

EXPLORING THE CRAFT OF COFFEE

Nº62

Extracted

**Redefining
Coffee Trade**



Review the Magazine

PUBLISHER

Joseph Robertson

DESIGNER

Michael Mage

CONTRIBUTORS

Jesse Nelson

Steven P. Unger

EXTRACTED MAGAZINE seeks to educate, delight, and empower coffee drinkers everywhere bringing you into the world of **craft specialty coffee**. We build connection and understanding that raises the value and the lives of people in coffee around the world, as well as each individual cup that you enjoy.

Even though coffee is consumed by billions worldwide, many are unaware of the significance of the beverage in their cups. Conscious consumption of coffee leads to not only the best tasting coffee of your life, but more powerfully supports the various cultures and peoples that are responsible for that coffee.

Extracted reflects this growing awareness and empowers all coffee drinkers to discover the richness, not only of flavor, but also of the history and relationships of the coffee in your cup.

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MAGAZINE





FEATURE ARTICLE

Redefining Coffee Trade

Joseph Robertson

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- ▶ What You Don't See
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- ▶ Cult Following, Opulent Store,
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This Month in Coffee



VIDEO

Breville Barista Touch Espresso Review

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HOW TO BREW

How To Do The French Press

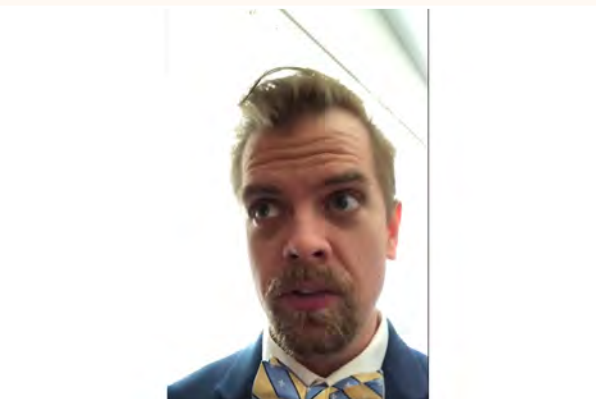
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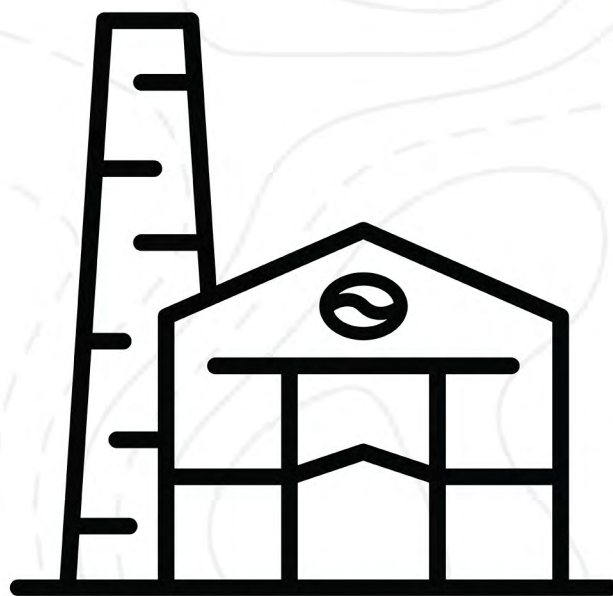
Joseph Robertson

Coffee Tastes



Burnt

The taste of burnt in coffee is common, and not entirely relegated to the world of dark roast (although it is most prevalent there). The roasting of coffee is a delicate art, and any carbonization of the beans will yield a distinct burnt/carbon/ash flavor in your brew that is pervasive.



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MOTMOT

A Student Run Coffee Company

Part 1:

Where Does Your Coffee Dollar Go?

Interview by Joseph Robertson

MotMot Coffee is a student-run coffee business based out of Seattle University. It was started by Braden Wild in 2014, with a goal of approaching coffee business and production from a different perspective – building larger long-term sustainable profits on the farmer's side of coffee.

I sat down with Braden in the spring of 2018, shortly before he graduated and handed off CEO control of MotMot to his successor, Sam Henry. We talked about the origins of MotMot, the goals, impacts, and some of the interesting aspects of a student-run business with an interesting executive model that rotates through students as they grow, graduate and move on.



In this first part (part 2 to be featured next issue), we talk about the challenges that MotMot is trying to address on the trade side through their work with farmers in Nicaragua. How do you support the sustainable growth of large groups of farmers? What does this mean to the coffee drinker? We talk about Fair Trade, Direct Trade, and what MotMot is doing that is different...

The Beginning of MotMot

Joseph: How did it all begin?

Braden: It started my freshman year when I got Seattle University certified as a Fair Trade University.

Out of that research, I got invited to go on an economic research trip with Dr. Quan Le who's a Development Economist here at Seattle University. We went on a faculty research trip to look empirically at the impacts of Fair Trade vs. Direct Trade. Does Fair Trade live up to what it's supposed to do? Does Direct Trade do better? What are the problems of both?

[We did this] with a coffee co-op that Seattle University has worked with since 2003 – doing research work with a sister university. So we went and did that research, and published a paper last year in the World Development Perspectives Journal on that work. And based off that research we basically said 'neither of these models is



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doing it right, both have problems. This isn't news to us, this isn't the first time that someone has said this.'

But for at least for this unique environment, where it's students working with a single co-op, and not systemically, we can do something better. So that's kind of where the idea of MotMot Coffee was born. We were in the back of a bus, driving back, talking with the professors and they said 'hey, we have some extra grant money, why don't we buy some coffee and let's do this differently, let's do this better.'

So I had about a month to figure it out. I had to get an exporter and an importer. I had to get [the coffee] shipped up, partial freight on a container. I got it onto campus and figured out a roaster. I bought some bags, and kind of just kind of slapped it together and said 'can we make this work?' And...it worked.

The simplest way to put it is it worked. We sold through the first 200-300 pounds of coffee - people liked it. So I took those sales as a justification and pitched it to our Dean. We got some funding and MotMot coffee was born - we hired the first batch of students that year, to work on the project.



Fair Trade vs. Direct Trade vs. MotMot

Joseph: You talked about this research between Fair Trade and Direct Trade – in short, what did you discover about those two that don't work, and what are you doing differently?

Braden: The simple way to look at it is the Fair Trade premiums that are provided often fall short of what's actually required to make an impact for a coffee farmer. That's been the research that we've seen. The average Fair Trade premium is 20 cents above 'spot.' With

an additional organic premium sometimes. So you're looking at New York Spot commodity prices for green... our farmers, even if they are making Specialty Coffee, they don't get to sell it above commercial grade for any kind of normal coffee, with the importers and exporters that they work with.

So what they rely on are those extra Fair Trade premiums. Then once they are split out... so it's a 20 cent premium: 5 cents of that goes to the community organizer or the co-op, 15 cents goes to the farmer. The simple math is that the 15 cents is often less than the cost to make it in the first place. So coffee farmers are switching out of Fair Trade because they can't make money on the premiums that they receive.

There's a similar problem for Organic. The amount of premium they get for organic...the costs often exceed it. If they do exceed the costs, it's a cent or two a pound - it's not enough to actually make a real difference. So most of them are just switching to pure volume - how much coffee can I push out? Because they can only sell it for commercial prices anyways, why would they bother focusing on quality?

We wanted to reverse that, and say 'how can we incentive farmers to continue to produce quality products, and organic products that don't need a lot of harmful

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pesticides.' But more importantly, how do we give them a living wage off the coffee? Looking at the coffee supply chain, 70-80% of the value of the coffee industry is retained in the roasting country where the coffee is sold. How do we shift it where 70-80% is retained in the country?

Joseph: What about Direct Trade?

Braden: So Direct Trade, we've often found, does a lot better job from the standpoint of - they are going to go in, and then the farmers they do partner with are going to get money. Partners we've worked with and done research with, places like Victrola, Stumptown, Caffe Vita - they do a really good job with the handful of farmers they work with. The problem is they work with like...3 farmers. We're not talking a co-op, we're not talking an organization. We're certainly not talking 'the coffee system' or the industry that is coffee buying. We're talking they'll go into a co-op, or a group, pick out the best 2-3 farmers, buy out their whole lot, then make that one farmer dependant on that buyer. While that one farmer gets a lot of wages, that doesn't help out the average coffee producer that's still producing specialty grade, but not high enough, or not enough alone to sell to one of those places.

Not to single them out, because I know they are continuing to make progress - it's not like they came in with the intention to hurt other farmers, but the reality is that only a handful of farmers can benefit from that direct trade model.



Joseph: What is MotMot doing?

Braden: So what MotMot does is say, let's take the average coffee farmer that's producing a specialty grade coffee, that can be sold in the United States, and let's buy a blend from a group of producers - not just one farmer is benefitting. Let's pay them a living wage. Part of why we go back every year and do research with the coffee farmers we buy from is to establish qualitatively and quantitatively what wages do we need to be paying, adjusting for inflation or different things to make it worthwhile.

We pay them up front, and then we ship it up either with a third party exporter, or I'll arrange my own container depending on the relationships I can build. We produce it and we sell it. The end profits are going to be a little lower than some of the average coffee shops because we are eating the margin for the producer. But whatever end profits are left go back to the producers in the form of educational scholarships.

We don't tell them how to use the funds but we try to find NGOs or co-ops or partners that are organized and can take the funds and do something with them, but not dictating to them how they will be used.

Joseph: Then one of the major benefits of MotMot is that you don't need to make a 'profit.'

Braden: Right we can operate at cost

Joseph: Or you take whatever the profit is and put it back into the community

Braden: Correct, so the social enterprise in that sense... we can afford to take a contract at cost, or we can afford to operate at a lower profit margin because that's not the primary function of the business.

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Working with Coffee in Nicaragua

Joseph: How about Nicaragua...in terms of challenges. You're not just going to a coffee origin, you are going a coffee origin in Nicaragua, which I hear is having some challenges...

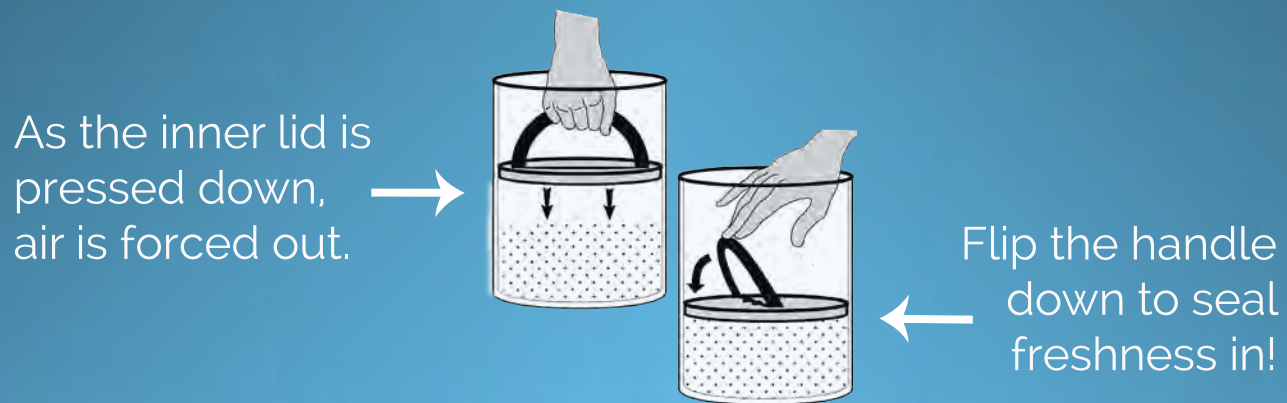
Braden: It's having some challenges yea. That's been on the top of our list actually, working with [Seattle] University Legal, and our Central American group.

I think Nicaragua for us is really important because the kind of coffee farmers we get to work with in Nicaragua are the kind of coffee farmers who are overlooked by direct trade buyers. These are the farmers that are experiencing first hand the problem MotMot is trying to solve. They are producing a high quality, 84, 85 point Q Score specialty coffee that is clean, smooth, easy to market to consumers. It should be a product that should be working really well. But they can't sell it because of political instability, they can only get commodity spot prices for the quality of their product. Even when it's Fair Trade and Organic.

So that's been a real challenge. Some of the co-ops we've worked with have had transitions of leadership. How do we retain relationships when they switch over managers? How do we make sure the quality of our product is there? It presents challenges in sending back the profits. You need a stable enough management to be sure when you send the profits back they are being used for the correct thing.

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We've lost shipments of coffee before due to corruption and other problems in the country. So it's not that we've been without our share of difficulties. I think we remain committed to it, because if we don't do that, then we aren't living up to our mission, so why should we exist.

Joseph: Are you working with the same farmers every time?

Braden: We are working with new farmers this year. We were working with the same farmers for 2.5 years before that. Those were the farmers we had some corruption issue with and lost a shipment with, so we are no longer able to work with them, unfortunately.

Joseph: But your hope is to work with the same farmers continually...

Braden: Yea, our hope is, once we can find a viable partner, there's no reason we are trying to switch away from them unless we have to.

That's always our goal, can we find a long-term stable partner? What's the point of doing something if you come in there, you buy 1000 pounds, you never come back. You're not actually achieving anything. But partner with the same co-op over a long period of time, the same place where the profits are going, increasing our volume, building that trust...then it starts to matter.

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Where Does Your Coffee Dollar Go?

Joseph: Would you be willing to share your data? Can we show people what you spend, and how that goes for the farmer, etc?

Braden: I'll give you a comparison because I've priced it for Starbucks, or an industry rough average. So when we're selling a \$12.95 twelve ounce bag of MotMot coffee...

You get about 30-35% wholesale margin, which is pretty typical - down to \$8 wholesale. Cost of Goods Sold...including green coffee, roasting, shipping, bagging, labels, some of those other fringe costs...is somewhere between \$4.6-\$4.7 (that includes the initial price of the green)

So the way we calculate the money we return back to the farmers is the \$2.6-\$2.65/pound that we are paying them up front, plus the end profit that we end up sending back. The \$2.65 is in the \$4.65 cost of goods sold. On average we send back 15% profit. I think the number is \$3.65 per pound (that the farmer receives) off the top of my head.

Our comparison there is that the average farmer (not working with us), after netting premium fees, shipping, cost of production, is going to get somewhere between \$0.65 and \$0.70 per pound [in Nicaragua].

Joseph: So normally on average, Nicaraguan farmers receive \$0.65-\$0.70 and with you, they are receiving ~\$3.65-\$3.70



Braden: Yea you have to net out some of the costs too. So profit for them ends up about \$2.00 per pound. We pay them \$2.60 (per pound), but they still have to pay some of those costs. So they are paying about \$0.60 of cost still, for production.

It still makes a big difference, (they earn) somewhere in the neighborhood of 500% more for the coffee we sell. Part of that is we are very vertically integrated, so we get to cut out some of the middlemen fees. The costs are still the same because I have to pay my roaster, I have to ship it. But we cut out a lot of the profit by reducing the number of true middlemen. So that helps drive down the costs. Some of it is the social business, it's a student-run business, my labor is not comparable to other companies, I don't have to own a warehouse, you're sitting in my warehouse (an office room)...

Continued...

Join us in the next issue as we explore MotMot as a student run coffee business. How are these students doing all this? What happens when they graduate? What's in the name?

If you'd like to support MotMot, visit www.motmotcoffee.com where you can get their coffee and merchandise.

Coffee Facts



Cascara

Cascara is a tea made using the dried coffee cherries which are left over after processing out the coffee bean. Coffee grows as a fruit, and what we know as the coffee bean is actually the pit of a cherry-like fruit. Most of the time the fruit is discarded after harvesting and processing the beans. Sometimes farmers will hold onto the fruit and then dry it - from this, you can create a tea.

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VIDEO

Breville Barista Touch Espresso Machine In Depth Review

Coffee Lovers TV



This is an in-depth review of the Breville Barista Touch Espresso Machine, after using the machine personally for several months. I go over the details of the machine, brew an espresso then a cappuccino right out of the box. Then I brew an Americano and show you how easy that is. Then in the final section, I take you through the process of dialing in an espresso using this machine and create a really fantastic cappuccino.



HOW TO BREW

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WHAT YOU NEED:

- ▶ French Press (800ML)
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1. Add 50 grams of medium-coarse coffee - darker roasts lean coarser, lighter roasts lean medium (1:16 ratio).
2. Add 800 grams water, 30 seconds off the boil.
3. Stir, cover, wait 4 minutes.
4. At 4 minutes, take a spoon and push down the surface of the grounds (you can quickly stir).
5. Using 2 spoons, scoop the foam and remaining floating grounds off the top.
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THE SOUL, THE SWORD, AND THE GUEST

COFFEE WITH THE BEDOUINS
IN LITTLE PETRA



BY STEVEN P. UNGER
BOOK PREVIEW PART 2

The Bedouins

IN THE BEGINNING WERE THE BEDOUINS—literally. The name "Bedouin" has the same root word as the Arabic noun for "the beginning": "*Bedaya*." Bedouins have been referred to by various names throughout history, including *Qedarites* in the Old Testament and *Arabaa* by the Assyrians. They are referred to as the *Araab* in the Koran.

The Bedouins have always lived in long, low black tents of cloth woven from goat hair, known as *beit al-sha'ar*, or "house of hair." The tents are supported by a row of tall central poles in the middle, while the front, back, and sides are supported by shorter poles. The number of poles is an indication of the family's wealth and social standing.



The tent is well adapted to desert life—it can be packed up and ready to move within an hour. In summer, sections of cloth are rolled up during the heat of day and dropped back down when it cools at night.

The public area of a family tent is normally arranged to receive guests, who sit, lounge, or lie on mattresses arranged around a small fire. No discussion of money or business will ever take place inside the tent. A guest will be received inside; will sit and drink tea or coffee; but if he has come to discuss business, he must wait for a while. Eventually, when the talk becomes serious, the whole party will move outside, taking their mattresses and beverages with them.

For a few hundred years, from about 1100 until 1400, Arabic tribes were the only culture outside of East Africa to have tasted coffee as we know it. They called it *qahwa*, which was the word for wine until alcohol was prohibited. Coffee history changed forever when a few wild young Ethiopian coffee plants were taken from the Horn of Africa across a narrow passage of the Red Sea to the port of Mocha in Yemen. There, in a Sufi monastery, the mystic monks learned to cultivate the plant and boil the raw beans to make a drink that would help them stay awake during long nights of prayer and meditation. Adding a mixture of aromatic spices made the potion barely palatable. Neighboring Arabic tribes soon learned to vastly improve the Sufis' drink by roasting and then grinding the coffee beans before boiling them.

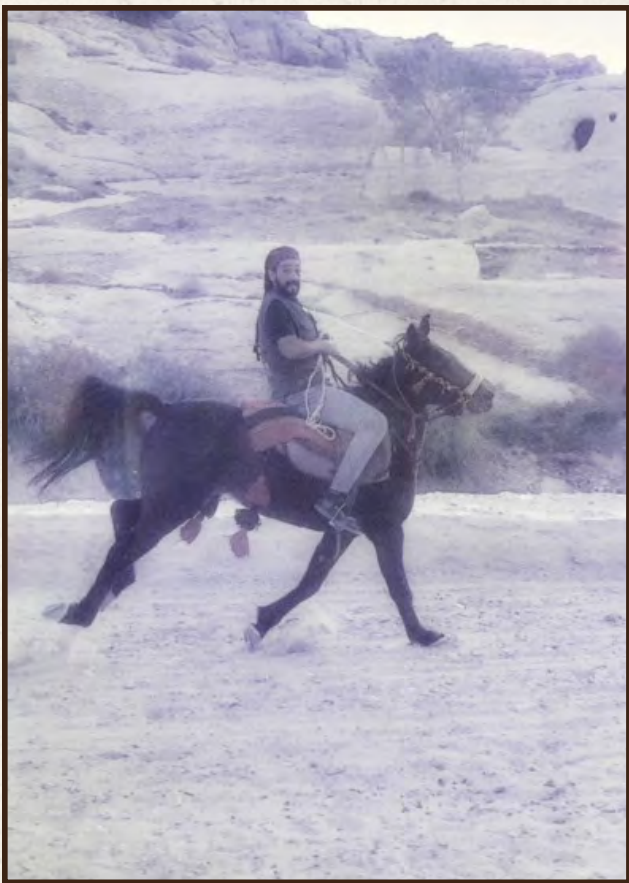


By 1414 coffee had migrated by ship and camel caravan from the Ottoman Empire's port at Mocha as far as Mecca, Medina, Cairo, and Damascus. (All this time, Arabian coffee traders had preserved their monopoly of coffee plants by scorching or boiling the beans they exported to make them infertile.) Ships full of precious Arabica coffee beans from Yemen docked at what is now the Jordanian port of Aqaba. The coffee was unloaded onto Bedouin caravan trains that traveled on to Iran and Iraq.



Coffee became a part of Jordanian culture, synonymous with hospitality and wealth; and even today the Bedouin tribes prepare it in the traditional way. Green coffee beans are roasted and ground by hand and then simmered in a *dallah*. The *dallah's* lid is crowned with a purely decorative spire, like a miniature minaret, that almost doubles the height of the pot. The handle is a winding crescent, and the curved spout ends in a small triangular opening, like the bottom half of a beak. (Sometimes it actually is a beak.) The cups, called *fenjan*, are small with no handle. There are little or no grounds in the cup.

Guests may have up to three cups of coffee. The first cup is for the soul, the second is for the sword, and the third is for the guest. If you want a refill, simply hand your cup to your



host. When you've had enough, shake the cup before giving it to your host. According to custom, guests should accept at least one cup if it is offered to them.

Coffea arabica has generally followed the path of the first humans, northward along the Great Rift Valley and through the Afar Triangle, where the Red Sea meets the Gulf of Aden and three tectonic plates are pulling away from one another. Still farther north the Rift Valley becomes an earthquake-prone line of active volcanoes called *Harrat Ash Shamah*. The Petra Basin is in that line.

Some day, the separation of tectonic plates that has already torn Saudi Arabia away from the rest of the African continent, forming the Red Sea, will persist until the region becomes the site of the planet's next major ocean. The three plates that meet at the edge of the African continent will break apart completely, allowing the Indian Ocean to rush in, suddenly transforming the Horn of Africa into an island the size of Western Australia.

Until that day, the best place to experience coffee in much the way that the Bedouins—the first people to drink coffee outside of Africa—have prepared it for almost a thousand years, is within the Petra Basin.



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VIDEO

Cup of Joe Brew Along - 9.17.18

Coffee Lovers TV



Brewing on the V60 and then chilling my drink with the Coldwave - a Brew Along...Testing out a new format, recording directly on my phone and publishing via IGTV. They do vertical format there (which I'm not a huge fan of, but that's the way it is). I figure this can be a variant on the Cup of Joe series. I won't be always recording in this format, but I want to try it out as a way to do short(er) off-the-cuff style videos. Thoughts?



READERS QUESTIONS

How to Quickly Improve Brewing a Cup of Coffee

Coffee Lovers TV

Whether it's an espresso, a fine V60, an auto drip, or anything where you can control the size of your grind and the amount of coffee you use to brew, you'll find times where you aren't satisfied and want to make some quick and easy adjustments to brew a better cup.

An important note here: if you don't have control over the size of your grind, then you're at the mercy of the size of that grind as far as taste goes - there's only so much you can do with the quantity of coffee you use (but there's still a few steps you can take) if you can't control the grind.



If you don't have the ability to grind your own coffee AND you don't have control over how much coffee is being used in the brew, try picking up a brew method like French Press.

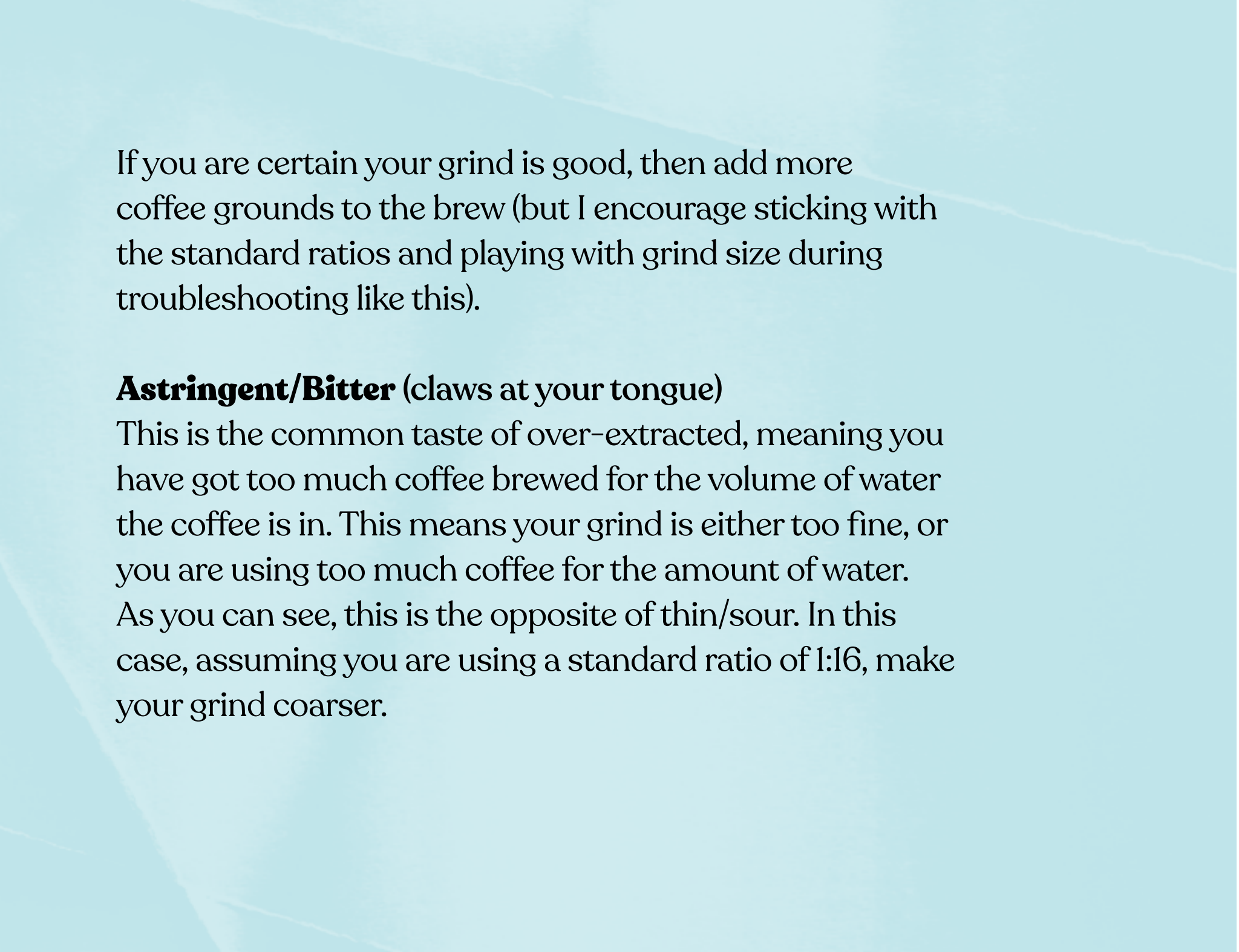
The first step to doing a quick improvement is to examine the taste result of your coffee. You are undoubtedly at this point because something about that taste has made you want to improve the brew. Identifying these key taste characteristics will guide you in figuring out what's wrong and how to fix it.

You are going to find two extremes in taste result of the brew.

Thin/sour

This is the common taste of under-extracted coffee, meaning you don't have enough of the coffee brewed for the volume of water the coffee is in. This means your grind is either too coarse, or you aren't using enough coffee altogether.

Assuming you are weighing your coffee and water during the brew, then using a standard 1:16 ratio (1 gram of coffee for every 16 grams of water used while brewing) means you can focus primarily on grind size to adjust your brew. In this case, make your grind finer, and see if the thin/sour taste goes away.



If you are certain your grind is good, then add more coffee grounds to the brew (but I encourage sticking with the standard ratios and playing with grind size during troubleshooting like this).

Astringent/Bitter (claws at your tongue)

This is the common taste of over-extracted, meaning you have got too much coffee brewed for the volume of water the coffee is in. This means your grind is either too fine, or you are using too much coffee for the amount of water. As you can see, this is the opposite of thin/sour. In this case, assuming you are using a standard ratio of 1:16, make your grind coarser.

Or, taking the opposite of the under-extracted coffee, if you are certain your grind size is good, then use less coffee grounds in the brew.

If you aren't sure about these taste qualities but are not quite satisfied, I encourage you to grind finer, and use a standard ratio of 1:16 – unless you are brewing with a dark roast, then you might consider using a standard ratio of 1:18 (dark roast is more water soluble, so you need less ground coffee to get the balance of brew).

Push the boundary of astringency/bitterness. Once you hit that wall then you know where you are, and you're pretty close to how the coffee should be extracted. If you don't like the way it tastes at this point, you might have a few other issues to work on: your water may not be the right quality or temperature, you might be pouring too fast/slow, your grind quality might not be high enough, the particular brew method might not be right for you, the particular coffee might not be right for you.

One of the cases that is super tricky is when the coffee is both sour AND astringent. This is very difficult to explain in text, and even in person. You can judge from the assessment that the coffee is both over AND under-extracted. How is this possible?

Got Coffee Questions?

[Email the Experts](#)

Usually, this kind of experience is due to a poor grind quality, poor water quality, or inconsistency in the brewing method. If you are using a blade grinder, this can be a common result as due to the wildly varying size of the grinds, some will under-extract and some will over-extract.



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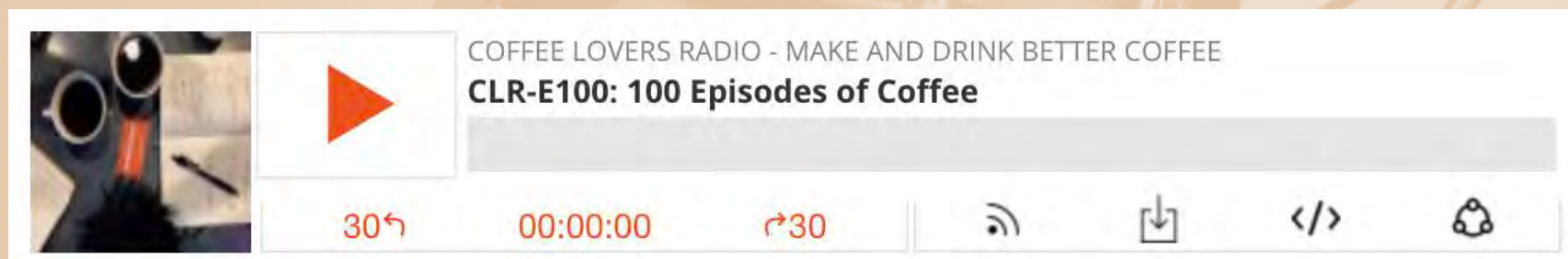
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Hosts

Joseph Robertson, Extracted Magazine

www.extractedmagazine.com

Jesse Nelson, Conduit Coffee

www.conduitcoffee.com



What You Don't See

In this issue, we get to see a very interesting approach to the business of coffee, and through that, you get a great view of the impact that the economics of coffee buying can have on the farmer.

This story about MotMot also highlights one of the major challenges of the coffee business in general. I didn't touch on this during the interview, but from a broad perspective point, it's important to note that one of the reasons MotMot is able to have such an apparent strong impact on the farmers they are working with is they have no need to generate a profit – their executives, employees, and shareholders have no need to make anything other than the impact of the business from the business.

That isn't to take anything away from what MotMot is doing. I think it's important to have that layer of work going on in coffee, and the coffee industry, however, I also think we



shouldn't look at their work as 'the way it should be done' nor should we look at other people's work as 'how it shouldn't be done.'

Braden does point out one of the challenges in 'direct trade' coffee is that in some situations, the farmers can become completely dependent upon the one business, who ends up buying all their coffee. This is a complex economic challenge and goes much further than these distinct cases presented (of individual roasters buying out entire farms lots).

Is it a bad thing? No. But you can certainly say it's also not ideal. In many respects, it is far better than Fair Trade, because it gives the farmers the opportunity to actually make money and grow their work. It also gives the farmers an opportunity to create a name for themselves, assuming the roasters do a good job marketing their coffee and representing the farm. But it does make them highly dependent.

One thing I'd be really interested to see is to have coffee importers become as well known as roasters. There are several importer companies who act as kind of a cross between what MotMot is doing and what individual roasters who participate in Direct Trade do. That is, they directly work with many farmers, and some even put in a lot of effort to not just give farmers more money, but to oversee the growth of coffee farming communities and regions.

On the other side of the equation these importers see those coffee farmers sold to many different roasters and individuals, spreading out their brand and making it so they aren't reliant on any one roaster (though you could argue they become reliant on the importer, in this case, I think it's a stronger foundation than just one roaster).

This whole conversation has the danger of becoming too technical and boring for the average person - but if you have an interest in the health and development of the people responsible for growing the coffee you drink, then I think it's important to be aware of these 'behind the scenes' structures.

If you want to take this a bit further, I'll always encourage you to go find your local roaster and ask them everything they know about where their coffee comes from and how it got to them. Awareness is always the first step.

-Joseph Robertson

This Month in Coffee

October 2018

Cafe De Olla

This is a fun look into Mexican coffee culture, and an interesting different way to prepare a cup of coffee.

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The Coffee Connoisseur with a Cult Following in Hong Kong

This is the story of an Australian based coffee entrepreneur, who went to Hong Kong, bringing change to Chinese specialty coffee culture.

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Specialty Instant Coffee Startup Aims to Change the Way You Drink a Cup of Joe

Specialty Instant Coffee is on the rise – read about the creation of one of the first startups around this new market.

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Starbucks Reveals Opulent Store in Milan, the Culmination of Howard Schultz's Italian Dream

Starbucks has expanded into Italy, opening a new reserve store in Milan. This story involves Francis Howard – friend of the magazine (and occasional writer) – as their new head Roaster.

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How much Caffeine is in Decaf Coffee?

This is a good look at Decaffeinated Coffee options. The biggest note to take from this article is that the truest decaf is Swiss or Mountain water processed coffee (99.9% decaf free)

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