

Introduction to coffee

A TRAINING GUIDE



D A R K W O O D S
C O F F E E



SPECIES & VARIETY

Just as the many grape varieties give us different styles of wine, coffee has many varieties and flavours. The two key species of coffee that we drink are Arabica and Robusta, although many others do exist such as Liberica and Excelsa.



ARABICA	ROBUSTA
FLAVOUR PROFILE Citrus/higher acidity Cleaner/sometimes floral Lighter body Lighter crema	FLAVOUR PROFILE Lower acidity Earthy and round Richer body Darker heavier crema
GREEN BEAN IDENTITY Green in colour General oval in shape (beetle)	GREEN BEAN IDENTITY Brown in colour Generally rounder in shape (ladybird)
KEY CHARACTERISTICS Lower in caffeine Grown at higher altitude	KEY CHARACTERISTICS Twice the caffeine Grown at lower altitude
COMMON VARIETIES Typica, Bourbon, Caturra, Gesha, Pacas, Catuai	COMMON VARIETIES Known as Conilon in Brazil

THE COFFEE CHERRY

CHERRY ANATOMY

1. GREEN BEAN

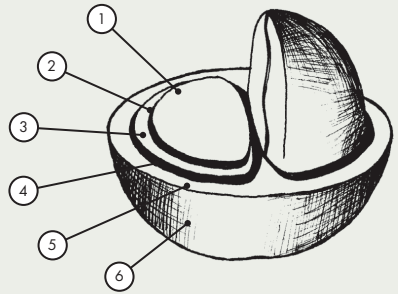
2. SILVER SKIN

3. PARCHMENT

4. MUCILAGE

5. PULP

6. CHERRY SKIN



PROCESSING

Processing refers to the way we extract green beans from the coffee cherry. Three main methods are used to do this, the most common of which are the wet (washed) process and the dry (natural) process. The choice of processing method has a profound impact on the potential flavour and body of our green coffee.

WASHED PROCESS

Pulp and skins are mechanically removed from the ripe cherries. The beans, still in their parchment skins and covered with sticky mucilage are put into tanks of water for a few days to ferment. The mucilage is washed from the beans and then they are dried in the sun ("sun-dried") or in drying rooms. Variations in the length of water-soaking or drying time can influence different degrees of fruit character in the green beans.

PULPED NATURAL/HONEY PROCESS

This process sits between the two other methods. First the outer cherry skin is mechanically removed but then, rather than being washed the beans are left to dry in the sun, still covered with their parchment and mucilage. Known as Pulped Natural in it's native Brazil, this method has gained popularity and is now used worldwide. Outside Brazil it is normally referred to as Honey Processing after the Spanish word "miel", which means "honey" and refers to the sticky, sweet mucilage left on the bean. The method can be further categorised as "Yellow", "Red" or "Black" depending on how much mucilage is removed prior to drying.

DRY/NATURAL PROCESS

Whole ripe cherries are laid in the sun for several weeks whilst being turned regularly to prevent spoilage. The longer and more carefully managed the process, the sweeter and more intense the fruit flavours may become. After drying, the brittle outer skin is mechanically removed from the bean. Boozy or "funky" notes in natural coffees used to be considered defects but are now often valued for their contribution to cup character.



WASHED	HONEY	DRY
Characteristics Bright Clean Light Body Crisp	Characteristics Bright Sweet Medium Body Fruity	Characteristics Earthy/Funky Sweet Full Body Fruity

WORLD VIEW

NORTH AMERICA

TROPIC OF CANCER

'THE BEAN BELT'

CENTRAL/SOUTH AMERICA

TROPIC OF CAPRICORN

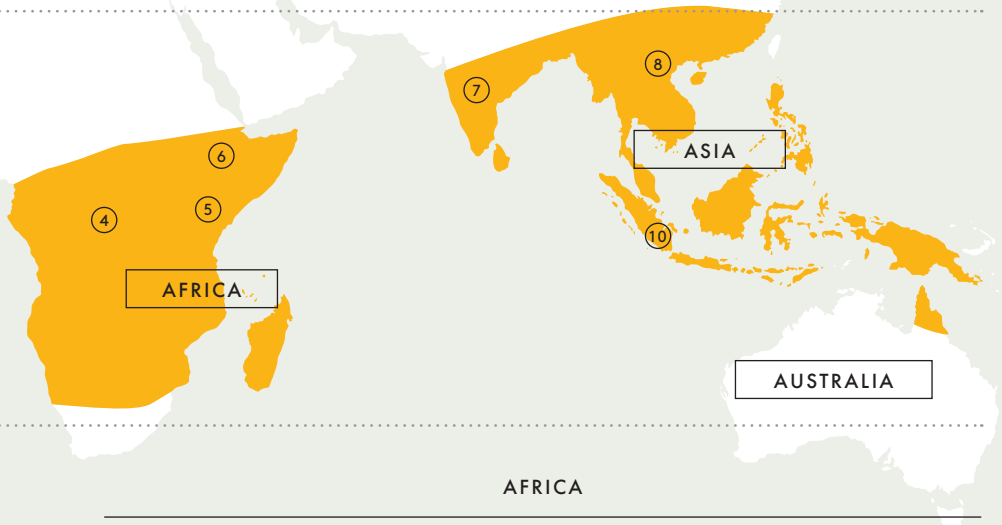
CENTRAL/SOUTH AMERICA

This region displays enormous diversity in coffee styles, from the bright, sweet and citrusy high altitude Arabicas of Central America (1) to the soft, wheaty and nutty coffees of Brazil (2). Home to the some of the biggest coffee farms in the world, Brazil is the world's largest coffee producer, it's lower altitude providing suitable growing conditions for both Arabica and Robusta (known locally as "Conilon"). Colombia (3), another large producer, straddles these two regions and dependent on altitude can produce coffees that range in style from nutty and sweet to floral and fruit-driven.

ASIA

Though primarily known for its Robusta, Asia is home to a growing market for domestically produced Arabicas (8), some of which are beginning to meet Speciality grade. Vietnam (9) is the world's second-largest producer of coffee, a fact that is little known due to its low-grade Robusta ending up primarily in either instant coffee or hidden away in cheaper blends. India (7) on the other hand is home to some of the world's best Robusta, which can be as sweet, rich and gentle as its low altitude Arabicas. Indonesian (10) coffee derives its trademark earthy, mellow spice and chocolate notes from a unique processing method called "Giling Basah" and exceptionally high levels of humidity.

EUROPE



AFRICA

Home to both the tropical, humid lowlands of the Congo (4) and the drier, higher altitudes in and around Ethiopia (6), Africa is the birthplace of both Arabica and Robusta coffee. Evolving to suit these differing conditions, Arabica now grows worldwide where sufficient altitude protects this more delicate crop from the pests and diseases that are more prevalent in humid, lower lying regions where Robusta thrives.

Ethiopia produces some of the most striking and unusual coffees grown anywhere in the world, from intensely fruity or winey naturals to floral and jasmine scented washed coffees. Indeed the highly prized Gesha varietal takes its name and derives its style from the coffees of the Gesha mountains in the Yirgacheffe region. Further West, a cluster of countries that include Kenya (5), Burundi and Rwanda are famed for coffees that balance pleasingly high levels of sweetness, fruit and acidity.

ROASTING

The final link in the flavour chain is roasting. This process develops flavours and hopefully reveals the true potential hidden inside the green coffee. These coffees may be presented on their own (single-origin or single-estate) or blended together to create new flavour profiles. As coffee darkens in the roaster, sweetness, body and eventually bitterness increases whilst natural fruity acidity diminishes.



FRESHNESS

Roasted coffee will quickly oxidise, losing aromatic qualities and developing a stale, woody flavour. It is best stored in a cool, dry place away from strong odours and moisture. Fridges are nice and cold but far too wet for storing coffee. A freezer is better but it is generally agreed that in most cases, coffee is best enjoyed as fresh as possible.

HOW FRESH IS "FRESH"?

- In the bag*** It can be legally used up to 12 months from roasting but would be lifeless in the later months. It is best used in the first 2 months after roasting, but may benefit from a rest of one or two weeks before use in order to allow excess roast gases to escape ("gassing off").
- In the hopper*** Put in what you hope to use in a day and leave the remaining coffee in it's bag, wound down and fastened with a clip or elastic band.
- Once ground*** Use immediately!



DARKWOODS COFFEE LTD
HOLME MILLS . WEST SLAITHWAITE ROAD . MARSDEN
WEST YORKSHIRE . UK . HD7 6LS

T: +44 (0)1484 843 141
DARKWOODSCOFFEE.CO.UK