

# Crown Jewel Ethiopia Sidama Daye Bensa Washed

8.30.2024 | [See This Coffee Online Here](#)

## Overview

This is a low intervention washed coffee from Sidama, Ethiopia, produced by smallholder farmers of the Boreta village organized around the Daye Bensa coffee company.

The flavor profile is classically Ethiopian, we tasted jasmine, peach, lime, black tea, and even hints of blueberry.

Our roasters found light roasts with short drying stages produced aromatic and flavorful results.

When brewed, we preferred high water to coffee ratios in pour-overs and found our yield ratios more flexible when dialed as espresso.

## Taste Analysis by Isabella Vitaliano

Tucked away in Sidama's eastern district, this coffee represents the highly organized, collective effort of smallholder farms in the region. Producers in the region are at an elevation range of 1900-2330masl with diversified lots and rich soil health.

The Crown team was enamored by its nuanced flavors of melon, mint, jasmine, Bartlett pear and sage. Delicate flavors of chrysanthemum and lemon verbena are also at play. We also found flavors like mangosteen, rhubarb, camphor and kiwi.

On espresso, the coffee provided an excellent performance by transforming into a peach, black berry, fig, hibiscus cup. Peach and black tea were common notes in the varied shots but there is an opportunity to unlock some herbal, berry and sweet molasses notes

So much to explore in the cup! From florals to tropical fruits and intriguing herbal notes, everyone will find something to love in this coffee.

## Source Analysis by Charlie Habegger

Truly a story of local entrepreneurship, this superlatively fragrant and sweet coffee came to be through a producer group founded by Bensa district natives in 1996. The neighboring Bensa and Arbegona districts reach some of the highest elevations in all of Ethiopia; in the right hands, coffee grown here has proven capable of pushing the limits of what Sidama coffee genetics can show us. This fully washed lot, from smallholders in the Boreta village, is sweetly perfumed with chrysanthemum and jasmine blossoms, a range of autumn fruits, and subtle but decadent caramelized sugars.

### Welcome to Eastern Sidama

The Sidama Zone has long been considered a kind of gateway to Ethiopia's southern coffees. This is true, as Sidama is the first producing zone on the way south from Addis Ababa. It has also been true in the cup: Sidama has been known for having a robust and stable union of more than 50 coops that turn out predictably honey-like, herbaceous fully washed coffee year after year, and almost always with earlier availability and lower prices than neighboring Gedeo (a.k.a. "Yirgacheffe"). Perhaps because of its stability, the sprawling zone has also seen little disruption to its union presence and hallmark washed profiles.

It is in Sidama's eastern districts of Bensa and Arbegona that the zone has spent the past few years reinventing itself, one innovative group at a time. For the past four harvests, we have seen several private processors turn out incredible coffees that reset our expectations for Sidama. Some have used transformative anaerobic fermentations, whereas others, like this one, are nothing more than sound traditional washed processing fundamentals applied to a select subset of the region's coffee—some of the highest and most genetically gifted on the planet.

Coffees this good wouldn't be possible without a divine terroir to begin with. Eastern Sidama runs up against the mighty Harenna Forest National Park, Ethiopia's largest indigenous forest, whose elevation surpasses 3,000 meters and whose old growth tree species can be found across eastern Sidama, whose presence boosts natural shade and soil health. Were this not enough, the elevation alone is enough to make a coffee buyer's eyes water, with coffee farms as high as 2300 meters above sea level. Harvest here pushes past the end of the calendar year.

### Daye Bensa Coffee Export PLC & Boreta Village

Daye Bensa is one of the entrepreneurial groups pushing Sidama's coffee to new levels. Originally founded in 1996 by two brothers from the Bensa district, the organization now operates 2 of its own large estates and manages over 15 processing stations in eastern Sidama.

This lot is centrally processed coffee from smallholders in the Boreta village, part of the Arbegona district, north of Bensa. Growers here are at an average of 2,200 meters in elevation, farming entirely on small, diversified plots typically devoted to coffee, sugar cane, spices, subsistence vegetables, and *enset*—a fruit-less relative of the banana tree whose pulp is scraped and packed into cakes, fermented underground, and then sliced and toasted as *kocho*, a staple starch.

Processing begins with fresh picked cherry that is floated for density and hand-sorted to remove any imperfections. Cherry is then depulped, and the parchment is fermented slowly—36 to 48 hours—due to the low ambient temperatures in the region and the replenishment of cold groundwater throughout the process. Drying

takes 12-15 days and wet parchment is often covered during the searingly-hot afternoon hours to prevent it from cracking.

Once complete, dried parchment is conditioned in local warehouses before being transported to Daye Bensa’s Addis Ababa dry milling facility, where it is cleaned, sorted, and prepped for export.

<b>Grower:</b>	Smallholder farmers organized around Daye Bensa Coffee Export PLC	<b>Process:</b>	Fully washed
<b>Region:</b>	Boreta village, Arbegona woreda, Sidama Zone, Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples’ Region (SNNPR), Ethiopia	<b>Cultivar(s):</b>	Regional arabica cultivar 74158
<b>Elevation:</b>	1920 - 2330 masl	<b>Harvest:</b>	December 2023 – February 2024

## Green Analysis by Isabella Vitaliano

Not only is this coffee delicious, but the metrics are also ideal, which displays an impressive effort of organization between the smallholder farms of the Boreta Village. A high density paired with small screen size is typical of this region. Don’t be afraid to push the heat on the front end of the roast, we find this helps the acids and florals shine in the cup. Water activity is slightly above average with moisture content in the average ranges.

Screen Size	Percent	Density
>20	0	(free settled) 695
19	0.77	(Sinar) 745
18	2.07	
17	5.6	<b>Total Moisture Content</b>
16	19.88	(Sinar) 11
15	36.46	
14	26.38	<b>Water Activity</b>
≤13	8.84	(Rotronic) 21.76 – 0.588

## Diedrich IR 5 Analysis by Doris Garrido

Every day is an opportunity to be amazed by the beauty of Ethiopian coffees. We just got the second of this season, Ethiopia Sidama Bensa Boreta. Words fail to describe their essence; perhaps if it was music, it would be like a soft and sweet piano note that echoes into your senses and calms your body. An experience that everybody should have.

And since I'm not a poet, here I describe the roasting process.

Before starting, when roasting these specific coffees, I must note that I cannot use more than 50% of the roaster capacity. The beans are small and dense requiring a fast roast to achieve the floral notes I seek. I use the 5 kilo Diedrich at 50% capacity, and on the Loring or the Bullet, the situation is pretty much similar.

I preheat the drum roaster to a high heat temperature, maintaining it at 465.9F with all the airflow at the dropping of the coffee. From the charge of the beans to the end of the roast I used the full airflow. As soon as I started the roast, I set the gas intake to 100%.

The turning point occurs at 204F, giving the roast an excellent opportunity for rapid drying. At 3:38 minutes the yellowing phase begins, and I reduced the gas as the rate of change decreased. The yellowing phase lasted 2:21 minutes and the first crack occurred at 379F.

I spent 1 minute and 26 seconds in the development phase, adjusting the pilot to zero, halfway here to further reduce the rate of change and maintain an end temperature of 400F.

Although I was initially nervous, my concerns dissipated after grinding the beans. The fragrance and aroma full of florals, and the first sip confirmed it. Chrysanthemum, jasmine, caramel candy, fresh Bartlett pear, key lime, mangosteen, melon, blueberry, simply amazing. If you doubt me, just come and taste it - it will hit the menu at the Crown shortly.

## 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!*

Much like Doris, I wanted to bring this coffee quickly through the drying stage and really bring out the floral characteristics I knew would be in this coffee. The green smelled so clean and floral, I knew I was in for a treat. This type of coffee really only comes once a year, and it gives me sentimental feelings to smell the fresh green, and to roast coffees I know are some of the best in the world. Sidama usually brings to mind sweet jasmine and orange creamsicle/julius experiences for me at its best, and that's just what I got here.

To start off the roast, I warmed up the roaster to a 473F charge temperature. With P9 power and F2 fan, I knew this roast would be off to a good start. At peak rate of change of 38F/min, I reduced heat to P8 and increased fan to F3. Before yellowing, I reduced heat further to P7 and bided my time until 360F, where I increased air further to F4. This coffee was so well behaved, all I needed to do was lower to P6 power and increase air to F5 around first crack, and I was in good shape to continue development at an even pace. This roast was on the shorter side for me (8:25), but that's personally what I'd suggest for a coffee with this much acid and floral expression.

I got a nice and even roast, and the smell of freshly roasted Ethiopian coffee sent a mist over my eyes. It's a beautiful thing. In the cup, I got incredible sugars like marzipan and maple donut, but the real star of the show was the floral expression, somewhere between jasmine and honeysuckle. Add all of that to a juicy, complex orange and grape acidity, and you've got a complete coffee that's leaves nothing to be wanted for. Did I mention the buttery texture? Well, it has that, too. I am planning to keep my cup full of this for as long as possible.

Truly, I don't know if I have any opinions (within reason – please don't brew it with pond water) on how you roast or drink this coffee. When you start with something this beautiful, you're bound to get good results. Even super darkly roasted, I see this coffee pleasing the most ardent fans of washed coffee from Ethiopia. Good vibes only!

## **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](#).*

From the region of Eastern Sidama, the team is excited to welcome our recent Crown Jewel release. On initial pass of this coffee we got note of lemon, jasmine, chamomile, melon and honeysuckle.

On the light density roast there were delicious flavors like ripe melon, dark caramel, kettle corn and light florals.

The high density roast was high in florals, a jasmine bouquet if you will, with accents of melon, mint, sweet basil and starfruit. While the light density roast delicious, the high density roast felt fuller and the profile was more cohesive.

I highly recommend trying out the high density roast for your first sample roast of this coffee. Enjoy!

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 Tim Tran**

Ready for the flavors and characteristics teeming in an anticipated high-altitude coffee out of the Sidama region, I excitedly dove into this coffee with high hopes. And this coffee crushed my hopes with exceedingly floral flavors and nice subtle punches of fruit that provided a high clarity brew that continued to get better with every sip.

To start the brew analysis, I began with a 1:16.22 ratio at a moderate grind setting on a flat bottom brewer. This brew was fairly light and delicate in taste while still boasting a rich body while carrying an incredibly tropical aroma. The coffee TDS'd at a 1.42 and presented notes of peach, black tea florals, and honey. Despite the above average TDS, the coffee still proved to be a fairly mild brew.

To find a brewer comparison, I brewed the coffee at the same ratio and grind on a conical brewer. While the coffee still was very good, it proved to be a little bit less balanced in taste and body. Ultimately, for our dripper choice we preferred the coffee on a flat bottom brewer.

As the coffee proved to be fairly light and delicate, we opted to explore at a higher ratio by dosing down our coffee. At a lower dose, the coffee TDS'd at 1.28. The floral, chrysanthemum-forward flavor profile was accentuated with additional sweetness of mango and passionfruit complemented with lemongrass and honey notes.

The coffee is very soluble, and to further test this, we pushed the grind a step coarser. To balance this, we dosed the coffee up slightly. This brew TDS'd at 1.45. Interestingly, this brew provided a different type of sweetness, that aligned more with that of in molasses, brown sugar, and chocolate, while some of the more tropical notes receded from the flavor profile. The black tea florals and citrus notes still proved to be the backbone of flavor. At a coarser grind setting this coffee was still delectable.

This coffee is a treat, and each of the brews were delicious in their own right. We enjoyed the coffee most at a higher ratio, finding the marriage of tropical fruit with floral chrysanthemum to be a beautiful taste profile. Ultimately, we recommend a lower dose/high ratio at a moderate grind setting on a flat bottom brewer.

Brewer	Grind	Dose	Yield	Ratio	Pre-infuse	Seconds	Total Brew Time	TDS	Extraction %
Kalita	10	18.5	300	16.22	50	40	3:23	1.42	19.57
v60	10	18.5	308	16.65	50	40	3:27	1.4	19.83
Kalita	10	17	300	17.65	50	40	3:53	1.28	19.2
Kalita	11	19	300	15.79	50	40	3:13	1.45	19.23

## Espresso Analysis by MJ Smith

Recipe 1: 18g dose, 37.5g yield, 27 seconds

Recipe 2: 19g dose, 39.5g yield, 29 seconds

Praise the espresso Gods, we have a new Ethiopian coffee coming soon to the espresso bar here at The Crown! In true washed process Ethiopian fashion, this coffee was packed full of beautiful florals and a delicate-yet-tangy fruity element, with just enough dessert-y sweetness to hold it down. I've got some super tasty recipes to discuss today, so yallah! Let's get right into it!

First up, we have a dose of 18g, a yield of 37.5g, and a pull time of 27 seconds. I don't know if there are any other synesthetes out there, but this shot tasted like the color magenta and reminded me of the time of year when cherry blossoms bloom. As for actual tasting notes, my top three that I picked out were pomegranate, rose, and cocoa powder. I also picked out some faint notes of pie crust and ginger blossom. Something tells me this shot would taste incredible with a little milk, say...in a cortado, for example.... Either way, it was a very delicious shot.

Next, we have a 19g dose, a 39.5g yield, and a 29 second pull time. This was my favorite shot of the day. Like I mentioned in my introduction, this is exactly what I expect when I think of a washed process Ethiopian espresso. Bursting with florals in the form of jasmine and honeysuckle, it also had some delightful notes of white grape, pear, sweet basil, and flan. I shared some with our friend Evan Gilman, and we had one of those magical moments where two people are perfectly calibrated on a coffee. Without even seeing my notes, the first things he said were "jasmine, honeysuckle, and grape"! This is always the best feeling, I swear. He also found some notes of marzipan floating around in there.

All in all, this coffee makes for a wonderful espresso. I found that it tasted best with a dose between 18 and 19 grams, and with a pull-time in the high 20s. The yield was a little more flexible and forgiving. Great on its own and when paired with milk, this coffee is sure to be a hit when it lands on our espresso bar in the coming weeks. Come on down and try it out for yourself, or you can just take my word for it and secure yours today! Enjoy!