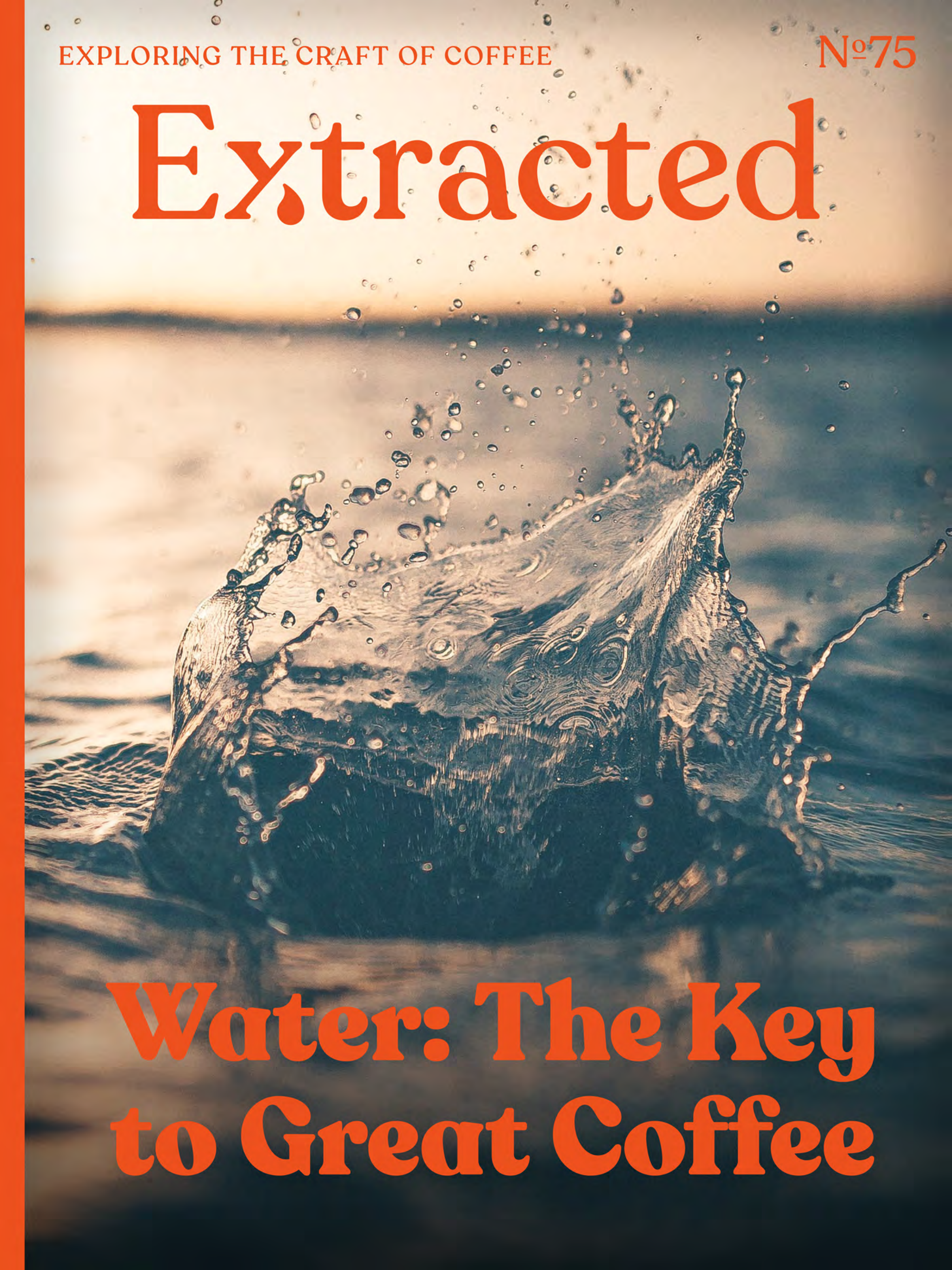


EXPLORING THE CRAFT OF COFFEE

Nº75

Extracted



Water: The Key to Great Coffee



Review the Magazine

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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.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

Water: The Most Important Part of Your Brew

Extracted Magazine

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE...

► **Farmers Leave, Price Jumps, Yemeni Coffee and more ...**

Monthly Coffee Chronicles



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Crafting Brewing Water

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Portland Beers and Brews, Part 1

Steven P. Unger



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PODCAST

Wine, Chocolate, and Coffee

Coffee Lovers Radio



FROM THE EDITOR

This Year in Coffee

Joseph Robertson



**A PATHWAY TO
BETTER COFFEE**

THE COFFEE ROASTER
OF EXTRACTED MAGAZINE

Coffee Tastes



Spice

Spice tastes in coffee come in two forms - natural and unintentionally added. Natural spice in coffee is usually a delight to discover, as the added layer of complexity creates intrigue. On the other side, historically coffee is often processed in the same buildings as spices, so in many cases spice ends up in the processed coffee itself.



Water:

The Most Important

Part of Your Brew

Why is water important for coffee? This is one of those subjects in specialty coffee which seems mundane at first, possibly outright silly, until you actually look into it and try a few things out.

I might go so far as to say that your water is the most important component of your brewing process. It is more important than the quality of the coffee itself.

Let's take a quick look at coffee brewing and how that process works. For the sake of explanations here, I'm going to be talking about brewing with a paper filter pour over in mind. These processes in brewing are universal no matter the method.

This morning, I brewed a batch of coffee on the Kalita Wave. I took a fresh roasted whole bean coffee (a light roast colombian if you're curious), ground that coffee,



added it to the filter, then started my water pouring cycles until the brew was complete.

What's happening during this process?

Water comes in contact with the grounds, saturates the coffee, and then the water begins extracting all the water soluble compounds of that coffee into the water, to then be filtered by paper down into the carafe.

Sounds pretty basic?

What you probably have never thought about is HOW that water extracts these soluble compounds. What is it in the nature of the water to do these things, to make it possible to fill a mug of so many tastes and aromas from the roasted coffee?

For the most part, it's not actually the H₂O. It's the minerals within the water that make the extraction possible.





Don't believe me? Try brewing a coffee with distilled water. It's going to taste disgusting. You'll get some extraction, but for the most part it's going to be a thin sour brew.

Point of interest - never use distilled water to brew coffee (unless you're doing that experiment).

This article is not intended to be a scientific exploration of coffee extraction. If you'd like to dive more into the science of all this, I recommend starting with this piece by the Specialty Coffee Association:

[**scaa.org/PDF/CoffeeBrewing-WettingHydrolysisExtractionRevisited.pdf**](https://scaa.org/PDF/CoffeeBrewing-WettingHydrolysisExtractionRevisited.pdf)

What I want to do here is open your eyes to the critical nature of the water with which you use to brew. I said the water is more important than the quality of the coffee, because even with great quality coffee, if your water is not right, you'll never be able to get a good brew from that coffee.

What This Means for the Home Brewer

One of the greatest challenges I've found in helping others learn how to brew an excellent cup of coffee is that I've no idea what water it is you're working with. I can tell you to get a specific coffee I know you'll like, which is high quality, and I can direct you to a brewing method, but I have no idea what your water situation is, nor do you have a way really to explain to me.

It's not as simple as tasting the water. This is a reasonably common assumption which is passed around, that if you like the taste of your water then it will be fine for coffee (or rather, whatever you taste in your water will get into your coffee). The taste of the water tells us very little (unless you can taste things like chlorine, then we know for sure some filtering needs to be done).

The best universal approach I've found is to establish a baseline for what you can expect in a brewed coffee.

To establish your baseline, start by getting a bottle of spring water from the grocery store (nothing fancy, no

added minerals or electrolytes or anything), brew your coffee with that water and then compare to what you usually use.

Knowing the nature of your own water will be helpful as well. Is it hard, soft, filtered? Water that is hard could have too many minerals, and soft water could have too few. If you're living in a place that doesn't have a quality water source and you have a setup which filters and softens the water going into your house, you could end up with water that is too 'clean' (for lack of a better word) to brew coffee well.

There's a goldilocks zone of mineral content in water to brew a great cup of coffee. Fortunately we don't need to be too precise in getting there. But if you want to read about the specific mineral content ranges, check out Specialty Coffee Association's guidelines:

scaa.org/?d=water-standards&page=resources

I've found that most of the time, a simple charcoal filter

will work well - something like a brita or pur water filter that sits in the fridge (this is what I use). However I'm located in Seattle, which has a fantastic water table. Our water does not need much to be great for brewing coffee.

So to figure out your water, follow these steps:

- 1) Start with a bottled spring water from the store, brew your coffee.

- 2) Compare this with a brew using the water you typically brew with.

- 3) From there, you'll have to do some analysis based on your specific situation. If you're already heavily processing your water (filtering it, softening it, etc), you may need to stick with bottled water for brewing your coffee. If you are just using water straight from the tap, and you find the spring water brew to taste a lot better, I recommend trying a charcoal filter (as this will be much more economical in the long term than bottled water).

The Ultimate Water Solution

There's one more solution to having great brewing water. That is to craft your own water.

That may sound silly at first, but remember, great water for brewing coffee is about the goldilocks balance of minerals in that water. Crafting your own water is about taking distilled/purified water, and then adding the exact mineral balance for brewing great coffee.

Sounds simple right? It is actually quite simple. For the example here, I've taken a 'water recipe' from Barista Hustle (a website dedicated to serving the specialty coffee industry, helping baristas everywhere make better coffee).

[**baristahustle.com/blog/barista-hustle-water-recipe/**](https://baristahustle.com/blog/barista-hustle-water-recipe/)

If you dive down the water crafting rabbit hole, you'll find that people get very specific about the craft of their water, to highlight different parts of the coffee. For our case here, I'm just looking to provide an easy to replicate process to create lots of good quality water for brewing coffee. Let's have a look...

The ingredients you'll need are Baking Soda, Epsom Salt, and Distilled/Deionised water. You'll also need a good scale (which you should already have for brewing), and two containers which can hold at least 500 grams water each.





In this recipe, you'll be making a concentrate of mineralized water, which you then add to distilled water to create the brew. The idea being that you can create a batch of concentrate to last you 10-100 brews, and then just reload on distilled water as you need it.

For the concentrate, measure out 500 grams distilled water, then add 8.6 grams baking soda, and 25 grams epsom salts. Shake this up and then let sit for a few hours to fully dissolve.

To create your brewing water, measure out 500 grams distilled water, then add 2 grams of your concentrate

(shake this up a bit to fully disperse the minerals).

That's it.

From there whenever you brew, you can just add the appropriate amount of concentrate to distilled water, boil away, and brew.

(Just don't forget that some of the water is going to boil away, so if you measure out exactly 500 grams, you aren't going to be able to brew with 500 grams)

Check out the video on the next page where I demonstrate this process...

VIDEO

Making Your Own Water For Brewing Coffee

Extracted Magazine



Coffee Facts



Latte Art Etching

Latte art which is made through a combination of pouring milk foam and dragging that foam across the surface using tools. More elaborate/detailed designs can be made with etching than with free pour latte art.



Exploring Portland Oregon **Beers and Brews** **Part 1**

ARTICLE BY:

Eric Bierker

Eric Bierker is a high school counselor by day and writes in his free time about food, beer, culture, and philosophy/theology for magazines and also at <http://bierkergaard.blogspot.com>. He earned a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Temple University and is an expert on the transition to college. He has written a book "On The Edge: Transitioning Imaginatively To College" which is available on Amazon in both a hard copy and Kindle. He lives in Columbia, Pennsylvania.

As the plane began its descent towards the Portland Airport, the shift in the cabin's air pressure created excruciating pain in my inner ear canals. A baby was howling—and so was I, but on the inside

I fly a decent amount so unexpected searing pain like this was a highly unusual experience.



I speculate it was the peculiarly dense rain-laden atmosphere of Portland which brought on the 15 minutes of tortuous pain which left me nearly deaf for my first 24 hours in Portland. After I dropped off my belongings at the Hotel Dossier, I headed out as if into a silent planet to the legendary late night bar spot. Not being able to hear made it a surreal environment. Almost magical and other-worldly.

The Olympia is a few blocks away from the hotel and I proceeded to engage IPA therapy. I didn't have much of a choice in terms of establishments. It was the only bar open close to the hotel.

It was Christmas Vacation 2018. I had a week to accomplish four tasks in Portland: 1) Drink specialty coffee; 2) Drink craft beer; 3) Eat ethnic cuisines from food trucks; and 4) Walk my arse off; and to reflect on the



similarities and differences between specialty coffee culture and craft beer culture. The food trucks were just an added treat to visit a city that is considered among the best in the world for both coffee and beer.

My friends used to ask what I did on vacation. Visit museums? Nope. Art galleries? Nah. Noteworthy sites? Well, sometimes if they happen to be along my meanderings. I essentially make my yearly Christmas journeys for food, drink, and meeting locals. The places are typically exotic or at

least interesting: the Blue Mountains of Jamaica, Venice Beach, old city Quebec, Taos, etc.

So I get out of Columbia, Pa., a beat-up but endearing little town on the Susquehanna River, and chase the epicurean ideal. I enjoy myself for sure yet practice the fine art of balance. I usually actually lose weight on these vacations despite consuming, due to my walking everywhere ethos. Walking provides a spacer to the victuals. Eat, Drink, and Be Merry, for today and tomorrow we walk.



On a day after Christmas, walking from downtown Portland to North Portland and back, to drink some beers, after having several pints, I almost peed myself a couple of times due to the lack of accessible restrooms. Portland has an ongoing homeless issue, some of whom are quite belligerent and nasty, which has resulted in stores refusing access to lavatories for non-paying drifters like me. I had a truly desperate moment at a Subway where the server asked for 20 dollars to open the john's door. I didn't have time to negotiate or to order something. I was

desperate where every second mattered. I booked out of the store and I ran into a parking garage which miraculously had an open bathroom. A urinary oasis. Never had I appreciated emptying my bladder so much in my life.

On December 23 morn, I made my way to Stumptown Coffee. It was embedded in a classic hotel downtown. Ornate and dimly lit in the hotel lobby, Soul Christmas music wafted like sweet potato pie from the oven. The coffee shop was where people received their coffee and then moseyed over



to the big and substantive rectangular low riding table in the dusky hotel's lobby surrounded by coffee chairs and couches. The setting was low-key. A lot of wood, lights on low, and whispers.

Here I made my first observation on the differences between specialty coffee and craft beer. Coffee culture tends to be intimate and internalized in the US. Other parts of the world, coffee shops are loud and rowdy, even revolutionary. If I had boisterously attempted to connect to other patrons, I

would have been viewed as an ingrate. Whispering, reading, contemplation, and silence reigned. We shared the sacredness of the experience in a subtle way.

As a contrast, later in the day, at Von Ebert Craft Brewery, the opposite vibe prevailed. Garrulousness was king. Guffaws and locals telling stories of Old Portland. A few hours difference and a switching of drinks was almost a perfect expression of introversion vs. extroversion writ large. Since I have both of



these traits, I can adjust easily. My coffee drinking tends to head in the bookish and literary direction where my beer drinking makes me a story-telling raconteur.

I thought of a perfect scene that illustrates the difference. A man with a book, reading in a coffee shop. Normal. Expected. Usual. Move that man to a Craft Beer Emporium with the same demeanor and book? A weirdo, anti-social misfit. Perhaps a serial killer. I know this is a stereotype all around. If the coffee shop serves cuisine,

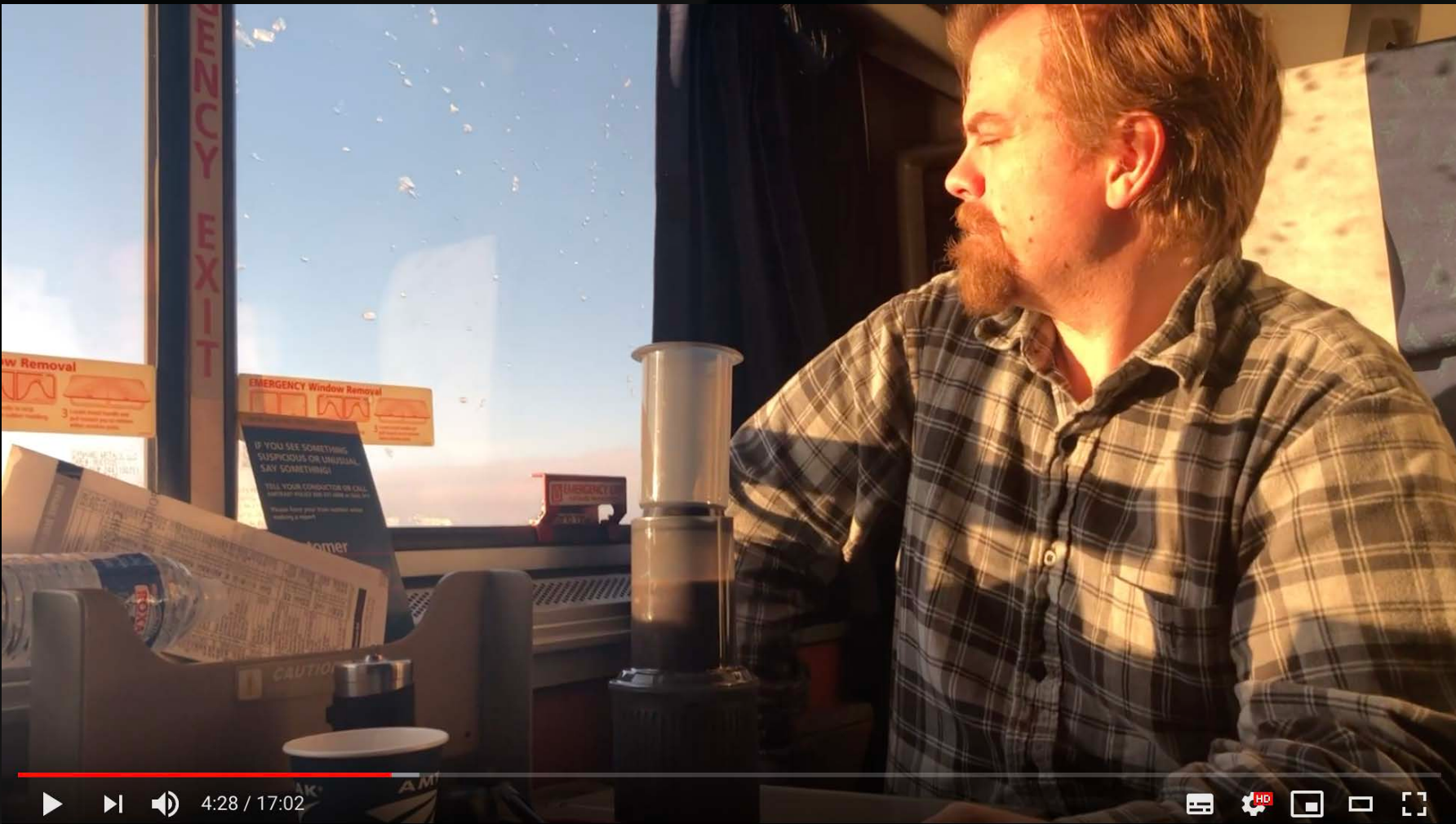
it is usually very chatty. But a classic coffee shop is more hushed. As it was, I had a lovely mug of Stumptown's Duromina coffee. It was wonderful.

In upcoming installments, I will delve further into the similarities and differences between specialty coffee and craft beer and construct a metaphorical bridge between them. A big similarity is the appreciation of quality and how that mug or glass content's came to be from start to finish. And the flavorful stories along the way.

VIDEO

Aeropress Go on The Train

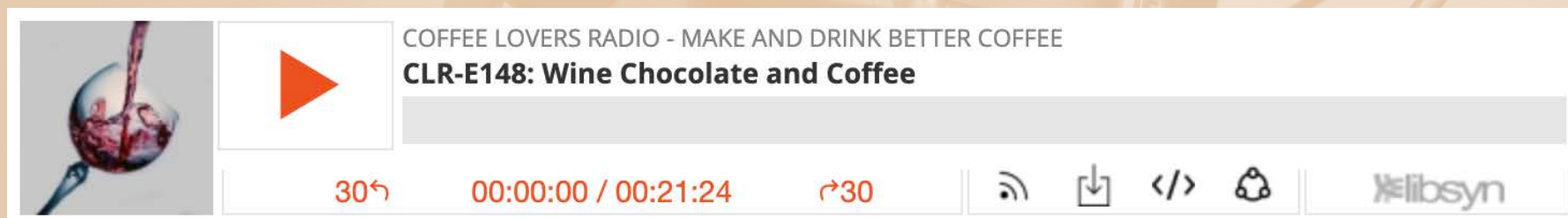
Extracted TV



CLR-EPIISODE 147

Wine Chocolate and Coffee

Coffee Lovers Radio



Aaron Barthel of Intrigue Chocolate co joins us for another episode. On this one, he pulls the subject out of the mug – What is Your Favorite Wine? A fitting subject for such a guest. We also talk about the interesting phenomenon where coffee doesn't seem to taste as good as it smells. What is that all about?

Visit Intrigue Chocolates - www.intriguechocolate.com

Hosts

Joseph Robertson, Extracted Magazine

www.extractedmagazine.com

Jesse Nelson, Conduit Coffee

www.conduitcoffee.com

This Year In Coffee

With 2019 coming to a close, I thought it would be good to take a quick look back on the year and have some thoughts.

The biggest story this year – though perhaps not one that was as loudly proclaimed as it should have been – has been the depressively low average commodity price for coffee. This price drives the global average sale cost per pound of coffee. It's generally determined through investment based on global supply and demand.

In August, the price dropped to a 12 year low, and when considering inflation, hit the lowest price compared to expense and living costs that coffee has ever been reported. That is, farmers were making the least amount ever comparatively.

This has driven many farmers out of business, impacting coffee production worldwide. I'm not sure we'll ever have a clear picture of the total impact that this has had. The sad part is that all this is happening purely on the back of speculative investing.



In this issue's Coffee Chronicles, you'll find an article that talks about this a little bit. As we hit the end of the year, the coffee C price is actually surging. Though if you read articles about this, they are all fear-based, as the only reason the price is going up is because Brazil is running out of coffee stores (again, supply and demand).

Those of you who enjoy specialty coffee are already paying for coffee that is way above these prices. SCA has determined that the minimum cost for sustained farming production of coffee should be at least \$2.50 per pound (and the C price presently is \$1.36, the highest it's been this year). Most quality specialty

coffee is purchased above this price, as roasters and importers motivated to produce higher quality roasted coffee needs to invest much more into the production than these numbers.

The biggest impact that we as consumers will observe is probably going to be seen on the local small business level. For the past few years, it's been easier than ever to get into roasting quality coffee. With prices so low, and increased access to knowledge/resources, little roasters and cafes all around the world have been popping up, bringing specialty coffee to places outside of big cities (where traditionally it's easiest to make as a profitable business).

If the commodity price continues to rise, it will likely eventually affect everyone, and those tiny roasters and cafes with razor-thin margins are going to get pushed out. On the flip side, more and more big coffee companies, who 4 years ago were soaring through investment, are being gobbled up by conglomerates.

Specialty coffee to me is largely about community, craft, and connecting with people all around the world. It feels like that entire system is about to get squeezed (if it isn't already).

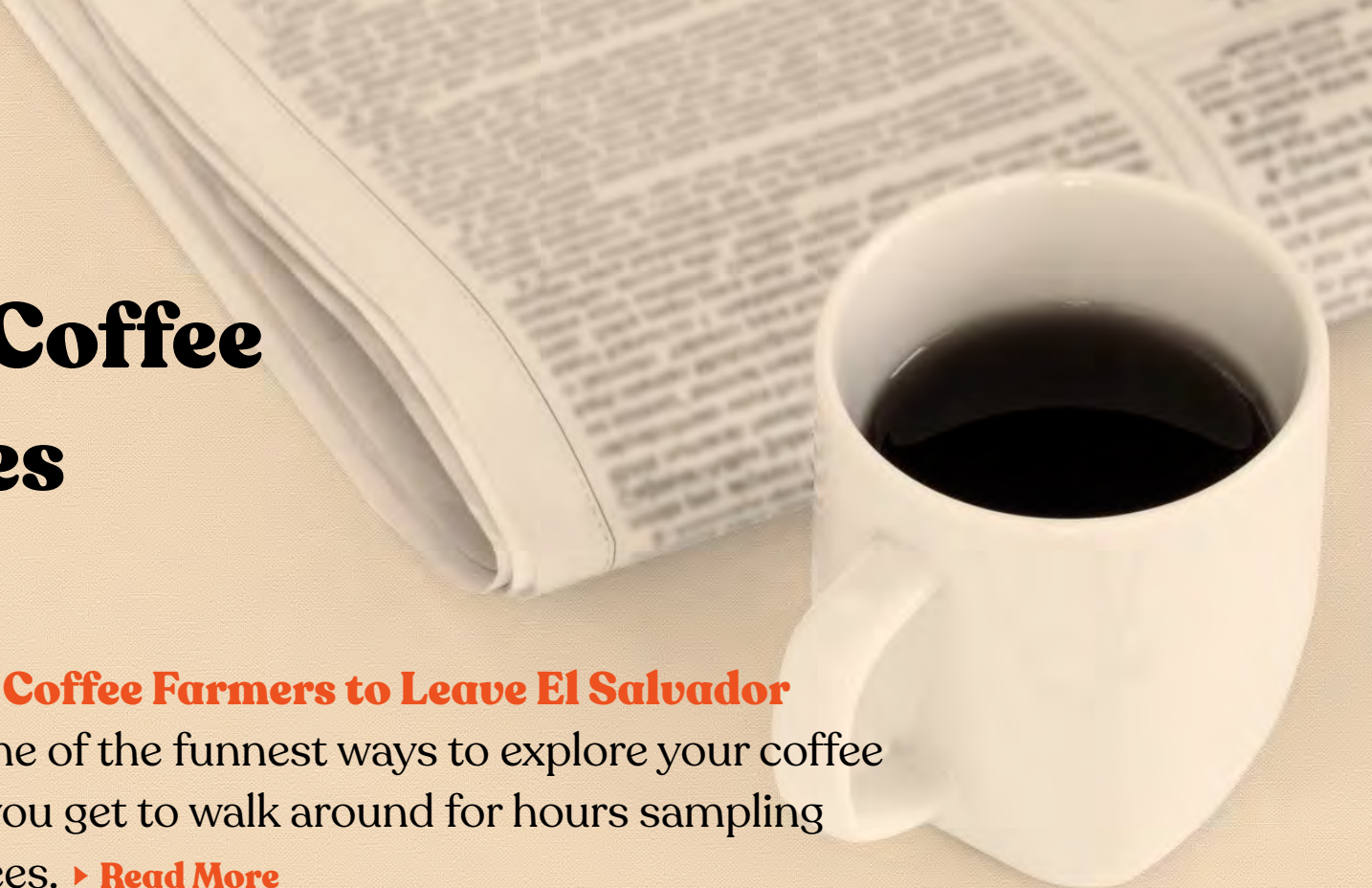
What can we do?

Find local roasters and cafes, and support them directly.
Make it one of your new years resolutions to try a new place
out each month. Meet the roasters, find out what they
believe, and support those who help others.

Thank you for joining me this year and this decade. See you
in the next :)

-Joseph Robertson

Monthly Coffee Chronicles

A white ceramic mug filled with dark coffee sits on a light-colored surface. Next to it is a folded newspaper, with its text visible on the pages.

Bad Harvests Force Coffee Farmers to Leave El Salvador

Coffee festivals are one of the funnest ways to explore your coffee obsession. Typically you get to walk around for hours sampling endless kinds of coffees. ▶ [Read More](#)

The Price of Coffee on the C Market Just Took a Huge Jump

The part of this article which makes it worthwhile is giving you the perspective of WHO is responsible for the commodity price in coffee.

▶ [Read More](#)

Two Cousins Aim to Put Yemeni Coffee Back in the Spotlight

This is the story of a new cafe opening in Brooklyn, focusing on Yemeni coffee and culture. I'd definitely visit this. ▶ [Read More](#)

Picked by Slaves: Coffee Crisis Brews in Brazil

This is the dark side of coffee. And one which you need to see.

▶ [Read More](#)

Defending Switzerland's Coffee Stockpile

The Swiss have a unique thing going here. The only question is, how vital to life is coffee really...? ▶ [Read More](#)



Happy New Year!

CHEERS TO TWENTY TWENTY