crack started at what was a very early time on the Behmor - 9:55 - I engaged P4 and opened the door of the roaster. Giving this coffee only 50 seconds of development meant that the coffee was still cracking as it left the roaster, though the roast looked very even. The crack here was loud, but long, slow, and steady. My roast time of 10:50 was well on the shorter side of most 225g batches I've roasted.

Each year we taste dozens of Kenyan arrival samples, and the Rukira usually stands out as having smaller lot sizes and consistently sweet coffee. This sample proved to be as sweet as I remember, with that clear blackberry (or blackcurrant if you're in Europe) flavor that Nyeri coffees are famed for. In this roast, there was also the typical tomato note in the fashion of a sun-warmed cherry tomato, fresh off the vine. Not overwhelming in the least, this sweet nightshade flavor formed a nice background to honey like sweetness, lime acidity, and a quinic tonic zip.

At darker roast levels and faster roasts, you're going to lose that gentle tomato flavor, and you might start to see a deep marshmallowy sweetness from this coffee. Personally, I prefer bright Kenyan coffees like this one on the lighter side, but to each their own! This coffee has so much dimension, any profile you get is going to be worth appreciating. Try this coffee as a filter drip; you're going to get so many nuanced acidity and clear fruit notes, you'll think it's spring all over again.

Brew Analysis by Nate Lumpkin

I had a nice time brewing the Ikawa roasts of this peaberry, so I was really looking forward to digging into a few different brew methods with Alex's roasts on the Diedrich. I was impressed by this coffee's balance of lively acidity and dark chocolate notes, so I decided to try a brew on Aeropress in addition to a couple pour-over devices, just to see what the coffee did with a little more concentration.

My first brew was with the V70. It brewed through at just under three minutes, and even though I used a high dose of 20g and a standard grind setting of 8.5 on our EK, I was surprised to find its TDS and level of extraction were fairly low, about 1.15 and 17.25% respectively. Nevertheless the coffee tasted good in the cup, and not at all thin: I found notes of grapefruit, red plum, white grape, blackberry, and lemongrass, with a hint of cocoa and maple syrup. This was a really clean and sparkling cup.



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The second brew was with the F70. I figured the flat bed would help push the extraction a little bit. This cup brewed through fairly quickly, at around two minutes, and though it did show a higher extraction, with a TDS of 1.21 and an extraction of 18.15, I was again surprised at how low the extraction was. As expected, this cup was a little heavier, with notes of tangerine, red grape, toffee, orange, milk chocolate, and clove, though I would say my preference was for the first cup, with its cleaner and livelier acidity.

Finally I made a cup with the Aeropress. I have to admit, I don't have a lot of experience with the Aeropress, outside of one shift I pulled at Blue Bottle's Mint Plaza back in 2017, where I brewed a cup on the fly based on instructions I found on a website. I ground this coffee just a little bit finer and let it brew for a minute thirty-five, and really enjoyed the results: notes of grapefruit, lemon, honeydew, and dark chocolate, with a light florality like jasmine or rosemary. I enjoyed this method so much that I suspect this coffee would taste really nice as an espresso, so if you happen to pull some shots, please let me know how it goes!

Roast	Method	Grind (EK43)	Dose (g)	H2O (g)	Ratio	Preinfusion (g)	Preinfusion (s)	Time	TDS	Ext %
Diedrich	V70	8.5	20	300	1:15	45	30	2:44	1.15	17.25
Diedrich	F70	8.5	20	300	1:15	45	30	2:05	1.21	18.15
Diedrich	Aeropress	8	18	200	1:11	40	30	1:25	1.55	17.22