

ROASTER'S DICTIONARY



A

ACERBIC A taste fault in brewed coffee that leaves an acrid and sour taste. Often the result of leaving brewed coffee on heat.

ACIDITY A pleasing piquant or tangy quality characteristic of high-altitude coffees. Acidity is a perceived taste quality—it is not a measure of pH. Citric, malic and lactic acids are three of the most pleasing and predominant of the hundreds of acids found in coffee.

ACIDY A desirable taste that is nippy and sharp.

ACRID An irritating and piercing taste associated with harsh, bitter and pungent sensations. Sometimes found in over-roasted coffees.

AFRICAN BEDS Raised flat-bed structures, usually made of wood with a metal screen, on which parchment coffee is dried. Used as an alternative to patio drying, and notable for the fact that they allow more airflow to pass through the coffee during drying.

AFTERBURNER A device attached to a roaster that incinerates smoke and odor.

AFTERTASTE The mind's second opinion and lingering memory of a coffee. The nose and taste sensation after swallowing. Also: Finish

AGED Coffee held at origin in parchment to mellow the character or mature the flavors under controlled conditions.

AGTRON SCALE A number system for characterizing degree of roast by measuring coffee's luminance on a white to black scale. Also: Agtron Rating

AIR QUENCHING The use of rapid airflow to stop the roast and cool the coffee upon the completion of roasting.

AIR ROASTER A roasting apparatus that utilizes forced hot air to simultaneously agitate and roast green coffee beans. Also: Fluidized Bed Roaster, Fluid-Bed Roaster, Sivetz Roaster

ALKALINE A secondary taste sensation related to pungent.

ALQUEIRE A traditional unit of volume and land measurement. In terms of volume, it is equivalent to about 13.8 liters or 12.5 U.S. dry quarts. One alqueire also equals a variety of land measurements ranging from 0.35 acres to 24 acres.

AMERICAN ROAST A traditional term for a medium roast characterized by a moderately brown color and dry bean surface. Generally falls between 420 and 440 degrees F when reading bean temperature.

APPELLATION A distinct term denoting a geographic growing region having noticeably distinct flavor attributes.

AQUAPULP METHOD A coffee processing method in which the pulp or mucilage is scrubbed from the beans by machine. Also: Demucilage, Lavado, Washed Process, Wet Process.

ARABICA A traditional species of coffee originating in Ethiopia. There are many varieties, including typica and bourbon.

AROMA The fragrance of brewed coffee.

ARROBA A measure of volume used in Spanish-speaking countries, equal to about 25 pounds.

ASTRINGENT A drying sensation on the

tongue most often caused by the presence of immature beans in the coffee.

AUTOMATION The automatic operation or control of any equipment, process or system.



B

BACTERIAL BLIGHT A coffee disease that can occur when wet and cold conditions prevail.

BAG A burlap sack of coffee. Bag weight differs by country of origin, but is traditionally 132 or 152 pounds. Also: Bale

BAGGY An off-taste or smell similar to that of burlap bags. Can be due to a storage problem or biological issue.

BAKED Bland, tasteless or flat. Often the result of coffee roasted too slowly at too low a temperature.

BALANCED Denoting a pleasing combination of two or more primary taste sensations. Containing all the basic characteristics to the right extent and aesthetically pleasing. Also: Round

BASIC TASTES Sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami.

BATCH ROASTER Apparatus that roasts a given quantity of coffee at a time. Unlike continuous roasters, batch roasters have an identifiable start and stop time to each roast. See also: Continuous Roaster

BEAN PROBE Any measuring probe positioned on a roaster to enable the operator to read external bean temperature.

BEAN TEMPERATURE The external temperature of the coffee bean during the

roast cycle. Generally used as the control temperature for the roasting process.

BENEFICIO A Central American coffee term for a coffee-processing establishment, such as a wet mill.

BIRD FRIENDLY A certification that designates that a coffee has been grown in accordance with the Smithsonian Institution's Migratory Bird Center's guidelines, which help protect bird habitat through shade-grown coffee and other environmental focuses.

BITTER A harsh, unpleasant taste perceived at the back of the tongue. All coffees have a slight bitterness that is characteristic of the roasting process, and moderate bitterness can be balanced by sweetness. Commonly found in dark roasts or overly extracted coffees.

BLACK BEAN A common physical defect of green beans, resulting in a bean that is at least 50 percent black externally or internally. Usually the result of an infection during bean development or the prolonged fermentation of cherries that have been picked up from the ground.

BLAND Lacking in positive taste characteristics. Not highly flavored. Also: Dull, Mild, Tasteless

BLEND A mixture of two or more coffees that differ by growing regions, districts, farms, varieties, processing methods or roasts.

BODY The tactile impression of the weight or viscosity of coffee in the mouth. Also: Mouthfeel

BOUQUET Usually a reference to an overall aroma impression of brewed coffee. The total aromatic profile of the initial fragrance of the dry ground coffee plus the aroma of the brewed coffee and the nose impression when drinking. Also: Fragrance

BOURBON A botanical variety of *Coffea arabica* that features broad leaves and small, dense fruit.

BRACKISH A taste sensation that is distasteful, bitter and salty.

BREAKING THE CRUST During cupping, the action of breaking apart the cap of coarse grounds on the top of a cup prior to tasting.

BROKENS Coffee beans that were cracked or broken during processing; considered a defect.

BURNT A bitter, smoky or tarry flavor characteristic, often found in brewed coffee that has been over-roasted.

BUTTERY A full and rich flavor with an oily body or texture.



C & F Common abbreviation for Cost and Freight, which is a buying term that means the seller owns the coffee goods until they are loaded on vessel and that the selling price includes all costs so far plus cost of ocean freight.

C MARKET The ICE or Intercontinental Exchange (NYSE: ICE) commodities exchange where arabica coffee futures are bought and sold.

CAFFEINE (C₈H₁₀N₄O₂) A bitter white alkaloid found in coffee beans and leaves, having certain drug-like properties.

CAFFEINE CONTENT The amount of caffeine in a product. One cup of coffee contains about 1.5 grains of caffeine.

CAFFEOL A volatile aromatic conglomerate formed during roasting.

CARAMELIZED A burnt-like flavor, as in cooked/browned sugar. A desirable taste note if complemented with a strong coffee flavor.

CARAMELLY The smell or taste of cooked sugars without any trace of burntiness.

CARBON DIOXIDE PROCESS (CO₂ PROCESS) A decaffeination process involving soaking green beans in highly compressed CO₂ to extract the caffeine. The caffeine is then removed from the CO₂ using activated carbon filters and is reused to extract more caffeine from the coffee.

CATIMOR A modern variety of *Coffea arabica* that is a cross between caturra and a natural arabica-robusta hybrid. Designed to be high yielding and disease resistant.

CATUAI A modern variety of *Coffea arabica* that is a hybrid of mondo novo and caturra. This high-yield plant can grow in high densities and is resistant to strong winds and rains.

CATURRA A modern variety of the *Coffea arabica* species discovered in Brazil that generally matures more quickly, produces more coffee, and is more disease resistant than older, traditional arabica varieties.

CAUSTIC A burning, sour taste sensation.

CERTIFICATION A way of showing that a coffee is grown, harvested, processed and/or roasted within the guidelines of a specific set of social or environmental values. Can also be used to mean coffee that meets origin certification, national certification or other political district certifications.

CHAFF Flakes of the innermost skin of the coffee fruit that remain on the green bean after processing, and which float free during roasting.

CHAFF COLLECTOR The part of any roasting system designed to collect the chaff. Often, but not always, a cyclone configuration.

CHEMICALLY Term used to describe a taste or aroma suggesting a phenolic or hydrocarbon presence. It may be inherent in the coffee or the result of contamination.

CHERRY The fruit of the coffee tree. Each cherry contains two regular coffee beans or one peaberry.

CHOCOLATEY A positive taste or aroma reminiscent of unsweetened, semi-sweet or milk chocolate, cocoa and/or vanilla. Also: Chocolaty

CINNAMON An underlying spice accent sometimes detected in the aroma. Also, a flavor nuance in light roasts.

C.I.F. Common term for Cost, Insurance and Freight, which is a buying term similar to c & f, except that the seller absorbs the insurance premium.

CINNAMON ROAST A traditional term for a very light roast, used mostly for cupping, with a final roast temperature around 420 degrees F. There is very little or no oil on the bean surface.

CITY ROAST A traditional term for a light to medium commercial roast.

CLEAN The term "clean cup" refers to a coffee free of taints or faults. Does not necessarily imply clarity of flavor impression.

COCOA Can be a positive attribute, when it has a sweetish chocolate smell, or a taint of completely stale roasted coffee. Not to be confused with chocolatey.

COFFEE BERRY BORER A coffee pest that eats coffee beans throughout the stages of both its and its host plant's development. Can cause defects in raw coffee. Also: Broca

COFFEE BERRY DISEASE A coffee disease caused by the virulent strain of *Colletotrichum coffeanum*. The fungus lives in the bark of the coffee tree and produces spores, which attack the coffee cherries. Can cause defects in raw coffee.

COFFEE BLOSSOM An aromatic scent found in ground coffee that is reminiscent of the white flowers of the coffee tree, similar to jasmine.

COFFEE CLASSIFICATION A way of sorting, or grading, coffee that considers a number of factors including quantity, type and severity of defects, bean size and cup

quality, green coffee aroma, and bean color. Also: Coffee Grading

COFFEE LEAF RUST A coffee disease that is spread by spores from lesions on the underside of the plant by wind and rain. Originally discovered in Brazil in 1970, it is now in most coffee-growing countries. Can cause defects in raw coffee.

COFFEE OIL The volatile coffee essence developed in a bean during roasting.

COFFEE TRIER A special pointed device for removing a sample of green coffee beans through the bag wall without opening the bag. Also, as part of a roasting machine, a metal scoop that is used to catch small samples of roasting coffee for examination during the roasting process. Also: Trier, Tryer

COMMERCIAL COFFEE Mass produced coffee of average to good quality that is classified under premium or specialty grade levels.

COMPLEX Describes a balance and intensity of flavor. The impression of a coffee with an interesting mix of flavors, undertones and aftertastes. Also: Deep

CONTAINER A large reusable box used to transport coffee or other cargo. Quantity is governed by the container size for maximum allowable weight, usually up to 275 bags at 69 kg, or 320 bags at 60 kg.

CONTINUOUS ROASTER Large commercial coffee roaster that roasts coffee continuously rather than in batches.

COOLING TRAY A piece of equipment, usually circular and equipped with stirring arms, which agitates fresh-roasted coffee to cool it to room temperature and may be used to halt the roasting process in roasters not equipped with water quenching.

CREAMY A measure of body somewhat less than buttery.

CREOSOTY A taste sensation related to pungent. A bitter, burnt vegetal taste found

in the aftertaste of some dark-roasted coffees. Similar to tarry.

CUP OF EXCELLENCE A coffee competition and auction, seeking the absolute highest quality single lot of coffee from a particular harvest, judged by national and international juries.

CUPPING The sensory evaluation of coffee beans for flavor and aroma profile. The beans are ground, water is poured over the grounds, and the liquid is tasted both hot and as it cools.

CUPPING SPOON A spoon, about the size of a bouillon soup spoon, but perfectly round, used to taste coffee during a cupping session. Made of silver or stainless steel so as to have no flavor or aroma impact.

CURRENT CROP Green coffee from the recent harvest available after processing. Also: New Crop



DATA LOGGER Equipment used to record the time and temperature data during the roast process. May be PC, PLC or PDA based.

DATA LOGGING The act of compiling time and temperature roast data in order to assist an operator in profile roasting. May be manual or automated.

DECAFFEINATION The process of removing the caffeine from coffee.

DEFECTS Unpleasant flavor characteristics in green beans caused by problems during picking, processing, drying, sorting, storage, transportation, roasting or packaging. Also: Flavor Defect, Visual Defect

DEGASSING A natural process in which recently roasted coffee releases carbon dioxide gas.

DELICATE Pleasing to taste or smell. A

sensation that is mild, subtle and sometimes fleeting. Also: Gentle, Mellow

DEMUCILAGE A procedure in which the sticky fruit pulp, or mucilage, is removed from freshly picked coffee beans by scrubbing in machines. Also: Aquapulp, Mechanical Demucilaging, Water Process, Wet Process

DILUTION AND DISPERSION A process used to lessen the nuisance impact of coffee roasting emissions. This process involves mixing emissions with fresh air.

DIRECT PROCESS A decaffeination process that involves applying a solvent directly to the green beans after the caffeine has been brought to the surface by steam or hot water.

DIRECT TRADE Purchase and sale of coffee negotiated and executed directly between roaster and producer.

DIRTY An undesirable, unclean smell or taste. Can imply a defect, such as sourness, earthiness or mustiness.

DOUBLE-PICKED Coffee that has been hand-picked twice to remove imperfect beans, pebbles and other imperfections.

DRUM ROASTER A coffee roaster where the beans are agitated inside a metal drum. The heat is provided by a flow of hot air through the drum, as well as by the hot metal of the drum.

DRYING CYCLE The first phase of the roasting process, when the temperature of the beans rises to 100 degrees centigrade. During this phase, the beans change from a bright green color to a pale yellow.

DRY PROCESS Coffee process that involves harvesting and drying the beans while still in cherry. Dry-processed coffees often have less acidity and heavier body than their washed counterparts.

DULL Term used to describe a coffee lacking in character. Also: Flat, Unimpressive



EARTHY A complex mustiness found in certain dry-processed, low-acid coffees. Often considered a taint in washed coffees. Also: Dirty, Groundy

EAST AFRICAN FINE COFFEE ASSOCIATION (EAFCA) An association of coffee producers, processors, marketing people and organizations in a number of East and South African countries, as well as others from outside Africa.

EMISSIONS CONTROL The process of regulating roasting emissions, typically in accordance with regional environmental, smoke or odor regulations.

ENVIRONMENT TEMPERATURE/DRUM TEMPERATURE Temperature in the roasting chamber during the roast cycle. Sometimes used as the control temperature.

ETHYL ACETATE (C₄H₈O₂) A colorless, volatile, flammable liquid having a fragrant, fruitlike odor. Used as a decaffeinating agent.

EUROPEAN PREPARATION In Central America, denotes use of electronic sorting machines to remove defects; in Colombia, denotes 90 percent or more above screen size 15.

EX DOCK The buyer takes ownership of the coffee when it is unloaded from a ship in a particular port, and assumes responsibility for all charges thereafter, including transportation.

EXHAUST TEMPERATURE Temperature of the exhaust stream of a coffee roaster.

EX WAREHOUSE The buyer takes ownership of the coffee where it is stored at the warehouse and assumes responsibility for all charges thereafter, including transportation. Buyers must have their own account with the warehouse, as the warehouse will apply out-loading charges—which may

include palletizing, shrink-wrapping and strapping—when the coffee is picked up. Also: XW, EX-W



FAIR TRADE A certification that designates a coffee has been grown in accordance with the guidelines of the Fairtrade Labelling Organizations. These guidelines are geared toward providing a living wage to farmers in coffee cooperatives. Also: TransFair USA, TransFair Canada

FCA Free Carrier. With this agreement, a seller pays for the coffee to be transported to a specific place, where it is transferred to the buyer or a representative of the buyer.

FERMENTATION The stage during the wet method of coffee processing when the sticky pulp is loosened from the skinned coffee beans by natural enzymes while the beans rest in tanks.

FERMENTED A sour or acrid vinegar taste or smell. Obvious and unpleasant. A common processing error.

FINCA Spanish for “estate,” a specific coffee farm, either large or small. Also: Cafetal

FIRST CRACK The second stage of coffee roasting. Once the beans reach 160 degrees centigrade, complex chemical reactions occur, which cause an audible cracking sound.

FLAT Coffee that has been exposed to oxygen for too long. Often tastes stale or cardboardy. Lacks intensity. Can also refer to acidity, in which case it means light or no acidity. Also: Stale

FLAVOR PROFILE The total impression of aroma, acidity, body, sweetness and aftertaste. Usually described with specific major taste impressions.

FLAVORED COFFEE Roasted coffee that has been mixed with flavoring agents, or brewed coffee mixed with flavored syrup.

FLOATER Green bean defect characterized by a faded or bleached appearance. Can introduce fermented, bitter or straw-like flavors in the cup.

FLUID-BED ROASTER A roasting apparatus that utilizes forced hot air to simultaneously agitate and roast green coffee beans. Also: Fluidized-Bed Roaster, Air Roaster, Sivetz Roaster

FOB Free on Board. Under FOB terms, the seller maintains fiscal and practical liability for the coffee until it passes over the ship's rails. At this point, the buyer typically issues payment in full and takes over fiscal and practical liability.

FORWARD SALE/PURCHASE A mechanism of selling or purchasing green beans at a specific time period in the future. The agreement is specific to quantity, quality, price or price differential, and time period for shipment or delivery.

FOT Free on Truck. The seller pays out-loading charges through to loading on the truck, and the buyer pays all charges after coffee is loaded on the truck.

FRAGRANCE The smell of dry ground or whole bean coffee before brewing. Also: Bouquet

FRENCH ROAST A traditional term for a very dark roast, with a stop temperature around 460 to 465 degrees F. In this roast, the beans are the color of bittersweet chocolate and are usually covered in oil. Also: Dark Roast

FRESH A recent roast, often characterized by a distinctly pleasing aroma.

FRUITY Denotes the aromatic scents of citrus or berry fruit in the cup. Also, a flavor taint bordering on fermented.

FULL BAG Coffee sold in its country of origin bag weight. Generally 60 or 70 kilos.

FULL CITY ROAST A traditional term for a medium commercial roast, with a stop temperature around 440 to 445 degrees F.

Also: North Italian Roast

FUTURES The purchase of certified green coffee from or sale to the ICE (InterContinental Exchange). Priced as U.S. cents per pound. The pricing mechanism used to establish fixed contracts price for green coffee contracts. Trading months are March, May, July, September and December.



GEISHA A variety of *Coffea arabica* that features large fruits and long, curvy beans.

GRADE The level of quality given to a particular coffee based on factors such as defects (amount and severity), bean size and moisture content, color appearance and aroma. Can be seen as numbers (e.g. Grade 1), letters (e.g. Grade AA) or a combination of the two (e.g. 1AAA).

GRASSY A flavor taint indicating a slight chlorophyll or herbal taste or odor. Can be found in green coffee that has not been sufficiently dried, as well as in under-roasted coffees. Also: Green, Hay-like

GREEN COFFEE Unroasted coffee beans. Also: Raw

GREEN COFFEE ASSOCIATION An association that works in conjunction with the coffee, sugar and cocoa exchange to help benefit the coffee industry.



HACIENDA Farm, ranch or coffee plantation.

HARD Coffee without sweetness, usually considered a cup defect

HARD BEAN (HB) A term used to describe coffees grown at relatively high altitudes, usually 4,000–4,500 feet.

HARRAR Dry-processed, or natural, coffees of Ethiopia. Grown in eastern Ethio-

pia near the city of Harrar, these coffees are usually fragrant and light bodied with complex acidity. Also: Harar, Harer, Mocha Harrar, Moka Harrar, Mocca Harrar

HARSH Crude raw taste with the obvious presence of bitter and astringent compounds. Can taste caustic or medicinal.

HEAVY Quantitative term for body or mouthfeel.

HECTARE (HA) A customary metric unit of land area, equal to 100 acres. One hectare is a square hectometer, so the area of a square 100 meters on each side; exactly 10,000 square meters or approximately 2.47 acres.

HEIRLOOM A species of arabica that is more variable and genetically closer to wild coffee than other cultivars.

HERBY A taste sensation resembling the flavor or odor of herbs.

HIDY Unpleasant odor reminiscent of wet leather or wet dog. Can be caused by excessive heat during the drying process usually associated with coffees dried in mechanical dryers. Also: Fauna, Hidey

HIGH-GROWN Arabica coffees grown at altitudes of more than 3,000 feet.

HOME ROASTERS Any number of small coffee roasters manufactured specifically for the consumer/hobbyist market. Generally roasting 4 oz. or less, and electrically heated.

HULLING The process of removing the parchment and silver skin from washed coffees just prior to milling.



IMMATURE BEANS Small, malformed green beans with tightly attached silver-skin. Can taste astringent or grassy in the cup.

IMPERFECTIONS Defects in the green beans, such as broken beans, shells, quakers, etc. Coffee is graded by the number of imperfections in the sample. Also: Defects

INSECT DAMAGE A green bean defect characterized by signs of insect boring, nibbling or chomping.

INTENSITY Measure of the degree, strength, magnitude and total impression of sensory characters such as fragrance, aroma, acidity, sweetness and body.

INTERNATIONAL COFFEE ASSOCIATION (ICO) An intergovernmental organization for coffee that brings together producing and consuming countries to tackle the challenges facing the world coffee sector through international cooperation.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS OF OPERATION (ISO-1401 9000) International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is an international standard-setting body composed of representatives from national standards organizations. The organization produces worldwide standards (ISO standards) for industry and commerce, including coffee.

ITALIAN ROAST A traditional term for a darker commercial roast, with a stop temperature around 450 to 455 degrees F. The beans are usually the color of milk chocolate and are half-covered with oil droplets. Also: Vienna Roast, South Italian



KOSHER Fit or allowed to be eaten or used according to the dietary or ceremonial laws of Judaism. Certification for adherence to the laws governing kosher foods, including coffee.



LE NEZ DU CAFÉ A set of jarred scents

formulated to train professional coffee cuppers and roasters.

LEMON The fresh zippy scent or flavor of lemon peel or zest found in coffee.

LICORICE A candy-like smell or flavor found in coffee, characteristic of licorice root, anise or fennel.



MACHINE-DRIED A term used to describe coffee that has been mechanically dried, usually in large, rotating drums or cascading silos.

MALTY A flavor fault that produces the odor of roasted cereal grains, walnuts or maple.

MARAGOGYPE A variety of *Coffea arabica* distinguished by extremely large, porous beans and low yield. Also: Maragogipe, Elephant Bean

MATURE COFFEE Coffee held in a warehouse for two to three years. Mature coffee has been held longer than old crop coffee, but not as long as aged or vintage coffee.

MEDICINAL A flavor or odor, usually unpleasant, often chemically and/or astringent.

MELLOW Used to describe a sweet coffee that is well-balanced with low to medium acidity.

METALLIC Describes coffees that are metallic in flavor, usually caused by immature beans. May be accompanied by astringent or bitter tastes.

METHYLENE CHLORIDE (CH₂CL₂) A colorless, volatile liquid used as a decaffeination agent.

MILD A taste sensation associated with mellow. A smooth and soft or sweet washed coffee.

MILLING The mechanical removal of the entire dried fruit husk from dry-processed beans or the dry parchment skin from wet-processed beans.

MOLDY A visual or flavor defect caused by damp storage conditions.

MONDO NOVO A modern coffee variety that is a natural hybrid between typica and bourbon. Highly productive and disease-resistant.

MONSOONED COFFEE Coffee deliberately exposed to monsoon winds in an open warehouse to increase body and reduce acidity.

MOUTHFEEL Describes the sensation in the mouth of weight or viscosity. Also: Body

MUDDY A dull, indistinct flavor. Full of sediment, possibly from grounds.

MUSTY A smell associated with earthy. As a taint, the coffee will smell of a musty cellar. Slight mustiness is not always a taint, especially in aged or monsooned coffees.



NATIONAL COFFEE ASSOCIATION (NCA) The National Coffee Association of USA was founded in 1911, one of the earliest trade associations formed in the United States and the first trade association for the U.S. coffee industry.

NATURAL PROCESS Coffee processing method that involves removing the husk or fruit after the coffee fruit has been dried. By utilizing only ripe fruit and drying carefully, this method can produce coffees that are complex and fruity.

NEUTRAL Used to describe coffee that is fundamentally characterless, inoffensive or insipid, without virtue yet without defects.

NEW CROP Green coffee from the recent harvest available after processing. Also: Current Crop

NEW YORK BOARD OF TRADE (NYBOT) An international marketplace for agricultural and financial futures, including coffee and sugar.

NIPPY A taste sensation perceived from a very clean high-acidity coffee.

NON-LINEAR PROCESS CONTROL SYSTEM A roasting control system that uses a non-linear math function to define the roasting path. Usually more sophisticated than a linear process control system.

NOSE The combination of taste and smell when swallowing coffee. The aroma component of aftertaste. Most commonly caramelly, nutty or malty.

NUTTY The aromatic sensation of roasted nuts, often found in brewed coffee.



OILY Term used to describe the surface of roasted coffee; denotes darker roasts.

OLD-CROP Green coffee that has been held in a warehouse and is available in the later half of the harvest cycle, but still within the harvest year.

ORGANIC A term used to describe coffee that has been certified by a third party agency as having been grown and processed without the use of pesticides, herbicides or similar chemicals. Also: Certified-Organic Coffee, Organic Certified



PACAMARA A variety of *Coffea arabica* that is a cross between maragogype and pacas.

PACAS A variety of *Coffea arabica* that is a cross between caturra and bourbon; produces good yields and can perform at medium to high elevations.

PAPERY An off-taste suggesting the taste of wet paper or cardboard. Sometimes the result of paper filters or the decaffeination process.

PARCHMENT A thin, crumbly skin covering wet-processed coffee beans after they have been de-pulped and dried. Also: Pergamino

PARCHMENT COFFEE Wet-processed coffee with the dried parchment skin still covering the bean. The parchment is removed by milling prior to roasting. Also: In Parchment, En Pergamino

PAST CROP Green coffee that has been held in a warehouse and is available from the previous harvest year.

PAST-CROPPISH Said of coffees that have deteriorated in the green state before roasting and, thus, taste weakened, faded or toned down. Particularly with less acidity, a woody or papery flavor, and little body or aroma.

PATIO-DRIED Coffee dried by exposing it to the heat of the sun by spreading and raking it in thin layers on open patios. Also: Sun Dried

PEABERRY A small, round bean formed when only one seed, rather than the usual two, develops in a coffee cherry. Also: Caracol

PERFORATED DRUM A type of drum roaster with a drum that is fully perforated on the sides.

PETROLEUM Off-smell or taste usually originating from contamination. Often found in coffee stored in poorly manufactured bags.

PIQUANT A pronounced and pleasant pungent acidity; slightly tart or biting.

POINTED Coffee with a fine, acidic sharpness.

POTATOEY A disagreeable and unpleasant taste of raw potato.

PROCESSING The way in which coffee is prepared at origin. The type of processing, such as washed or dry processed, can determine the presence and strength of certain aromas and tastes in the coffee.

PROFILE An analysis of the temperature path of coffee during the roasting process, usually in the form of a time and temperature graph.

PROFILE ROASTING The science of controlling the rate of heat transfer into the coffee during the roasting process, with the goals of repeatability and optimized flavor. Also, as a verb, taking a measurable and repeatable action during the roast process to affect a change in the taste of the coffee by changing the roast profile.

PROFILE ROASTING SYSTEM A roasting control system utilizing electronic process control hardware to manipulate the burner, airflow and/or drum rotation speed.

PROFILING The act of profile roasting and/or the act of making a hard copy profile of a roast temperature path, often in the form of a graph.

PRUNY The fruit-like taste reminiscent of prune found in some dark-roast coffees.

PULP The part of the coffee cherry that is removed during processing. Also: Mucilage

PULPING Removing the outermost skin of the coffee cherry.

PUNGENT A primary taste sensation related to the presence of bitter compounds. Usually from phenolic compounds that range in taste from creosoty to alkaline.

PYROLYSIS During roasting, the chemical breakdown of fats and carbohydrates into the delicate oils that provide the aroma and much of the flavor of coffee.



Q-CERTIFIED An independent confirmation of quality that can truly be deemed specialty. Green coffee samples are submitted to an In-Country Partner (ICP), and three licensed Q Graders (professionally accredited cuppers) cup and score the coffee. Coffees that meet the standards for green, roasted, and cup quality are issued a Q certificate. If a coffee does not meet specialty standards, it receives a technical report that explains why.

QUAKERS Blighted and underdeveloped coffee beans.

QUAKERY A peanutty flavor caused by unripe or underdeveloped beans. They appear very light when roasted.

QUINTAL A unit of weight. When applied to coffee, it is generally around 101.4 pounds, but this varies from country to country.



RAINFOREST ALLIANCE A certification that designates that a coffee has been grown in accordance with the guidelines of Rainforest Alliance. These guidelines are geared toward ecosystem protection and conservation, as well as sustainable social practices.

RANCID Having a rank odor or taste as that of old oil. A sour and unpleasant smell.

RANK A dirty, unpleasant flavor due mainly to contamination or overfermentation.

RESONANT Descriptive term for a long, pleasing aftertaste. Also: Recurring

RIADO Slight Riroy character.

RICH Mainly a descriptor for bouquet. Also used to indicate depth and complexity of flavor, big pleasing aroma and full body.

RIROY A harsh, medicinal or slightly iodized, phenolic or carbolic flavor. Often considered a taint but appreciated by others for blends.

ROAST INITIATION The third stage of roasting, when beans swell to around 150 percent of their normal size. Elements within the beans begin to caramelize, giving the beans their brown color.

ROAST STYLE The way in which coffee beans are roasted. Can be described as light, medium and dark, as well as in traditional terms like Cinnamon and Full City.

ROASTERS GUILD A trade guild of the Specialty Coffee Association of America consisting of specialty roasters dedicated to the craft of roasting quality coffee.

ROBUSTA A high-bearing, disease resistant coffee species that produces coffee with higher caffeine content than *Coffea arabica*. Also: *Coffea canephora*

ROUGH An unpleasant taste sensation related to sharp.

ROUND Commonly used term for a balanced and rich coffee. Also: Full

ROUNDED A quantitative descriptor for a moderate bouquet.

RUBBERY Burnt rubber odor characteristic of some robustas and noted in some dark roasts.



SALTY One of the basic taste sensations, yet saltiness rarely comes to the forefront in coffee taste. When it does, it is just perceptible.

SCORCHED A roasting defect resulting in an odor taint that gives the coffee brew a slight smoky-burnt aftertaste with an overall under-developed taste. Can be seen on the surface of roasted coffee.

SECOND CRACK The stage in roasting where the beans become brittle due to dehydration. As a result, the beans crack and begin to carbonize, producing the burnt characteristics of extremely dark roasts.

SET POINT PROCESS SYSTEM A roasting control system that utilizes simple on/off logic, similar to a thermostat.

SHARP Intense flavor taint resulting in salty and soury compounds. Sharp toward salty is termed rough. Sharp toward soury is astringent. When used in reference to acidity, it can be a complimentary term relating to tangy and nippy.

SHELL Green bean defect characterized by seashell-shaped beans.

SILVERSKIN The thin, innermost skin of the coffee fruit. During roasting, any silverskin left on the bean turns into chaff.

SINGLE-ESTATE Term used to describe coffee produced by a single farm, single mill or single group of farms, and marketed separately from other coffees. Also: Estate-Grown, Single-Farm

SINGLE-ORIGIN Term used to describe unblended coffee from a single country, region or crop.

SIZE CLASSIFICATION A way of sorting coffee by the size of the green bean. The beans fall through screens with round holes of various dimensions. Sizes range from 13, which is the smallest, to 20, which is very large. Peaberries are sized with screens that have oval-shaped holes from 9 to 13. Also: Screen Size

SLACK BAG A bag of coffee that is not completely full or has been torn and re-stitched.

SLURP AND SPIT The term for slurping the coffee from the spoon, tasting it and spitting it out.

SMOKY A taste sensation reminiscent of smoked food. Usually a positive descriptor, and more common in dark roasts.

SMOOTH A quantitative descriptor for moderately low-bodied coffee. Also referring to a full-bodied, low-acidity coffee.

SOAPY An off-taste similar to earthy and dirty.

SOFT Low acidity coffees that have a light or very light acidity just short of bland. A mild coffee with a dry aftertaste.

SOFT BEAN Term used to describe coffees grown at lower altitudes.

SOLID DRUM A type of drum roaster that has a drum with solid sides.

SOUR One of the basic tastes: sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami.

SOURCE The place of a coffee's origin. Also used as a verb, as in "to source coffee" from a particular place.

SOURS Visual green bean defect typified by yellow, brown or red beans. Often the result of improper agricultural or processing techniques. Can result in sour or fermented flavors in the cup.

SOURY A distinctly sour, rank or rancid taste often due to improper processing. Not to be confused with acidity and acidity.

SPECIALTY COFFEE Coffee that tastes good. Coffee produced with care and sophistication to achieve recognized quality. Also refers to green coffee with a limited amount of allowable defects.

SPECIALTY COFFEE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (SCAA) An association of specialty coffee roasters, wholesalers, retailers, importers, growers and manufacturers.

SPICY Said of aroma or flavor suggestive of spices. Sometimes associated with aromatic, piquant or pungent. Suggesting cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, etc.

SPLIT BAG Term used to define the sale of a coffee at any amount less than full bag.

SPOT SALE An on-the-spot purchase of

green coffee subject to current availability and pricing.

STAGE PROCESS SYSTEM A roasting control system that follows a predefined path or program.

STALE An unpleasant taste fault found in old and deteriorated roasted coffee. Roasted coffee that has faded in quality after excessive storage or exposure to air. Also: Flat

STRAWY A taste taint that gives a distinct hay-like and woody flavor.

STRENGTH Usually a term quantifying brewed coffee. Strength is conveyed through concentration of soluble solids in suspension, not the prominence of any one characteristic.

STRICTLY HARD BEAN (SHB) Coffee grown above 4,500 feet.

STRONG A term indicating strength derived from greater soluble solids in the extraction or intensity of any one characteristic of note. It is also used as an adjective to virtue or defect, as in "a strong sour taste" or "a strong fine aroma."

SUN-DRIED Term used for coffee that is dried by exposing it to the heat of the sun by spreading and raking it in thin layers on drying racks or patios.

SUN-GROWN Describes coffee that is not grown under a shade canopy.

SUPER SACK A method of shipping and/or storing coffee in large sacks, containing 1 ton, 1 metric ton or another large quantity.

SUSTAINABLE COFFEE A slightly vague description for coffees grown and sold in an environmentally and socially sustainable way.

SWEET One of the basic tastes. Also the recognition of sweetness or the absence of bitterness in a coffee. Said of a smooth, palatable coffee, free of taints or harshness.

SWISS WATER PROCESS A trade-

marked decaffeination method that removes caffeine from coffee beans using hot water, steam and activated charcoal.



TAINT A negative taste, fragrance or aroma occurring anywhere in the coffee chain.

TANGY A somewhat sour and fruity taste sensation.

TARRY A taste fault giving a burnt character.

TART A sour taste sensation between tangy and soury.

TASTE The total sensory impression of the combined basic tastes of sweet, sour, salty, bitter and umami.

TASTE WHEEL A systematic terminology used by cuppers for describing the faults, basic tastes and unusual flavors of coffees. Devised by Ted Lingle of the SCAA and Dolf DeRovira of Flavor Dynamics.

TERROIR The personality and character in aroma and taste represented by a coffee's origin. An overall flavor profile common to a particular growing region, district, altitude or processing style.

THICK Term to indicate an extremely heavy body.

THIN Coffee that lacks body or flavor.

TIPPED Coffee beans that are charred on the ends due to a roasting fault, usually starting the roasting process with an excessively high roaster drum temperature or simply roasting too fast for the type of coffee.

TOASTY Having the aroma of fresh toast or fresh-baked bread.

TRIANGLE CUPPING A system of cupping where the cupper tastes three cups of coffee to identify the one that is different

from the other two. Used as a skill-building technique, as well as to compare and contrast coffee samples.

TURPENY A medicinal aftertaste reminiscent of turpentine, resin or camphor-like substances.

TYPICA A botanical variety of *Coffea arabica*. The trees are conical in shape and can reach heights of 15 feet. Widely considered to be the original arabica variety.



UMAMI Commonly called the “fifth taste,” this word describes the flavor that is often thought of as pungent, savory, tangy or meaty.

UNDER-DEVELOPED Coffee roasted too slowly at too low a temperature.

UTZ CERTIFIED A certification that designates that a coffee has been grown in accordance with the guidelines of UTZ Certified. These guidelines are geared toward responsible coffee production and sourcing.



VAPID Lacking character and liveliness. Particularly lacking acidity, tang or briskness. Also: Insipid, Dull, Flat

VARIETAL Traditionally refers to the genetic subspecies of coffee based on location, such as Costa Rica or Colombia. Today, more commonly used to mean varieties of arabica, such as typica and bourbon.

VELVETY Heavy in strength and body, low in acidity.

VINEGARY A sour off-taste related to ferment.



WASHED PROCESS Post-harvest process of separating the seeds from the fruit before drying. Most important is the intermediate step of controlled fermentation between the pulping and the rinsing and drying phase. Poor processing can lead to defects that can render the coffee unusable. On the other hand, properly washed coffees typically exhibit sweetness, clarity and good acidity. Also: Aquapulp, Demucilage, Wet Process, Lavado

WATER PROCESS A trademarked decaffeination method that is similar to the Carbon Dioxide method, but instead of removing the caffeine with activated carbon filters, it is washed from the CO₂ with water in a secondary tank and is then recycled to extract more caffeine from the coffee.

WATER QUENCH Using water to rapidly cool roasted coffee to prevent over roasting and the loss of aroma.

WATERY Relating to body, it means the coffee shows signs of being thin. Relating to strength, the coffee is weak in flavor either due to the available soluble solids in the bean or to the ratio of grounds to water.

WET PROCESS A type of coffee processing that involves removing the skin and pulp from the bean while the coffee fruit is still moist. In the traditional wet process, the coffee skins are removed, the skinned beans sit in tanks where enzymes loosen the sticky fruit pulp and then are washed. In the demucilage method, the pulp is scrubbed from the beans by machine. Also: Aquapulp, Demucilage, Wet Method, Washed Process

WHOLE-BEAN COFFEE Coffee that has been roasted but not yet ground.

WINEY A bittersweet fruity quality characteristic of a fine red wine. A sweet soury taste, sometimes used to describe acidity.

WOODY A flavor taint characteristic of past-croppish coffees and those grown at lower altitude. Also, a desirable scent or flavor reminiscent of a fine wood such as cedar or sandalwood.

