

# Crown Jewel Sumatra FT0 Aceh Ratu Ketiara Gayo Wet Hulled CJ01518

February 17, 2023 | [See This Coffee Online Here](#)

## Overview

This is a traditional wet hulled coffee from Aceh, Sumatra, Indonesia, produced by women members of the Ketiara Cooperative, associated as “Ratu (Queen) Ketiara Gayo.”

The flavor profile is an update on a classic, with the sweetness of honey, a warming pumpkin pie spice note, light lemongrass-like acidity, and deep flavors of cacao.

Our roasters found the coffee to benefit from a “low and slow” approach and noted the appearance of the green will be different than more traditional “fully washed” styles.

When brewed, the coffee offered complexity and flexibility, really shining as a flat-bottom-brewed pour-over and will be featured as an espresso in the Crown’s Tasting Room.

## Taste Analysis by Chris Kornman

In classic Sumatra form, there’s more than meets the eye with this coffee, produced by a selected group of women in conjunction with Ketiara. Royal Coffee purchases a lot of wet hulled coffee from the Aceh region, and there’s a sense in which this coffee represents the best and brightest of the processing and regional flavor profiles – it’s loaded with sweet herbal notes like sage, juniper, and lemongrass, rich and deeply viscous with strong impressions of cacao, candied walnut, and salted caramel.

There’s a bit of a twist here, however, because the coffee isn’t simply great at being an archetype of an often-overlooked processing subset; it’s in fact a truly great coffee, period. It’s intensely aromatic with comforting reminders of bright spices like coriander and nutmeg. Delicate and sweet notes abound in the form of honeydew melon, vanilla ice cream, plum, and chamomile tea. There’s an undeniable lilt to the subtle but present acidity which elegantly balances the hefty, albeit not overpowering, mouthfeel.

A substantial coffee with a lot of room for interpretation both in roasting and brewing, we’ve explored drip options and lighter roasts, toyed with the idea of featuring it as a darker style, but ultimately it was lead barista MJ Smith’s recommendations for pressurized extraction that led us to feature it as an espresso in The Crown’s tasting room. If you’re in the mood for a coffee that’s at once rustic and refreshing, nostalgic and nuanced, this Queen of Aceh is worth all your attention.

## Source Analysis by Charlie Habegger

Aceh (pronounced AH-CHEY) is the northernmost province of Sumatra. Its highland territory, surrounding Lake Laut Tawar and the local city of Takengon, is considered to be the epicenter of one of the world's most unique coffee terroirs due to its isolated heirloom set of Typica and Catimor-based cultivars, as well as its uniquely fertile microclimates, land husbandry, and tradition of wet-hulled processing. Coffee farms in this area are managed with the experience of many generations of cultivation, while also harmoniously woven into their surrounding tropical forests. The canopies are loud, and fields are almost impenetrably thick with coffee and fruit trees and vegetables, all of which are constantly flushing with new growth. Year-round mists and rain showers never cease, farm floors are spongy and deep with compost, and almost every square meter of the region seems to exude life. Nothing is ever still.

PT Ketiara is an umbrella group in this area that was founded in 2009 by Ms. Rahmah, who began in coffee as a local cherry collector more than 20 years ago, and who by now is one of Indonesia's most respected coffee entrepreneurs. As a woman coming up in the male-dominated, largely conservative Muslim industry of Sumatra coffee, Ms. Rahmah learned to be assertive in negotiations, tend endlessly to the happiness of the farmers she represents, and to make her business a collective representation of the true gender diversity and talent of her community. The original cooperative was Fair Trade certified in 2011 and has grown from 38 original farmer members to almost 2000, and into multiple different sub-companies to service different qualities, processing styles, and certifications. Ms. Rahmah and her leadership team are in constant communication with their members. The price of coffee in Sumatra, while somewhat protected due to the limited supply, is still extremely volatile between farmers and collectors, and the Ketiara group is as transparent with their farmers as they are with their buyers when it comes to navigating local cherry markets, exporter competition, and quality expectations.

Ratu Ketiara Gayo (RKG) is the Ketiara group's newest business unit, a women's cooperative established in 2017 and co-lead by three of Ms. Rahmah's young protégés: Ms. Indayana as chairwoman, Ms. Dini as quality control, and Ms. Murul Kemala as treasurer. RKG represents a younger generation of farmers, 971 in total, 80% of whom are women, and all of whom are focused on top quality. Together RKG members farm a total of 1,234 hectares of coffee.

Regional coffee distinctions in the northern provinces of Sumatra are interestingly all based on human ethnicity, rather than geography itself. "Mandheling" for example, is a broad label for a widespread cultural group in Sumatra and Malaysia and subsequently the most common coffee trading term, applying to almost any chosen blend of wet-hulled coffees from across the northern half of the island. "Batak" is a Mandheling sub-ethnicity based around Lake Toba and considered a regional coffee pedigree to itself, and often marketed as such. These terms are malleable, and it is often difficult to pinpoint a coffee's exact origin without direct partnerships that allow buyers to travel the entire value chain themselves. "Gayo" is Ketiara's declaration, used to proudly signify a pure microregion and society of coffee from the center of Aceh, handmade by the Gayo people. Ketiara undoubtedly captures their community's best qualities through careful logistics. The cooperative centrally controls transport, final drying, and sorting for all members' coffee. It also conducts all export business from their headquarters in the mountains, avoiding any further consolidation or exposure of their shipments to Sumatra's humid, balmy coastal climate, where many exporters tend to hold green coffee for sale.

<b>Grower:</b>	Ratu Ketiara Gayo Cooperative (RKG)	<b>Process:</b>	Wet hulled and dried in the sun
<b>Region:</b>	Aceh, Sumatra, Indonesia	<b>Cultivar(s):</b>	Regional catimor & typica cultivars
<b>Elevation:</b>	1200 – 1600 masl	<b>Harvest:</b>	September 2021 – June 2022

## Green Analysis by Chris Kornman

Familiar with wet hulled coffees? For the uninitiated, these beans will look a little surprising. There's the slightly pale appearance, the ever-so-slightly musty fragrance, and yes, the secondary defects. Let's get into it. Hulling coffees while they're still wet (as the name implies) isn't exactly a flawless system. The beans which are chipped in the process often develop blackened edges as they finish drying, unprotected by the outer parchment layer. While I'd suggest that an excess of these beans is absolutely problematic, I also admit that it's pretty common to get a few in even the nicest sortings. They're not primary defects or even partial blacks as classified by the SCA system, but for those used to the immaculate green sorts of traditional washed beans from say Kenya or Colombia, there are some expectations you should be prepared to accept for this coffee. Our impression of the impressive flavor and appreciation of its careful sourcing remains unmarred by a few errant secondaries.

Okay, with the tough stuff out of the way, let's talk about the bright side. This is a nicely dried 12.3% wet hull, placing it in the "above average" classification for most coffees and the "totally expected" range for most of Indonesia's iconoclastic post-harvest process. Its low density and relatively large and somewhat spread-out screen size further reflect the range of local cultivars and the overall idiosyncratic treatment method.

Roasters should anticipate a coffee that requires a much gentler approach overall. This is no acid bomb, nor is it a high-density nutshell requiring all your available power to crack open and split the sky with citrus. Lean into the gentle herbal and cacao nature of the coffee and let those sugars caramelize slowly. You'll end up with a lovingly developed and elegantly complex coffee that in my estimation is one of the nicest traditional wet hulled Sumatras I've tasted in some time.

Screen Size	Percent	Density
>20	18.07%	663 g/L (free settled)
19	24.37%	688 g/L (Sinar)
18	22.21%	
17	15.21%	<b>Total Moisture Content</b>
16	11.54%	12.3% (Sinar)
15	6.34%	
14	1.80%	<b>Water Activity</b>
≤13	0.47%	0.628 @ 19.64C (Rotronic)

## Diedrich IR-5 by Doris Garrido

If we are looking for a good-tasting Sumatra, this is it; a good coffee from source to taste. We were pleased that this coffee performed great on the cupping table standing alongside other great coffees on the cupping table. Not the best looking, on the other hand. I was concerned while roasting when I saw some little chipped beans on the trier, but nothing alarming. After hearing Chris Kornman's explanation of all that this coffee has to go through in the wet-hulled process I got to understand why this is something that does not influence the tasty final cup.

Now, on the roasting side, the roast went simply great. I did a gentle roast with a little longer development than usual. I spent 5 minutes in drying, 3:39 in yellowing, and 1:38 minutes in post-development, and dropped the batch at 399.1F. Regarding gas movements, I started adding gas at 30 seconds until 100% and left it there for just a little while. In the same way, I dropped to 30% just after I marked color change. In the airflow settings, the roast began at 0, and I used my basic setting of 50% at the middle of Maillard and 100% before first crack. On the ColorTrack, 63.62 on the whole beans and 56.11 on the ground coffee.

I would say that even when it looks more like a medium roast, it seems just touching that area on tasting notes: lemongrass, orange zest, Valencia oranges on the acidity, clean, silky, milk chocolate, pumpkin pie spice, candied walnut, salty caramel, cashew butter. And for a final comment, I used to expect the wet-hulled kind of taste of earthy and muddiness, but that was barely noticeable here.

## Aillio Bullet R1 IBTS Analysis by Evan Gilman

*Unless otherwise noted, we use both the [roast.world](#) site and Artisan software to document our roasts on the Bullet. You can find our roast documentation below, by searching on [roast.world](#), or by clicking on the Artisan links below.*

*Generally, we have good results starting our 500g roasts with 428F preheating, P6 power, F2 fan, and d6 drum speed. Take a look at our roast profiles below, as they are constantly changing!*

At long last, a wet hulled Crown Jewel coffee from Sumatra. Occasionally, an incredibly clean and consistent wet hulled coffee will arrive, and more often than not it comes from our friends at Ratu Ketiara Gayo. One of the first places I visited in Takengon, the Ketiara Coop was high on the list as they have been providing excellently selected wet hulled coffee for years.

I know from experience that I get the most balanced flavors from a wet hulled coffee if I take the roast long and slow. I started with a slightly lower-than-usual charge temperature of 437F, P8 power, and F2 fan until peak Rate of Rise, where I increased to F3. I continued on this track until Yellowing, when I reduced heat to P7, drawing this coffee slowly and steadily through Maillard. At 342F / 5:45 I increased fan further to F4 to really slow down the roast. At 367F / 7:40 I began toggling between F4 and F5 in anticipation of the spike that usual happens around that time – but the spike happened much later, as did First Crack. Keep a keen ear to the roaster to note the pops that signal First Crack, as this coffee pops very softly. I'm thinking this is in part due to its lower density and the wet hulling process' propensity to chip and cut the coffee. I allowed the coffee to spend 1:16 in what I deemed post-crack development and dropped the coffee at a rather hot 402.8F / 11:13. All in service of some good sugar browning notes!

While I would generally not take a roast quite this far these days, the heat fits the style in this case. On grinding this coffee before brewing, I got the classic gingery galangal fragrance I'm used to finding in great wet hulled coffees. Upon brewing in the Chemex (grinding finer than usual and utilizing bypass - I've found this is the best way to handle wet hulled coffees for pourover), I got heavy dark chocolate top notes, cherry cordial sweetness, candied ginger, and ginger spice in the finish. The only noticeable roughness was a touch of pine that I attribute to just a bit too much time in post-crack development, the result of abundant pyrazines.

Regardless, this is a superlative example of Sumatran wet hulled coffee. While it's not the traditional creamy 'Gayo' flavor profile, it does have all the hallmark notes of the production area, with its heady spice, complex chocolaty notes, and touch of ginger. Cheers to Rahmah and her whole team for another excellent lot!

You can follow along with my roast profile below on [roast.world](#):

<https://roast.world/@egilman/roasts/sKztbMX8R81SXjFpyDXGs>

## Ikawa Pro V3 Analysis by Isabella Vitaliano

*Our current Ikawa practice compares two sample roast profiles, originally designed for different densities of green coffee. The two roasts differ slightly in total length, charge temperature, and time spent between color change in first crack. You can learn more about the profiles [here](#).*

Our first CJ Sumatran arrival of the year has hit the shelves (and the warehouse)! Produced by a women's cooperative named Ratu Ketiara Gayo (RKG). Ratu translating to a prefix for a "royal" appropriately named for a group that has distinguished itself among the male dominated coffee industry. The Crown team is excited about the representation this coffee represents and in conjunction with the quality it offer we are extremely proud to share this with the world. On initial sample roast this coffee took us from cacao nibs, candied walnut, cashew butter to brighter notes of orange zest, sour candy, bergamot and vanilla ice cream.

With the help of Doris' distinguished palate, we can break down what Ikawa roast complements this Indonesian royalty. With the high-density roast first on the table we got notes of allspice, cinnamon, pepper, pine, honey, lemon, maple syrup and tobacco. This cup was particularly sweet and waws a nice complement to the pepper notes. The low-density roast manifested as bolder in acidity with a slightly higher body. Notes of orange marmalade, orange peel, black pepper and hints of caramel. Doris and I did not have a noticeable preference in this round of comparison. Both of us leaned slightly towards the LD roast as the acidity was slightly more interesting over the sweet and spicy HD roast.

You can roast your own by linking to our profiles in the Ikawa Pro app here:

Roast 1: [Low Density Sample Roast](#)

Roast 2: [High Density Sample Roast](#)

## Brew Analysis by Colin Cahill

Indonesian coffees have a special place in my heart, and Gayo was one of the first places I went to visit coffee farms, and where I first learned to cup coffee. It is a dramatic and unique place, and an origin for coffees with those same two qualities. We are absolutely spoiled with exceptional fruity naturals, so it can be really exciting to get a spicy, herbaceous, chocolate-y coffee to play around with on our pourover bar at The Crown. And with the recent chilly weather here in the Bay, I was ready to sip on something cozy and fudgy. Having tasted some of MJ's espresso extractions, I knew this coffee could bring sweet, heavy chocolate and cozy spice notes. To explore those flavors in a filter coffee, we experimented with brewing this coffee on the Hario V60 and the Kalita Wave to excellent results.

Josh, our tasting room manager, took the lead on brewing this coffee. Because of this coffee's intensity, we started with a slightly lighter dose than usual, and a slightly coarser grind than usual. Sticking with our standard pours of a 50 gram bloom, and additional pours of 150 grams and 100 grams at 40 seconds and 1:40, for a total water dose of 300 grams. This brew finished draining at 4:05, yielding a delicate brew with a TDS of 1.31 and an extraction percentage of 21.34. While this brew had expected notes of chocolate and cinnamon, some juicy blackberry and tangerine, and a whisper of earthiness, it was a much more delicate brew than anticipated, with a mellow body and an unexpected floral note.

To enhance the qualities that we look for in a clean, wet-hulled Gayo coffee, Josh increased the coffee dose to 18 grams, and switched to a Kalita Wave, a flatbed brewing device. Trying to maintain some of the fruity, floral qualities of the previous brew, he coarsened the grind slightly to a 10.5 on our EK43. Brewed with the same water dose and pulses, we received a brew in 3:45 with a slightly higher TDS of 1.36 and a slightly lower extraction percentage of 20.77. This brew was sweet, with a bit more body, plenty of chocolate, and lots of caramel, toffee, and toasted marshmallow. It was also a bit brighter and fruitier, with notes of raspberry, nectarine, and mango. This coffee seems to really sing on a flatbed brewer with a moderate dose and a coarser grind, and can be dialed to either a heavy, chocolate-y brew, or one with more delicate fruit and floral notes. This coffee is dynamic and delicious, and we cannot wait to feature it on our espresso bar.

Roast	Method	Grind (EKS43)	Dose (g)	H2O (g)	Ratio	Bloom (g)	Bloom (s)	Total Brew Time	TDS	Ext %
Diedrich	Hario V60	10	17	300	1:17.65	50	40	4:05	1.31	21.34
Diedrich	Kalita Wave	10.5	18	300	1:16.66	50	40	3:45	1.36	20.77

## Espresso Analysis by MJ Smith

This is one of the best Sumatran coffees I've ever had, both on and off the espresso bar. As soon as I saw it on our list of upcoming Crown Jewels, I knew I was going to have a lot of fun dialing it in. Overall, it kind of reminded me of Thanksgiving dessert, with cozy notes of pumpkin spice, maple, and pecan, combined with some tangy citrus, delicate florals, and chocolatey goodness.

### Recipe 1: Dose 19g, Yield: 39.7, Time: 32 seconds

I started out with a standard dose of 19 grams, and aimed for a slightly higher yield, landing at 39.7 grams and 32 seconds. After taking my first sip (and writing down a few tasting notes) I enthusiastically ran some out to share with the rest of the barista team. Collectively, we came up with notes of lemon-lime, pumpkin spice, medium-dark chocolate, rose, and sesame candy.

### Recipe 2: Dose 19.5g, Yield: 38.6, Time: 34 seconds

For my second recipe, I bumped the dose up to 19.5 grams, and ended up with a 38.6 gram shot at 34 seconds. This shot still had some of that fun citrusiness and cozy pumpkin notes, but the higher dose and slightly longer extraction time brought out some really fun fruity and spicy notes as well. The rest of the team and I picked up notes of lemon, tootsie roll, blackberry, pecan, maple, nutmeg, banana, and hibiscus.

I'm beyond excited to be adding this coffee to our featured espresso offerings here at The Crown in the near future. With a wide range of exciting notes to work with, it's sure to be a Crown pleaser among baristas and customers alike. When pulling it for yourself, I would recommend a medium dose and slightly longer extraction time, but with coffee this good, I'm sure it will be delicious however you brew it.