



CJ1404 – Crown Jewel Ecuador San José de Minas Finca Cruz Loma Macerated Honey

February 19, 2021 | [See This Coffee Online Here](#)

Overview

This is an experimental honey process coffee from Ecuador, produced by Galo Morales, Maria Alexandra, and their family on their farm, Finca Cruz Loma.

The flavor profile is clean and sweet with a creamy texture. Ripe red fruit like pink cherry and strawberry accompany chocolates and brown baking spice.

Our roasters found the coffee to be chaffy, and encourage an eye to color development and (if possible) adequate fan speed to compensate. Otherwise, the coffee's complex green metrics make for idiosyncracies during roasting, so check the specific notes carefully.

When brewed, our baristas found the coffee sweet and fruity and easy to enjoy as a pour-over.

Taste Analysis by Sandra Loofbourow

What's striking about this year's Ecuadorian coffees is how clean they are, even with their unique processing. The cup is delightfully sweet with grounding notes of brown baking spice, milk chocolate and sweet pipe tobacco. On top of this we find a plethora of cherry flavors - think cascara and pink cherry. The fruit sweetness ranges from comforting simplicity, like pink lady apples, to unique and specific notes of strawberry and ripe banana. All of this rounded out by a creamy mouthfeel that's distinctly vanilla-y.

Source by Sandra Loofbourow

If you've been paying attention to Ecuador's coffee scene, you may have heard Galo Morales' name. His coffee has won several quality competitions in the past several years, including Best of Quito Pichincha in 2019 and the national Taza Dorada competition in 2020. His coffee was used in the winning routine for the 2020 national barista competition by Santiago Rodriguez, Ecuador's current champion, who will go on to represent his country in the next World Barista Championship (pandemic permitting). Since then, Finca Cruz Loma's renown has only grown – as chair of the Good Food Awards Coffee Committee I



was thrilled to see the Morales family's coffee submitted for this year's competition, and even more pleased to see it finish as a [2021 Good Food Awards finalist](#).

Finca Cruz Loma is a family operation, with Galo and his daughters driving the technical aspects of production, and Galo's wife Maria Alexandra handling marketing and promotion. More than 20 years ago, Galo and his four brothers took the farm over from their parents, who themselves had inherited the work from Galo's grandparents. When asked who the most critical people on the farm were, Maria Alexandra said "We work in a team as a family, and we all fulfill a critical role. Each of us has a responsibility we must deliver on so that our coffee is successful."

In the past 5 years, the Morales family has dug deep into specialty coffee, and the results are evidenced not only by their many awards and accolades but also by the exceptional quality of the cup. We've been lucky enough to work with Galo for two years now, and it's clear that they like to push the envelope and continually seek improvement.

This honey process may go through go fewer steps than [CJ1403](#), Galo's double fermented washed offering. After depulping, it's sealed in tanks to ferment anaerobically for eight hours before being sent directly to the drying beds. The results are perfectly in line with Galo's commitment to quality control and careful processing. There's no need to overcomplicate this coffee: it's delicious.

Galo himself says: "Growing coffee allows me to and continue to develop and apply the skills and abilities I've learned over these years". As each harvest yields more and more delicious coffee and clean but unusual processes, it's clear that the Morales family not only draws constant inspiration from their coffee but that they are committed to continuing to push the boundaries to prove just how delicious Ecuadorian coffee can be.

Grower:	Galo Fernando Morales Flores & Maria Alexandra, Finca Cruz Loma	Process:	Anaerobic Macerated Honey: Cherries floated and then submerged and macerated for 8 hours after depulping. Dried under canopy for 25-30 days.
Region:	San José de Minas, Pichincha, Ecuador	Cultivar(s):	Caturra
Altitude:	1450 masl	Harvest:	June - September 2020

Green Analysis by Chris Kornman

A fascinating green coffee specimen here, with lots to discuss. Although the lot comes to us from the same farm as [CJ1403](#), you'd hardly know it by the physical specs.



The coffee is very high in density and has a slightly wide, but not uncommon, distribution of screen sizes between 15-18. It also has a slightly elevated moisture content and a high water activity measurement. Keep the green sealed up when not in use, and it should last well on the shelf.

I also noticed that the seeds are covered by a thick layer of silverskin, which has been darkened significantly due to the brief maceration and drying in mucilage. I'm accustomed to seeing reddish, so-called "foxy" coffee in honey and natural process, though this particular lot might be about as discolored as I've ever seen. Don't be dismayed, however, the effect is merely cosmetic and not considered a physical or sensory defect. You should expect this silverskin to fly off as chaff when roasting, but it may cause some difficulty when looking for color as you approach first crack. For those roasting to color by sight, be extra cautious as you exit the Maillard development stage.

The selection is 100% Caturra, a dwarf mutation of Bourbon. It is a well-loved cultivar by producer and consumer alike – its short stature allows for dense planting, high per-hectare yields, and easy manual harvest. As a Bourbon descendant, it is also well regarded sensorially. The variety was first observed in Brazil in 1937 and can now be found worldwide and is commonly bred with the Timor Hybrid to produce Catimor, a line of high-yielding, disease resistant arabica trees well suited for farmers seeking hardy alternatives to delicate legacy cultivars.

Screen Size	Percent	Density
>20	0.57%	710 g/L (free settled)
19	2.80%	729 g/L (Sinar)
18	14.56%	
17	26.38%	Total Moisture Content
16	33.46%	11.4% (Sinar)
15	15.66%	
14	5.68%	Water Activity
≤13	0.90%	0.604 @ 20.24C (Rotronic)

Diedrich Analysis by Candice Madison

I have never had so many coffees from Ecuador to taste, and through diligent work in choosing our Crown Jewels, I've tasted a few this season – a lot for me! I know that we all feel a little gifted to have award winning coffees to cup and work with but being able to chat about them with you is a boon.

Diving into this week's Ecuadorian Jewel produced by Galo Morales, Maria Alexandra of Finca Cruz Loma, I noted the green metrics while heating up the Diedrich. I knew the appearance of the dark silverskin to be normal, so was unconcerned regarding any possible defect issues there. I was concerned about the amount of chaff in the drum and made a note to check the drum and cooling tray after the roast. I would advise you do this between batches, to catch any possible fire issues.



The high density reading and higher than average moisture content made me feel confident dropping the batch in at the higher charge temperature I've been trialing for a few weeks now. The disparate screen size would usually have me starting with a lower charge temperature or lower gas application, but I felt the other two factors would be more influential on the initial stage of the roast.

I dropped the 4lb batch in at 380F and even with a fully warmed up machine, the coffee spent over 50% of the roast time in the drying stage with 90% heat application (gas dial 5). Roasting this coffee again, I would most likely give the coffee the full 100% gas application at the start for a short amount of time until just after turning point, and then start stepping down off the gas from there. It depends on the efficiency of your machine and the drum RPM as to whether this would be the right move for every machine, as the potential for scorching would rise.

Wanting to stretch out stage 2 for as long as possible, I reduced the gas well before coloring, at 260F - opening the air to 50% at 299F - and then reduced the gas again, halfway through stage 2, at 340F. The coffee cracked quietly at first, but rolled increasingly loudly, starting at approximately 370F. As always, I reduced the gas to the minimum and opened the air 100% to reduce any smoke and clear as much humidity from the drum as possible.

The cup gave and gave and gave! It was like sipping Jolly Ranchers. A delicious bright, light clear sweetness is the hallmark of this cup. Delicate Pink Lady apple notes were swaddled by those of deep cherry, and rich mandarin oranges, and strawberry candy. A veritable fruit salad, the myriad flavors were supported by dark chocolate, with a silky smooth, buttery body. I'm calling this one, 'What's not to love'!

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](#).

An Ecuadorian coffee is not something I see every day, or even every year. Knowing that these coffees are winning competitions and wowing drinkers makes me even more curious, and happy to have the opportunity to work with one. As Chris mentions in the green analysis above, your first glimpse of this lot will confirm that this is not your standard, run-of-the-mill coffee. Plenty of silverskin adhering, high moisture content and water activity, and a fairly wide spread of screen sizes made me think this would be a tricky coffee to roast. Not so, as it turns out.

Like my [other roast](#) this week, I decided for a slightly lower charge temperature (384F) but ended up regretting it somewhat. Not so much that I was dissatisfied with the roast, however! Aside from the slow start, everything went swimmingly.

I started with 10A heat application and full fan, reducing airflow to minimum at turning point. I then waited for this coffee to pick up speed until 275F / 2:40, when I turned fan speed up to 3 on the dial. At 300F / 3:15, I felt the need to really slow this roast down through Maillard, and reduced heat application to 7.5A. Afterwards, I waited until 340F / 4:20 to reduce a step further to 5A, and engaged fan to full at 365F / 5:05, a little before first crack. Just as



first crack began to roll, I turned off heat application entirely and let the coffee cruise through post-crack development until drop at 397.5F / 7:00.

If I were to change anything else here (besides raising charge temperature), it would be to manipulate fan speed more drastically than heat application. This coffee is rather chaffy, and more airflow earlier on in the roast would carry away a bit more of the resultant smoke. Keep in mind that increasing airflow will also wick away moisture. But as always: make sure to clean your roaster well after roasting this coffee – the chaff is a real thing!

In the end, I didn't get any smoke or roast flavor in the cup, but I do feel like I may have lost a little complexity to the extended drying phase of this roast. A winery fragrance hit me first off, right after grinding this coffee. The cup was thick like cherry juice and had a very distinct aftertaste of dark chocolate. Upon cooling, I got a very nice white grape juice taste, with just a touch of graham cracker flavor on the finish, probably as a result of my slower drying phase.

I didn't have any trouble drinking this entire sample in two days and getting completely wired before visiting The Crown. Slight preference for changes in my roast notwithstanding; this is an excellent coffee, and even if your first roast isn't perfect, you're going to find a very enjoyable and juicy cup here.

Ikawa Pro V3 Analysis by Chris Kornman

As of September 2020 we are running all Crown Jewel Analysis roasts on an Ikawa Pro V3, using the most recent app and firmware version on "closed loop" setting.

The Ikawa showed its versatility this week with an unusual and unpredictable green coffee, offering us 50g glimpses into how nuanced roasting approaches may affect flavor profile. Doris Garrido took the controls this week and logged data points, and we cupped the roasts separately before discussing the results.

High density coffee often responds well to assertive heat application during Maillard reactions, but this coffee's somewhat high water activity and unique processing methods provide a counterpoint to this usually reliable roasting metric. As a result, the hot and fast "standard" sample roast profile produced a cup that was sweet and bubblegummy but overdeveloped the fruit flavors a little. Dark chocolate and dried fruits paired up with a syrup body for a pleasant but incomplete experience in the cup. The sweetness was intriguing, but Doris noted a bit of roasty bitterness in the finish, likely the result of some mild scorching.

Surprisingly, using the similar "Maillard +30" profile, which extends the color change phase by a small percentage, resulted in a slightly less favorable cupping experience. The roasts' buttery body accompanied melon flavors and decent sweetness but veered a little into the nutty, pulpy range of flavors with cooling. However, both Doris and I noted a light citrus blossom florality, which lent interesting complexity to the cup.

A slower, lower fan speed profile which spent longer in the drying phase was ultimately the favorite for both Doris and me on the cupping table. Doris noted the coffee's balanced character and ripe mandarin flavor, while I



enjoyed notes of blackberry and deep vanilla sweetness. The cup was clean and juicy and managed to tie all the interesting flavors together seamlessly.

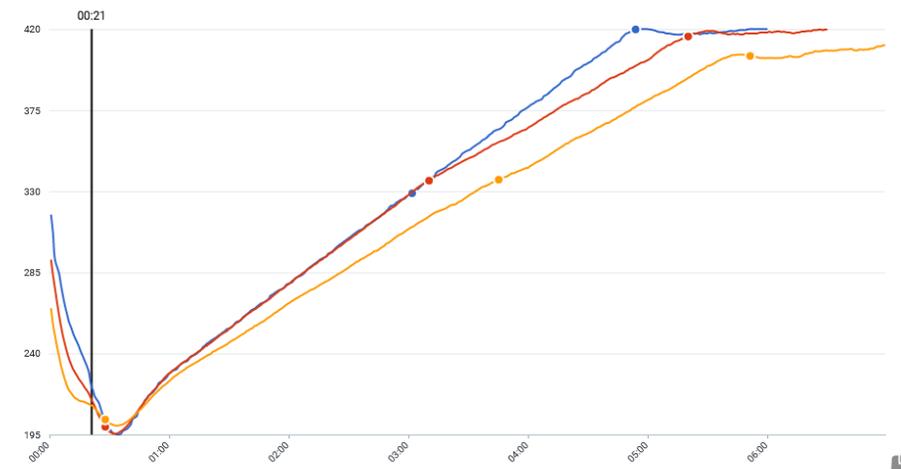
There's plenty to work with here and given the wide range of flavors possible (depending on your roasting style) there's likely something for everyone to enjoy.

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

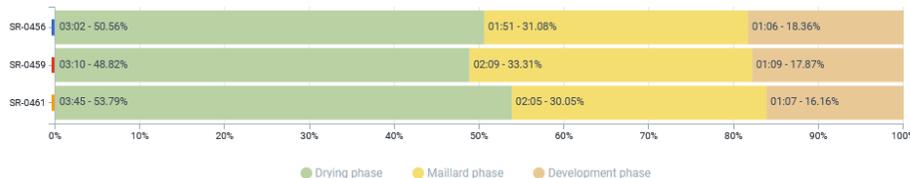
Roast 1: [Crown Standard SR 1.0](#)

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

Roast 3: [Crown 7m SR LowAF 2](#)



Modulation chart



Brew Analysis by Elise Becker

Prior to this year, I had not had the opportunity to work with much coffee from Ecuador, but recently have had the pleasure of tasting some truly outstanding crops from the origin. This Crown Jewel was a pleasure to brew and even more fun to taste!



I dove into the brew analysis of this coffee with my favorite brew comparison lineup – one conical brewer (the V60) and one flat bottomed dripper (the Kalita). The Kalita took a few extra seconds to finish brewing, and the resultant cup had a higher TDS and extraction percentage. Those few extra seconds yielded richer flavors and more grounding depth, with the brighter notes of cascara being rounded out by ripe banana, nutmeg, aromatic pipe tobacco, and dark chocolate. The V60 brought out more of the fruit acidity, with the cascara transforming to tart strawberry and pink lady apple, and the richer flavors skewing towards the creaminess of vanilla ice cream. My overall impression was that this coffee is sweet, very creamy, and has plenty of complexity to reward an attentive brewer.

Roast	Method	Grind (EK43S)	Dose (g)	H2O (g)	Ratio	Bloom (g)	Bloom (s)	Total Brew Time	TDS	Ext%
Diedrich	Kalita	8.5	18	300	1:16	50	30	3:35	1.48	21.73
Diedrich	V60	8.5	18	300	1:16	50	30	3:12	1.43	20.99