

Coffee in India

Although India's romance with coffee goes back over 400 years, commercial cultivation did not start till 1840 when the British established coffee plantations throughout the mountains of Southern India.

Most of the early plantations grew Arabica coffee from the seeds originally brought from Yemen around 1600. Coffee plantations were extended to lower elevations in India around 1900 with Robusta plants imported from Indonesia.

Coffee Production Today

India is the sixth largest producer of coffee in the world, behind Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia, Indonesia, and Mexico. It produces about 320,000 MT of coffee each year, of which 104,000 MT is Arabica and 216,000 MT is Robusta.

India exports nearly 200,000 MT of coffee each year, mostly Arabica and high grade Robusta. Italy, importing 50,000 MT each year, is the largest importer of coffees from India, because they perform particularly well in espresso blends. Of the three principal coffee growing states, Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, the first two produce most of India's Robusta.

India processes coffee by both the wet (or washed), as well as the dry (or natural) methods. Washed Arabica beans are known as Plantation and washed Robusta beans are called Parchment. Unwashed coffee beans, both Arabica and Robusta, are known as Cherry.

Rigid control of quality and grade designations by India Coffee Board, an agency of the Government of India, ensures the export of only the finest of India's hand picked coffee beans.

Robusta Coffees

Most people in the US have a prejudice against Robusta coffees. This can be traced to commercial coffees which were adulterated with cheap Robusta

before the coffee was ground and canned. This way of lowering the average cost of their coffee was achieved only with considerable loss of quality.

This led Specialty Coffee Association of America, at the time of its founding, to prohibit the use of Robusta as the distinguishing feature of Specialty Coffee. While this prohibition may be justifiable for brewed coffee, it is not at all reasonable for Italian or European espresso.

Most coffee professionals in the US, particularly new entrants in the Specialty Coffee industry, have not experienced a good, clean Robusta. Their image of a Robusta coffee is derived from the low quality, dry-processed Robusta with a rubbery after-taste from Thailand or Vietnam that is commonly available in this country. With that mind set, they simply cannot associate any Robusta with high quality or high prices.

Parchment Coffees

Robusta plants that produce Parchment coffee are grown in India at the lower elevations, between 1000 and 4000 feet, on sides of mountains with an ideal

combination of sunshine, shade, rainfall and soil conditions. Many of these estates are also suitable for growing Arabica, and many do.

Processing and preparation are labor intensive and require enormous quantities of fresh, clean water. As in the case of Arabica, beans are selectively picked by hand, only when the beans are fully ripe and at the peak of their flavor. At day's end, pickers sort through the day's pick to remove partially ripe orange and yellow beans that were accidentally picked before the beans are submitted for weighing and pulping.

The sweet pulp of the bean is first exposed by removing the outer skin and then fermented and washed off the bean. After further washing and overnight soaking in clean water, beans are sun dried to specified moisture content, hulled, polished and graded to exacting standards.

Kaapi Royale

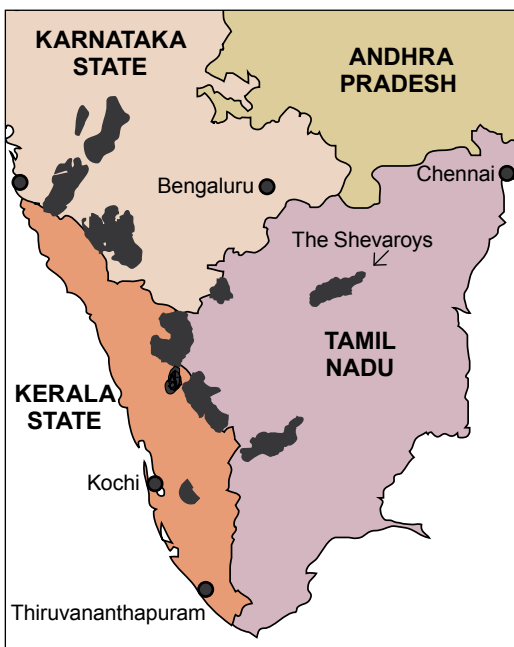
This grade, first introduced in the 1992-93 crop year, shows India's commitment to the Specialty Coffee Trade.

To be called Kaapi Royale, 95% of the beans must stand on a sieve with round holes 6.70 mm in diameter (17 screen) and 100% must stand on 6.65 mm sieve. No peaberries, broken beans, bits, blacks, brown or foreign matter is permitted.

Bean & Cup Characteristics

A principal feature of Indian Robusta is that plants from every generation is faithful to its parent, in that the plants undergo very little genetic mutation from generation to generation. As a result, the cup quality is very stable, despite beans being from Robusta plants from very different generations.

Beans of this coffee are clean, uniform, and extra bold. Screen size of 17 is very large for Robusta beans.



Map of South India showing both Arabica and Robusta Growing Regions

Bean preparation is outstanding. After grading, these beans are polished, put through an electronic color sorter and finally hand garbled. In this last process, a bank of 10 to 16 people visually inspect these beans, in layers one bean thick, as they are transported on a conveyor belt.

In the cup, this coffee is clean, full-bodied but soft, smooth and mellow. Although its Robusta roots can not be hidden, the characteristic rubbery after-taste, often associated with inexpensive Robusta, is virtually non-existent.

This coffee withstands the full range of roasting colors. It behaves well when roasted to very dark colors used in espresso blends in North America. Medium to light roasting, typical of Northern Italian style espresso, works fine too.

Suggested Uses

We recommend use of this premium coffee in three specific applications:

First, to fortify milk based espresso beverages: When milk makes up a significant part of the drink, coffee flavors become muted and most espresso blends are too mild to power through the milk. Addition of **Kaapi Royale** helps to cut into the milk and fortify the Arabica coffee flavors. It also adds to the European flavor profile that no Arabica can do.

Secondly, to enhance the *crema* in an espresso: **Kaapi Royale** helps to maintain ample *crema* that is the ear-mark of a high quality espresso. In our experience, Robusta does not necessarily produce more *crema*, but it alters the surface tension sufficiently to make the *crema* bubbles last much longer. Proprietary blends containing **Kaapi Royale** have produced *crema* so rich that it takes twenty minutes before it breaks in the middle to reveal a dark brew underneath.

Thirdly, as a component in a high caffeine blend: Since **Kaapi Royale** contains roughly twice the caffeine of Arabica, such blends give that extra "kick" one looks for in high-caffeine blends.

Josuma Coffee Company

Josuma Coffee Company imports fine specialty coffees exclusively from India for distribution to brokers, wholesale roasters, and roaster/retailers in the United States and Canada.

Josuma Coffee Company, located in the San Francisco Bay Area, was formed in 1992 to function as a knowledgeable importer of Indian coffees and to act as an effective liaison between the producers in India and the Specialty Coffee market in North America.

All the coffees we import are the result of "direct trade," buying them directly from the estates where they are grown, picked, and processed to meet Josuma's exacting standards. We do not buy any of these coffees from the trade in India. By eliminating several layers of intermediaries, we are able to pass on those savings to you.

This coffee is available thru:

Imported by:

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Menlo Park, CA 94026
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Fax: 650-366-5464
e-mail: info@josuma.com
web site: www.josuma.com

JOSUMA
COFFEE COMPANY

KAAPI ROYALE

a
premium
washed
robusta
from

India