

Crown Jewel Ethiopia White Honey

Worka Chelchele CJ1641

10.06.2025 | [See This Coffee Online Here](#)

Overview

This is a moderate intervention white honey processed coffee from Gedeo, Ethiopia, produced by smallholders organized around our processing and export partner, Tracon Coffee.

The flavor profile is elegant and iconic of southern Ethiopia, with a floral-forward profile accented by clean fruit sweetness and chocolatey structure. We tasted hibiscus, rose, grapefruit, pomegranate, and red apple candy.

Our roasters found this high-density coffee to generally prefer hotter, faster roasting styles as we might expect from a more traditionally washed coffee from the region.

When brewed, our baristas preferred low dosed pour-overs in a V60, to help mitigate the coffee's high solubility.

Taste Analysis by Isabella Vitaliano

With the recent opening of Royal's new lab in Addis, Ethiopia, the team has been able to take on higher volumes to efficiently approve and discover new coffee. A small team in the capital led by Haile Andualem makes up a portion of the sourcing, buying and approval for Ethiopian coffees. Joshua Wismans and Caitlin McCarthy-García are the other chaperones of this coffee based in California. With a well-rounded sourcing team in place, we get some of the best of the best in from the country.

This lot is a honey processed coffee from Worka Chechele is delicate and romantic coffee that brings flavors like green apple, jasmine and marzipan. On some roasts we found that the coffee can present as sturdier with dense chocolate candy, cake, peach rings and salted caramel. Not only is the coffee inherently good on its own, but also roasters have a lot of different directions they can take this coffee. Something a little bit deeper or the light aromatic flavors of lilac and macadamia.

Delicate rose and juicy grapefruit make up the majority of this profile. Layers of pomegranate, hibiscus and red apple candy take over for the upper tones. Together they make a sort of sweet, romantic profile. Your favorite bouquet of flowers, a chocolate sweet treat and deep dark fruits all in one.

The honey processes of this coffee keeps it soft and delicate, and is why all of these flavors together do feel so

romantic. Not an intense fruit bomb, this can ease your customers into the wonders of a delicate coffee and is a good medium for those that might not enjoy a natural coffee (yet).

Source Analysis by Chris Kornman

Sourcing coffee from Ethiopia, perhaps more so than anywhere else in the world, is a collaborative effort. With something like 95% of the coffee trees cultivated in the country under the husbandry of smallholder farmers, it literally takes a village to raise enough coffee cherry to export. The washing station (even in the case of minimal intervention naturals) is the local hub for most specialty coffee in the country. While farming families may dry coffee cherries on their patios or lawns to be roasted and enjoyed at home, export grade specialty coffee almost always requires centralized infrastructure.

In this case, that infrastructure—including logistics and farmer support strategies—is provided by Tracon Coffee, a 30+ year veteran organization of the coffee industry, and our trusted supply partner. Tracon's interests extend from farm and washing station ownership and management to running a dedicated cupping lab and a 30,000 square foot coffee processing facility that allows them to mill and finish coffee for export on-demand.

This year, in addition to our usual business of classic washed and natural coffees, we asked if Tracon had anything special in the works, and you better believe they delivered, sending us four of the most exciting coffees we've tasted this season.

This honey process coffee from Worka Chelchele, just east of Yirgacheffe town, is one of them. It's a master class in style and grace, a heavily depulped coffee—about as close as you can get to a washed coffee, just without formally fermenting and using all that water for rinsing. It's fruity in a more obvious way than classic washed Yirgacheffes, but without the berry-blast of traditional naturals, and it elegantly retains that *je ne sais quoi* of southern Ethiopian terroir, the iconic combination of cultivar and place that makes the regions' coffees distinctively floral, and time-honored as some of our favorites in the world.

From Royal's vantage point, there are at least three distinct locations and teams responsible for the decision making and sourcing strategy.

The first is Haile Andualem and the team in [Addis](#). The cupping lab there is our first look at quality, and our first point of contact with suppliers like Tracon Coffee, the processor and exporter of this lot. Not only is the lab a quality filter, but it's also a means of communication and a physical representation of the trust that is requisite in a complex trade relationship. Haile is our first contact, our inveterate initiator of relationships and, in this case, our gateway to extraordinary coffees.

The second is our trading team, specifically Caitlin McCarthy-García, Peter Radosevich, and Max Nicholas-Fulmer, who manage the bulk of our Ethiopian selections. In this case, Caitlin did the work of container-building, solicitation of samples, and general guidance and council through the process of selection and approval.

The last, for Crown Jewels, is of course the team here at The Crown. We're a collective, and decisions are usually semi-democratic, weighing various preferences while maintaining a high level of quality and considerations for menu variety, relationship loyalty, and more. For the 2024-25 sourcing season, Josh Wismans, our Tasting Room manager, took the lead on Ethiopia approvals.

The Tracon coffees we've secured this year, two honey processed selections and two low-oxygen naturals, are some of our favorites. This coffee is an ode to the complexity of coffee sourcing, a celebration of collaboration, and a delicious reminder of possibilities—both traditional and experimental—still latent in the fields of one of the world's most important producers of coffee, first in our hearts for its history and culture, its gift to the world.

Grower:	705 farmers organized around Tracon Coffee	Process:	White Honey Coffee cherries depulped with minimal mucilage, then dried on raised beds without formally fermenting
Region:	Worka Chelchele, Gedeo, Ethiopia	Cultivar(s):	Kurume, Dega, and Wolisho
Elevation:	1944 msal	Harvest:	November 2024 – January 2025

Green Analysis by Isabella Vitaliano & Chris Kornman

Some of the most exciting flavors of the season are in this lot. Density on this coffee is well above average, and the moisture content and water activity are in ideal ranges. On the green, it has the classic hues of green and yellow you would accept from a natural coffee. It has a slightly wider screen size spread between 17-14. This is on the smaller side, so be sure to watch out for uneven roasting in the roaster. On multiple different roasts we found this coffee to have some serious range.

Tracon have kindly shared with us the cultivars for this lot, a combination of the usual local landraces from the region. In this case, Kurume (Kudhume) is known for small fruit and compact size, while Dega (Amharic for a “high, cool place”) is a medium-sized tree that unsurprisingly prefers planting at higher elevations, and Wolisho (Walichu) is a tall tree with large fruits but inconsistent seasonal yields. (Credit to Getu Bekele and Tim Hill for their research and documentation in *A Reference Guide to Ethiopian Coffee Varieties*.)

Screen Size	Percent		Density
>20	1.37		(free settled) 702
19	3.03		(Sinar) 734
18	3		
17	26.03		Total Moisture Content
16	31.23		(Sinar) 10.5
15	23		
14	12.33		Water Activity
≤13			(Rotronic) 0.551 - 20.59

Diedrich IR-5 Analysis roasted by Doris Garrido, words by Chris Kornman

Machine: Diedrich IR-5

Batch Size: 4 lbs

These high-density Ethiopian beans, even if unconventionally processed as a white honey, are some of Doris’ favorites to roast. The only thing holding her back from placing a brick on the accelerator was the small batch size, just about 1/3 of the machine’s capacity at four pounds, a little less than our usual analysis roast.

She began with a very responsible looking 400F charge temperature and didn't hit the gas until about 30 seconds into roasting, starting at 70% and then ramping up briefly to 100% burner power as she approached color change, logged at 4:25 and a slightly lower temperature than average, just shy of 300F.

From there, she dropped the burner power to minimum (30%) and held steady with an open airflow, letting the coffee coast through Maillard (2:24 in duration), reaching the beginning of first crack at a brisk 6:49 and a slightly low 378.4F. The coffee's rate of rise slowed from 20F to 10F in the space of the 1:37 development time, achieving a wide differential between whole bean ColorTrack (65.93) and ground (55.6) a little on the lighter side but not extraordinary by any means.

The cup was bright and expressive. Doris and I both noted hibiscus notes, candy-like sweetness, and bright acidity. I thought (despite the color of this honey) about reddish fruits, from pomegranates to chocolate-covered cherries. This is a refined and exciting twist on the classic "washed Yirgacheffe" style profile, with plenty of lush florals and delicious clean fruit notes for the lovers of this style that want the volume turned up a little and the wavelength shifted ever so slightly in the direction of rose and violet.

The coffee shouldn't offer any trouble, particularly for roasters accustomed to classic washed southern Ethiopian coffees. Just keep an eye on the slightly lower temperatures for the onset of color change and first crack.

Aillio Bullet R1 IBTS Analysis by Evan Gilman

We use the RoasTime app and roast.world site to document our roasts on the Bullet. You can find our roast documentation below by searching on roast.world, or by clicking on the link below.

Take a look at our roast profiles below, as they are constantly changing!

So many more uniquely processed coffees are coming out of Ethiopia these days, and I feel honored to be a part of this release not only because of how much attention and care the team practiced in ushering this coffee in to our inventory, but also because it's the first time I've seen a white honey coffee from Ethiopia. I had no idea what to expect when roasting or when drinking, but pleasant surprises abound with this coffee, and I'm happy to relate my roast below.

I did want to handle this coffee as I would other coffees from the general region: with quick heat application at the start, and a measured approach to Maillard stage and post-crack development through the end of the roast. To that effect, I started with a lower charge temperature of 437F (mostly because of my smaller-than-usual batch size of 380g), P8 power, and F2 fan as has been my default lately. At peak rate of change, I increased fan speed to F3, and decreased power to P7 and a little after yellowing I increased fan speed once more to F4. My only other moves were to set fan to F5 and power to P6 at first crack and allow the coffee to roll through post-crack development. My only comment is that the coffee cracked at a lower temperature than I'm used to, 376F. I would advise roasters to take it very easy through Maillard to get even development.

This coffee was very easy to work with, though, and I achieved a full two minutes of development, with a final roast time of 8:22 and drop temperature of 395F. Everything was peachy keen – and peachy in the cup as well. That peach gummy note was accompanied by plenty of chocolate candy flavor, and a real zesty lemon acidity that kept the cup crisp and refreshing while being a classic profile representative of the region. It was an absolute pleasure working with this coffee for the first time!

You can follow along with my roast here at roast.world:
<https://roast.world/egilman/roasts/GDaPoofC8EOtOTAO5wllk>

Ikawa Pro V3 Analysis by Author's Name

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](#).

The high density roast of this coffee was good, it had lots of florals like lilac and shares the same sentiment iterated in the taste analysis: romantic. The low density roast brought out more full flavors and felt a little bit more sturdy or hefty.

Th entire team really appreciates how floral and substantial this coffee is, and the high density roast does a better job highlighting that. We highly recommend trying out the high density roast before anything else.

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 MJ Smith

I don't know how to explain it, but with tasting notes like caramel apple, funnel cake, and cotton candy, this coffee tastes like a trip to the county fair. At the same time, it also has some nice and fresh floral and citrus notes that round it out really beautifully. Honestly, this feels like the perfect coffee for the end of summer, beginning of fall. Like going for a walk on freshly fallen, crunchy leaves with that first cool breeze of the season and then coming home to the smell of warm and cozy desserts in the oven... Okay, okay, that's enough with the fancy imagery. Let's get into these brews, shall we?

The first brew I want to write about was made on the V60, with a dose of 19g, a grind of 11, and a final brew time of 4:15. The TDS on my first few brews was a bit high, and after making some adjustments, it was on this brew that I realized that this coffee might just be a bit more soluble than others. Don't get me wrong, they tasted good, but you could tell that they were definitely on the heavier side. We made the first few on a Kalita Wave, and they were just a little too heavy, but the V60 really cleaned it up a bit. I tasted notes of sesame, macadamia, green apple, ginger blossom, and mint. Some of the rest of the crew picked up some additional notes of marzipan, tahini, caramel, lime zest, and jasmine.

This next brew was the class favorite. We kept the brew device and grind size the same, but we dropped the dose down a little bit to 18g, which seemed to give it the room it needed to really shine. Personally, I got notes of cotton candy, lavender, apple blossom, ripe stone fruit, funnel cake, and dark chocolate. Some notes from the rest of the crew included jasmine tea, mint, peach rings, caramel, and then simply "juicy!"

All in all, this really is just a really, really delicious coffee, and it's highly possible that you will really, really regret not buying some for yourself. As for our brew recommendations, we liked it best with a lower dose on a V60 due to the higher solubility. This really is a fantastic coffee. I hope you enjoy it as much as we did!

Method	Grind (EKS43)	Dose (g)	H2O (g)	Ratio	Bloom (g)	Bloom (s)	Total Brew Time	TDS	Ext %
V60	11	19	300	15.79	50g	40s	4:15	1.52	20.30%
V60	11	18	300	16.67	50g	40s	4:35	1.36	19.71%