



# CJ1451 – Crown Jewel Honduras Santa Elena Maria Elena Vásquez Solar Dried Crown Jewel

Oct 7, 2021 | [See This Coffee Online Here](#)

## Overview

This is a traditional washed coffee from Santa Elena, Honduras, produced by Maria Elena Vásquez on her farm El Manzano in affiliation with the Catracha Coffee Company.

The flavor profile is clean with a delightful and refreshing sweetness led by flavor notes of pear, Meyer lemon, brown sugar, and honey.

Our roasters found the coffee well behaved in the roaster and encouraged a bit of Maillard extension to help draw out the best in viscosity and sweetness.

When brewed our barista team found the coffee easy to dial and approachable as a pourover, we are serving this coffee as an espresso at The Crown.

## Taste Analysis by Elise Becker

At first sip, this coffee is extremely approachable. It is a sweet, squeaky-clean micro-lot that presents enough fruit, florals, and chocolate to please just about anyone's palate. Brewed by our baristas about a week off-roast, the team tasted lots of crisp pear and apple, delicate white honeysuckle florals, and little bursts of citric juiciness. This one performs well across brew devices, and makes for an excitingly bright and sweet espresso option or a very chuggable brewed cup.



## Source Analysis by Mayra Orellana-Powell

This micro-lot was produced by Maria Elena Vásquez on her 2-acre farm called El Manzano in the municipality of Santa Elena. Maria Elena is part of a select group of producers who work with Catracha Coffee Company, which organizes monthly educational seminars that provide guidance for farm management, harvesting and coffee processing that is focused on quality. Traditionally, farmers in Santa Elena have sold their coffee in cherry to a middleman, eliminating the possibility of earning better prices based on the quality of the coffee.

Over the last few years, Maria Elena has improved her farm management practices using lime to control the pH of the soil, fertilizing with organic compost, and spraying organic fungicides to control levels of leaf rust. These actions have improved the health of her farm and the quality of her coffee production. Maria Elena processes her coffee using her own micro-mill to depulp, ferment, wash and dry her coffee before delivering it to Catracha Coffee.

With profits from the sale of her own micro-lot, Maria Elena has created a small business selling groceries in her community, remodeled her kitchen, built a second fermentation tank, and added a solar dryer. These investments have helped Maria Elena and her 19 year-old son, Adeldo Danilo, produce another excellent micro-lot for 2021.

<b>Grower:</b>	Maria Elena Vásquez Marquez   El Manzano	<b>Process:</b>	Washed after depulping and fermenting, dried on patios and elevated tables inside solar dryers that provide protection from the rain
<b>Region:</b>	Santa Elena, La Paz, Honduras	<b>Cultivar(s):</b>	Catuai 3000 plants -6 years
<b>Elevation:</b>	1800 masl	<b>Harvest:</b>	December 2020 - March 2021

## Green Analysis by Chris Kornman

Coffee from the Catracha project is among the most predictably consistent in physical spec year after year. Maria Elena Vásquez' lot here is really nicely dried, with picture-perfect moisture and water activity figures. As an importer and quality specialist, in an unpredictable year with major logistics complications, it's a complete relief to see coffees like this one which arrive stable and well preserved by the careful attention to detail of the farmer. With a fairly high density and large overall screen size, expect this coffee to need a little extra heat early in the roast.

The Catuaí hybrid is a Brazilian cross of Mundo Novo (a spontaneous Bourbon-Typica hybrid) with Yellow Caturra (a dwarf Bourbon mutation). It was developed in the 1940s but not released into the public domain until 1970s. It retains the short stature of its Caturra heritage, which allows for dense planting and high per-hectare yields

Screen Size	Percent	Density
>20	0.00%	687 g/L (free settled)
19	13.42%	735 g/L (Sinar)



18	33.28%		
17	30.51%		<b>Total Moisture Content</b>
16	18.37%		10.5% (Sinar)
15	3.63%		
14	0.80%		<b>Water Activity</b>
≤13	0.00%		0.547 @ 22.28 C (Rotronic)

## Diedrich IR-5 Analysis by Chris Kornman

Highly anticipated coffees from the Catracha project always catch the attention of the team here at The Crown, and we'd actually booked a good bit of this coffee up to use as espresso in the Tasting Room as soon as we approved the arrival sample.

Thus, by the time I got my hands on enough coffee to toss in for a production trial, I had a good idea of the coffee's final destination. My perspective on roasting espresso, particularly dense and bright coffees like Maria Elena Vásquez' lot, is to allow the coffee to spend a little extra time in Maillard than I would for a drip roast, and to extend the post-crack development at a cool, slow pace in order to balance acidity and caramelization without achieving an overly dark or roasty character.

I've been in the habit lately of charging the drum in my "idle" gas position of about 30% burner power and then boosting the gas about halfway between the charge and turnaround. For this coffee, a 395F charge and burner power set to 85% at the 30 second mark allowed me to escape the drying phase in about 4:45 and retain enough momentum to make a few gradual heat reductions and open my airflow in anticipation of first crack. The coffee had been very well behaved and predictable in the roaster up to this point.

Concerned that my rate of rise was a little high going into first crack, I actually cut the burners completely for about 15 seconds just to make sure the coffee didn't run away from me. This, of course, put my rate of rise perilously close to the baking danger zone, so kept one eye on the temperature changes and another on the color of the beans as they developed. It's very likely that constant trier pulls during the final minute of roasting contributed to the low end temperature recorded on the thermocouple. While only 2 degrees of temperature change were recorded between first crack and the end of 1:45 of development to finish the roast, a Colortrack reading of 63.85 (whole bean) and 56.14 (ground) easily cleared my <5 points difference benchmark for baked roasts. 56 is also our current color spec for our Decaf Honduras espresso, and put me in the pocket for a lightish espresso that would hopefully be easy to manage and also delicious, with "omni-roast" potential as a pour-over as well.

At the cupping table, the coffee was surprisingly bright and juicy, with excellent sweetness. I picked up a few hints of Hibiscus and Nutmeg accompanying a light, fruit forward washed coffee profile of honeydew melon, mango, and pear with a delightful Meyer Lemon acidity and clean Butterscotch sweetness.

Future roasts for bar service will attempt to mimic a similar low and slow end of roast approach, but will incorporate a little additional time during Maillard reactions to improve viscosity.



## Brew Analysis by Elise Becker

Each year, I look forward to the changing harvest seasons and my favorite coffees that come back seemingly better and better every time I taste them. When Catracha coffees pop up on the radar, I take notice, and Maria Elena's micro-lot this year is a truly chuggable delight! It comes through extremely sweet, clean, and full of juicy pear and apple notes balanced out by creamy milk chocolate and pleasant nuttiness.

The Crown's barista team and I brewed this one across three devices, two cone drippers (C70, V60) and a flat bottom brewer (Kalita) to check for consistency in performance. The first brew on the C70 was a fairly long brew for us, clocking in at 3:45, but was surprisingly delicate and sweet with light florals and melon notes appearing alongside the brown sugar and pear sweetness. We opened up the grind slightly for the next two brews on the Kalita and V60 and were rewarded with sweeter, richer cups. The V60 put the spotlight on all the crisp pear and green apple acidity, with a syrupy molasses sweetness and a chocolatey finish. The Kalita was a little more balanced and round in the cup, with creamy milk chocolate, light peachiness, gentle citrus, and an overall impression of a sweet, frosted pastry. Quicker brews with higher extraction percentages tasted a little more fun to us, and I'd be pretty happy letting this one shine as a single origin espresso.

Roast	Method	Grind (EK43)	Dose (g)	H2O (g)	Ratio	Bloom (g)	Bloom (s)	Total Brew Time	TDS	Ext%
Deidrich	C70	8.5	18	300	1:16	50	40	3:45	1.16	16.98
Deidrich	V60	9	18	300	1:16	50	45	3:10	1.24	18.17
Deidrich	Kalita	9	18	300	1:16	50	45	2:55	1.31	19.21