Subject: Re: Gourmet Coffee
Posted by Thermionic on Tue, 11 Jun 2013 05:41:18 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

There are two small roasteries here in Arkansas whose stuff makes me giddy just thinkin' 'bout it. One is Biff's Coffee http://www.biffscoffee.com, the other is RoZark Hills Coffee Roasterie http://www.rozark.com/.

In my gentle but unbending, hardcore-to-the-bone coffee snob opinion, both are definitely better than the premium grocery store brands (Millstone, Seattle's best, Starbucks, etc), and equal or best anything I've tried from any other roastery, large or small (and I've tried a BUNCH of 'em). Biff's is available at WalMart in my area, but I don't know if it's available out-of-state, or would be acceptably fresh. But, it's always super fresh when you order it, and they get it packed and shipped muy pronto.

All of Biff's single varietal coffees are expertly done, but my favorite is the good old fashioned Colombian Supremo. IMHO it's an absolutely perfect roast for the particular bean, and is always a well-balanced cup with great aroma and body, fine flavor, and a clean, mild acidity. My morning brew every day. The Guatemalan and Kenya AA are also really nice, and are "fine examples of their breed." If you like the sharp, tangy "zing" of Costa Rican, Biff does a good one that's roasted a tad darker than usual is to give a more balanced cup. The Classic House Blend is okay, although I don't care for their other blends. Then again, I'm just not at all a fan of blends in general; I much prefer single varietals.

Years ago, whenever I happened to be in that part of the state, I would drop in and chew the fat with Biff and grab some coffee fresh out of the roaster. He's one of the nicest guys you'll ever meet, albeit a real character with an intense personality that you'll NEVER forget.... But, he's an obsessively nitpicky old fussbudgety curmudgeon when it comes to quality, and takes a fierce pride in his work that you can taste in his product.

RoZark Hills is located about 5 miles from where I grew up, and whenever I'm there visiting I stop in and chat with Rita (the lady on RoZark's homepage slideshow), and see what new stuff she has. She's a really sweet lady, but like Biff is poker-faced serious and obsessive-compulsive about coffee. Rita's experience goes back a LONG way, to when she was a roastmaster in Seattle. I've spoken with many roastmasters and sampled the fruit of their work, and IMO she and Biff are the two most talented ones I've encountered.

RoZark used to have an Ethiopian Yirgacheffee that was my favorite coffee of all time. Sadly, she stopped carrying it for whatever reason. Nonetheless, every varietal that RoZark carries is top-notch. I particularly enjoy their Guatemalan Huehuetango. My uncle and aunt are some downright serious coffee drinkers, and go through a few pounds of RoZark's Colombian per week, purchased right there at the roastery. It's the only coffee they'll drink.

Thermionic