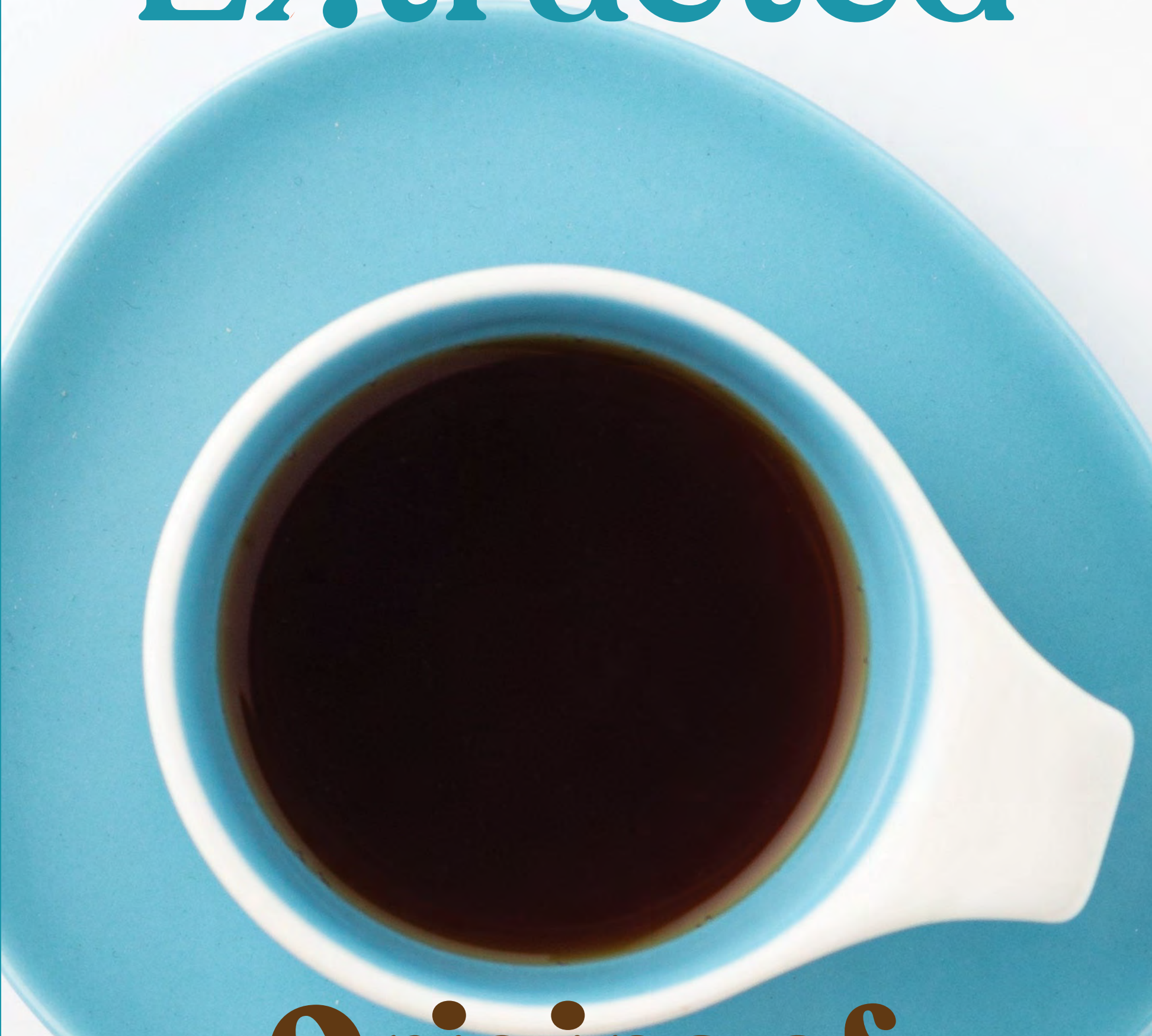


EXPLORING THE CRAFT OF COFFEE

Nº70

# Extracted



**Origins of  
Coffee Taste**



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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.

Extracted  
MAGAZINE





FEATURE ARTICLE

# Origins and Taste: Why So Much is So Similar

Joseph Robertson

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE...

▶ **My Favorite Coffee Tastes**  
From the Editor

▶ **Climate Resilient Coffee, Migrants,  
India's Coffee Consumption and more**  
This Month in Coffee



VIDEO

## The Ikawa Coffee Roaster

Extracted TV



BOOK PREVIEW

## Paris Became One Vast Cafe - Part 2

Steven P. Unger



PODCAST

## Not Your Typical Coffee Species

Coffee Lovers Radio



VIDEO

## How to Brew the Aeropress

Onyx Coffee



FILTER STORIES

## Sofia

James Harper

# Coffee Facts



## Dark Roast

Coffees which are roasted to second 'crack' and beyond. Most tastes of the origin or terroir are roasted out, and much of the flavor is the result of caramelized sugars and roasted oils. Marked by 'big bold taste' and oily thick coffee experiences.



charity: water  
SUPPORTER

# 663 Million People In The World Live Without Clean Water



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VIDEO

# Coffee Tasting Cups

Extracted TV





**Origins and Taste:**

# Why So Much is So Similar

By Joseph Robertson

**T**he ‘coffee taste’ is both ubiquitous and inexplicable. I’ve had it so many times. In diners. In cafes. In ‘coffee drinks’ I get off the shelf. In ice cream. In other treats. That flavor called “coffee.” But could I actually paint a descriptive picture for you of what that encompasses?

There are multiple things happening with this taste called ‘coffee,’ why it’s so ubiquitous, why it’s so homogenous, and why in this world of Extracted, we explore coffees with so many different unique tastes and aromas which never are described as tasting like ‘coffee.’

The major factors involved in the taste of coffee, which you are able to make decisions based on (assuming the roaster shares all this information), include what species and variety that coffee is, where the coffee was grown, how it was processed, and how it was roasted.



From a broad perspective, most people just look at the origin and make generalized assumptions about what that coffee will taste like (there's a reason for this, which we'll get to in a moment), but the combination of all of these things is of critical importance.

The 'coffee' taste that you are probably familiar with is most influenced by Central and South American Coffees. Market branding and mass production of these coffees in the last 50+ years has meant that when most people have tasted coffee - especially one from a large coffee chain - they are most likely tasting coffee that has come from these regions.

While you can find coffees in these regions with intricate and unique coffees, each general area tends to exhibit a typical range of flavors, most dominantly including chocolate, nuts, and spice, with places like Guatemala being popular for apple-like flavors as well.





The reason that broad swaths of coffee growing regions have similar coffee tastes actually comes down to how coffee originally spread throughout the world, which has lead to a relatively limited range of diversity.

Arabica coffee (and many other species of coffee) as we know it is accepted to have been discovered in Ethiopia, and originally cultivated to be roasted and sold for commerce in Yemen (from the port city Mokha). For a few hundred years following coffee's legendary discovery, you could only get it from one place - The Port of Mokha in Yemen (unless you physically visited a place like Ethiopia where it grew wild).

In 1690 a few coffee trees were smuggled out of Yemen by the Dutch East India Trading Company, ending up in Indonesia on Java (hence the origin of Java as a name for coffee), saplings also end up in Amsterdam. From these points outside of Yemen, coffee proliferated around the world. In 1714 the mayor of Amsterdam gifts a coffee tree to King Louis XIV. And saplings from that tree were taken to Haiti, eventually proliferating through Central and South America.

Because most of the coffee that is grown around the world now originated from just a handful of plants hundreds of years ago, there is very slim biodiversity amongst coffee grown worldwide outside of East Africa and Yemen. This leads to a lot of this coffee having similar taste capability (which is then influenced by the exact soil and environmental conditions it's grown in, how it's processed, and how it's roasted).

**[[Read more about coffee's origins in our issue on Coffee Origins](#)]**

On top of all this - common origin related tastes due to the way coffee growth originally spread around the world - mass coffee production meant that even if individual farmers were processing and handling their coffee in a specific way, most of it would get all batched together with other coffee in their region or country. This is why Single Origin is such a big deal because when you are very precise with singling out coffee grown from specific plants, you can discern a whole lot more unique tastes, as delicate aroma and taste compounds are not drowned out amongst those of slightly different coffee.

Even though most of the coffee grown around the world is lacking biodiversity, the complexity of coffee through influential factors of soil, environment, processing, and roasting means that one plant can grow and taste completely different\* from another of the same plant given the right conditions and treatment.

\*I say completely different, once you get used to the practice of tasting coffee. These plants would still have overarching similarities, and assuming they are roasted the same, would usually differ in taste on more subtle levels, yet on those subtle levels have enough of a difference to taste completely different overall - kind of like two different varieties of apple. This can be compared to complexity differences of a wild Ethiopian coffee (flowery and fruity) compared to a typical Colombian coffee (chocolaty and nutty), being actually like comparing Apples and Oranges in taste/feel.

So the question arises then, if all this coffee is so similar, yet can be so different, what is there to taste in coffee, and how do you taste it, and what do the origins mean?

On getting into the tasting and describing of your coffee, I recommend my Coffee Tasting 101 Guide - this “skill” of tasting and describing coffee is far more about memory, pattern recall, and practice than it is about understanding what is in coffee.

One of the most complex challenges for the coffee industry has to do with Coffee Taste, and communicating what that is. When we describe the taste of a coffee, we are taking a particular sensory experience (through taste, aroma, mouthfeel, etc), and trying to compare that with similar experiences we’ve had in the past.

Thus when we drink a natural processed light to medium roasted Ethiopian coffee, we can discover a taste that is highly reminiscent of wild blueberry fields, or wild strawberries (as a limited example - this is not a blanket statement). It’s not that there’s blueberry or strawberry in there, or that it even is the same as eating those things, but there is an element of commonality in the acids which gives us the ability to taste those things.

Extracted Magazine Presents

# COFFEE TASTING 101 GUIDE

**LEARN HOW TO TASTE AND  
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This also gives rise to the challenge of how you make sure you're talking about the same thing - one person's experience tasting things in the world is not the same as another's. Your perception of apple might be another's guava. Neither is wrong in coffee, but in order to create conventions around the taste of coffee, the professional associations in the industry (particularly The Specialty Coffee Association) established specific ways of talking about the taste.

These conventions will shed light on all the different sorts of tastes you can find in coffee. The SCA provides detailed guidelines (resources linked below). Common taste categories include Sweet, Sour, Bitter, and Salty. Within those, you can find specific taste categories of Fruity, Floral, Sweet, Nutty/Cocoa, Spices, Sour/Fermented, Green/Vegetable, Spices, Roasted, and 'Other.' The SCA breaks all this down visually in a coffee tasting wheel - they also provide a full lexicon of all the different tastes you can find and describe in coffee.

**[Wheel]**

**[Lexicon]**

I find practical application of this to be tricky for the average coffee drinker. There's so much detail to dive into, how can you get a good grasp without going so far down the rabbit hole that simple enjoyment of coffee becomes obsessive?





Not to say there's anything wrong with being obsessive about coffee, but for the sake of approaching the taste of coffee from a direction that is more casual and perhaps easier to get into, I'll distill some of the most common tastes of coffee and how I approach thinking about taste on a daily basis.

The most common taste that I look for in coffee is natural sweetness. This is where, to me, all the most interesting and quality tastes in coffee have a foothold. Many of them share tastes in sour as well. Salty and bitter add dynamism, though often bitter and sweet can be contradictory in coffee taste, but that's a whole article in itself.

Sweetness to me this is the base of so many of the great tastes in coffee, and that is why it makes sense to start here. It's also a great signifier of the quality of the coffee you are drinking. Generally speaking, the higher the quality of the green coffee and it's processing, the greater level of natural sweetness that coffee will possess (though due to processing it will take on different dynamics, as an example that natural processing usually is much stronger in sweetness).

I look at the sweetness and I observe within that sweetness for fruit (and different kinds of fruit), floral, baked sugar, cocoa, and nuttiness. All of these connect to some kind of sweetness in memory, and it serves for me as an anchor for navigating the taste of my coffee. As an example, the sweetness of a chocolate brownie is vastly different from the sweetness of a ripe wild strawberry - both can have high levels of rich sweetness, but even in this description, I'm sure you can tell just how different that can taste.

I include floral on that list...which is something you may not think of as sweet, but in my experience, I've found that it sits near fruit sweetness, but is quite different. I think most readily I can tell the difference between fruit sweetness and the sweetness of baked goods (including chocolate). Once I'm on the fruit sweetness side of things,

I think along with the different kinds of fruit - but sometimes it's not quite fruit, but it's definitely not a baked sugar sweetness, and that's often where I'll find a floral component.

It's not a complete picture just looking at the sweetness however, one must also consider sourness, bitterness, and saltiness. Think for example about the taste of a dark chocolate bar. That sweetness is definitely not fruit, but it's also not as rich as a brownie or milk chocolate. There's a higher level of bitterness to that kind of chocolate, and the distinct flavor of cacao, which you can also find in coffee. So once I've looked at the general sweetness, I start to bring in the other elements - is it sour? Is it bitter? Is it salty? How do these all coalesce together?

This complexity and process of tasting and analyzing can be overwhelming, which is why we often end up taking our cues from things like the coffee's origin, it's processing, and how it was roasted. There are generalities to all these components which make it just a bit easier to come to an enjoyable understanding of what we are tasting.

Here are some broad generalities for tastes of coffee by origin. Broader adoption of advanced processing techniques along with changes due to an environment that is heating globally has meant that these conventions by region are

starting to break down - so you very well may find a Colombian coffee which tastes fruity (traditionally chocolatey). However, this serves as a decent starting point.

**Central American** (Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica): Light chocolate, nutty, stonefruit, spicy

**South American** (Colombia, Peru, Brazil): rich chocolate, nutty, spicy

**African** (Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Yemen): fruity, floral, tea-like

**Asia** (Indonesia, Papua New Guinea): earthy, spicy

How the coffee is processed also influences flavors significantly - processing is how the seed is removed from the fruit. The two opposing main processes are Natural and Washed. Natural processed coffees have had the fruit dry like a raisin before the seed is removed, and Washed processed coffees remove the fruit immediately. Natural processed coffees tend to have stronger distinct flavors, especially that of fruit and intense rich sweetness, while washed processed coffees have milder but more discernable flavors.

Lastly, of course, is the roasting. The difference between light and dark roasted coffee is so night and day as to be completely different drinks (and in fact, is the source of much conflict amongst coffee drinkers). The flavors of

lighter roasted coffees that you can find are mostly those that are of the coffee's origin and processing (terroir). The darker you roast the coffee, the more these natural acids are roasted out, the more caramelized the sugars, and the more the taste of the coffee is due to the roasting process.

On the roasted end of coffees, you'll also find a contrast between single origin and blends. In short, a single origin is a roasted coffee that is all from one place - usually from one farm, but sometimes from one region. The closer to the source in specificity you can get, the less homogenized your bag of roasted coffee will be (and therefore you'll be more able to discern the unique tastes of a coffee).

The truth is that coffee is so complex, it can taste like everything and anything. A simplified approach starting with the origin clues, then looking at sweetness, followed by defining qualities of sour, bitter, and salty can help you navigate the unique tasting elements of coffee. Focusing



on lighter roasted single origin coffees will help you explore all the different possible tastes that you can find. If you lean towards darker roasted coffees and blends, you will be removing a lot of the uniqueness that coffee naturally has (or at the very least, making it more challenging to see all that uniqueness).



## Further Reading

There is a plethora of scientific reading that can be done on the chemical composition of coffee, and what it is exactly within coffee which is responsible for different components of taste. If you'd like to dive down that rabbit hole, here are a few places you can read more:

[\[The Flavor of Coffee\]](#)

[\[Chlorogenic Acid and Its Derivatives in Coffee\]](#)

[\[Chemistry in Every Cup\]](#)

# Coffee Tastes

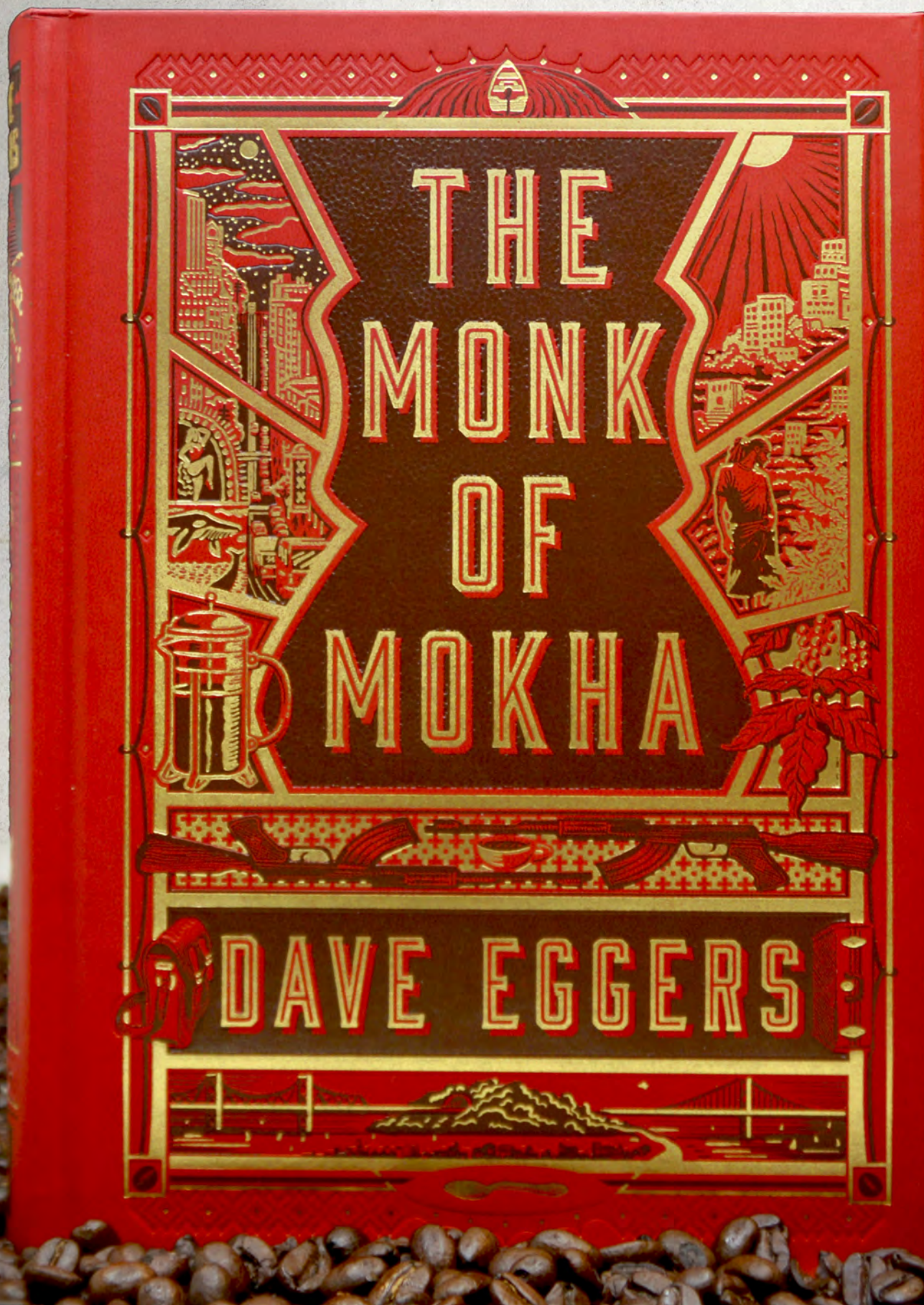


## Strength

Strength in coffee simply refers to how much extracted coffee solids have ended up in your cup after the brew. Increasing strength is done by using more coffee (or a finer grind) during the brew with the same amount of water, and has little to do with the coffee itself or how it makes you feel.

“AS GRIPPING AND CINEMATICALY  
DRAMATIC AS ANY FICTIONAL  
CLIFFHANGER” —*The Washington Post*

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A CUP OF THE  
WORLD



# Cafe Show<sup>2019</sup> China

## Cafe Show China 2019

Aug.30 (Fri) - Sept.1 (Sun), 2019

China International Exhibition Center, Beijing

Contact: Angelina Xin, Gao Dan

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— AT HOME —

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VIDEO

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Extracted TV



Filter Stories

# Sofia

James Harper

What were your dreams at 16?

Sofía, a teenager on a remote Nicaraguan coffee farm, doesn't hesitate: "my dream is to be a great English translator!"

If Sofía gets into university and becomes an English translator, she will probably live a life off this farm. With any luck she'll earn more than her parents - \$5 a day.

But Sofía needs school and a lot of luck. Every morning in her blue and white school uniform she walks for an hour to school. The road is deserted and her family knows she may be attacked. And then she walks home.

Physical assault is one of many challenges standing in Sofía's way. She will also need her father to stay employed and get a quality education from her high school.

In the this episode of Filter Stories, we take a hard look at what Sofía's up against and what us coffee drinkers can - and can't - do to help her and the hundreds of thousands of coffee farm kids across Central America.

PODCAST

Sofia

Filter Stories



Filter Stories  
Sofía

SOUNDCLOUD



31:18



# PARIS BECAME ONE VAST CAFE

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COFFEE AND MORE IN PLACES  
WITH STORIES TO TELL

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**By Steven P. Unger**

*Book Preview | Chapter 4 | Part 2*



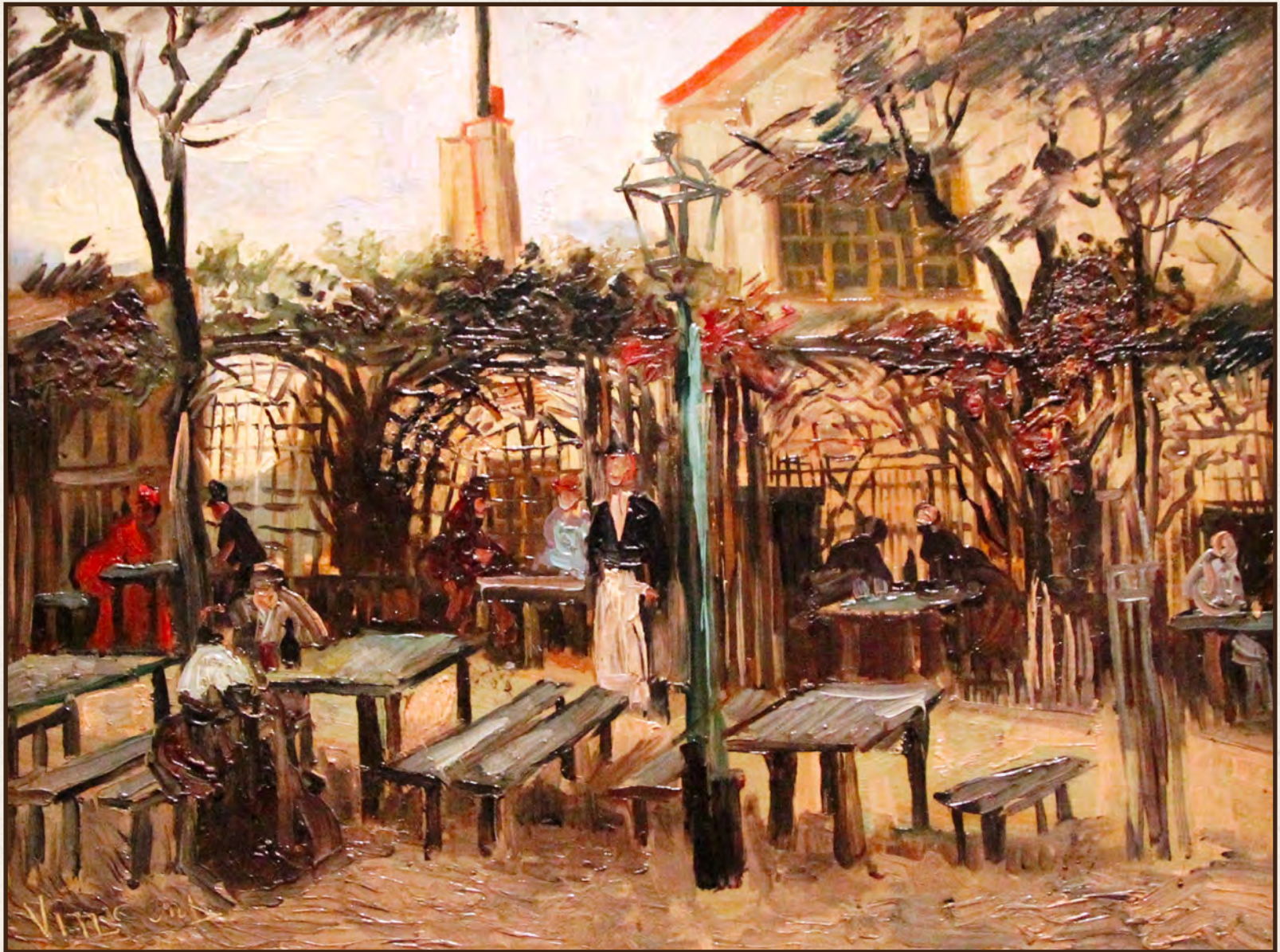
## *THE CENTER OF THE CIVILIZED WORLD: CAFÉ DE LA PAIX*

*In 1898, on a sultry summer afternoon, a regular customer by the name of Oscar Wilde witnessed a strange phenomenon: the street had just been watered down and a light mist was rising from the ground. Suddenly, within the fog forming across the square, he saw a golden angel appear, that kept growing and growing. This caused much excitement . . . women fainted . . . tables were knocked over. . . Was this a miracle? Not at all. It was the golden allegorical character perched atop the Opera that was actually reflecting the sunrays into the mist, and it was its image floating in the middle of the square!*

*\*reference\**

**T**he Belle Époque, the period in the history of Paris between the years 1871 to 1914, was the second Golden Age of the Coffeehouse. It saw the construction of the Eiffel Tower, the Paris Métro, the completion of the Paris Opéra, and the beginning of the Basilica of Sacré-Cœur in Montmartre. Paris during the Belle Époque was the birthplace of the Ballets Russes, Impressionism, and modern art. (Roger Shattuck, author of *The Banquet Years*, called Impressionism "the first artistic movement entirely organized in cafés.") The expression Belle Époque ("beautiful era"), a nostalgic term for what seemed a simpler time of optimism, elegance, and progress, came into use after the horrors of World War I.

Grand boulevards were constructed, radiating out from public squares like the arms of an octopus, turning the nighttime streets into day with the help of the Yablochkov candle, the first practical carbon-arc lamp. The café patrons spread out onto the sun-warmed sidewalks to watch the passing scene, becoming what Emile Zola called the "great silent crowds watching the street live."



Vincent van Gogh, Terrace of a Café on Montmartre (La Guinguette), 1886

Café de la Paix, once a favorite haunt of Second Empire Imperialists and their spies, was founded in 1872; designed by the same architect as the Grand Hôtel de la Paix, now the Intercontinental Paris Le Grand, that houses it on the bottom floor. Last of the grand cafés of the Belle Époque, Café de la Paix's marble pillars, tiled floors, and gold-bordered ceilings full of painted blue skies and cherubs represent the height of the period's architecture and design.

These grand cafés were the center of nineteenth-century Parisian life, in what many believed to be the center of the civilized world. Balzac, Flaubert, Maupassant, and Henry James redefined modern literature as they wrote at the café tables.



\*reference



# CAFÉ de la PAIX



In 1896, Eugène Pirou began to hold screenings of the brand new cinematograph in the mezzanine. Admission cost one franc, and showings ran from 8:00 p.m. to midnight. There were very few plotted "movies" to show that year, but one likely feature was Georges Méliès' *Le Manoir du Diable*, known in the U.S. as *The Haunted Castle*, which many now consider the first horror movie. In this three-minute film, a bat flies into a medieval castle, turns into Mephistopheles, then is chased away by a crucifix. It's kind of a vampire film, even though Bram Stoker's *Dracula* wasn't published until 1897.

Fun fact: on August 25, 1944, during the battle to liberate Paris, a grenade caused a fire to start in the café. The flames were quickly put out by the headwaiters using their soda siphons.

www

This article has been excerpted from **Black as Hell, Strong as Death, and Sweet as Love: A Personal Guide to the World's Best Coffee Experiences** Copyright © 2019 by Steven P. Unger and Ruthie Santistevan, currently in prepublication.



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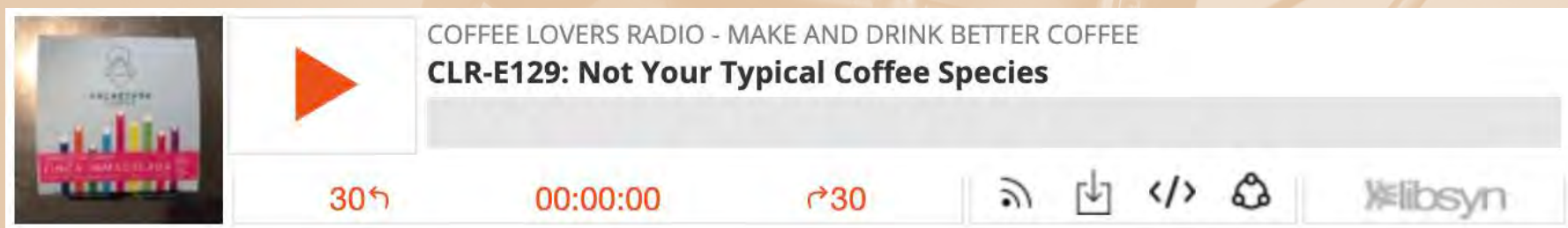


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CLR-EPIISODE 129

# Not Your Typical Coffee Species

Coffee Lovers Radio



In this episode, we brew and enjoy a coffee which is NOT Arabica or Robusta – presenting *Coffea Eugenoides*. There are many coffee species in the world, however most are not produced commercially. Most of the coffee we consume is Arabica, with the second largest production being Robusta (which is easier to grow, has more caffeine, but does not usually taste great).

Get Yourself some *Eugenoides*

[http://www.extractedmagazine.com/eugenoides\\_clr](http://www.extractedmagazine.com/eugenoides_clr)

## Hosts

Joseph Robertson, Extracted Magazine

[www.extractedmagazine.com](http://www.extractedmagazine.com)

Jesse Nelson, Conduit Coffee

[www.conduitcoffee.com](http://www.conduitcoffee.com)

## **My Favorite Tastes In Coffee**

Fig Newtons. Red cherry compote. Wild strawberries and chocolate.

I was almost running from cup to cup, tasting coffees like I'd never tasted before. Rich fruit and intense baked luxurious sugars. I was hooked.

It was just about 6 months after the first time I spoke with Mokhtar Alkhanshali - now owner of Port of Mokha - via email. He was presenting a selection of Yemen coffees, along with another exporter, at the Global Coffee Expo (this was directly following the events that transpire in The Monk of Mokha).

Up to this point I was getting a pretty solid understanding of all the different tastes like I like in coffee. I was really hooked on fruit coffees, especially those from Ethiopia - though other regions around the world have produced similarly delicious fruity coffees. I also really loved the deep richness of chocolate and nuttiness that can be found throughout central and south america.

The only catch I always ran into is that it was all never perfect. I'd really love the fruit coffees, but after having them for a bit, I'd long for something rich and chocolaty, or nutty. And the same with those, I'd switch to Central American coffees for awhile, but before long getting a desire for something delightfully fruity.

The porridge was always just a little too hot or a little too cold (you can probably see where this is going by now).



When I had those immensely unique flavors from Yemen, I got hooked on Yemen coffee.

But my realization as to my core favorite tastes in coffee actually happened over a glass of wine. I still remember it – I was enjoying a Sangiovese grown in the State of Washington. It was quite a bit different than other Sangioveses I'd had, in that it was much richer and sweeter than I was used to.

In fact, it reminded me of that wild strawberry coffee that I had enjoyed. And it hit me at that moment that all the tastes I drift to are some combination of bright and rich wild fruit with deep sugar sweetness, chocolatiness, nuttiness, etc. I'm talking fudge brownies covered in fruit compote. Wine that's bright with fruit flavors and rich. Thick and sweet.

All the greatest coffees I've preferred and enjoyed most in life have had elements of these dynamics – and the ones which combine all or most of them have become my desert island coffees. These coffees which I could drink day in and day out without ever getting tired of them.

That isn't to say I don't enjoy exploring tastes. That's what makes coffee so fantastic. It has a seemingly infinite dynamic capability to show us something new. And that's given the fact that most coffee in the world is so genetically similar.

So how do you find YOUR favorite tastes in coffee?

The simple answer is to drink all the coffees. Give yourself a task to try coffee from every origin, and then try different coffees from the same origins and compare.

I think though that the approach I outlined in the article on Origins and Taste in this issue will take you far. Separate what you are tasting in your coffee into these broader components - sweetness, sourness, bitterness, and saltiness. Think about how much you enjoy each of those, and then start making note about which origins, processing methods, and roast styles are providing you those experiences that you enjoy.

-Joseph Robertson

# Monthly Coffee Chronicals

A white ceramic mug filled with dark coffee sits on a light-colored surface. To its left, a folded newspaper is visible, showing columns of text. The background is a solid light beige color.

## **A Brewing Problem**

One of the biggest problems in consumer coffee is waste – and the largest contributor to that may just be the k-cup.

► [Read More](#)

## **5 Things You Don't Know About Coffee**

This list actually offers some interesting tidbits (except #2)

► [Read More](#)

## **China is a Nation of Tea Drinkers, But Coffee is Taking Off**

Specialty coffee has been on a huge boom in China over the past 5 years – not just in consumption, but also in the growing of coffee.

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## **Farmers in Honduras Fight For Their Coffee Lives**

This excellent article gives you insight into the devastating effect that low coffee pricing is having on coffee farmers.

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## **The Complexity of Coffee**

This is actually a pretty cool little read on coffee's complex nature.

► [Read More](#)



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