



COFFEESELECT

Coffee Tasting Notes - Indian Monsooned

Centuries ago, when coffee beans were transported from Asia to Europe in sailing ships, purely by accident a new coffee taste was discovered. Monsoon winds and high moisture levels below deck caused the beans to swell during their voyages across the sea, causing them to change colour and acquire a uniquely distinctive flavour.

Today, a handful of producers on the West Coast of Southern India with special open sided warehouses for 'monsooning' recreate the atmosphere of sending the beans across the sea. Raw, green beans harvested from December to February are spread across the floor of these special warehouses, where moisture laden monsoon winds circulate around the coffee beans as the storms roll in from June to September.

This process dramatically increases the aging process - the beans turn pale yellow in color and swell in size, reducing their acidity. As the acidity levels drop, the beans take on a mellowed but consistent, musty flavour and impart a heavy syrupy flatness reminiscent of aged coffees.

These 'speciality' coffees are predominantly used in blends to impart richness and body to fresher, more acidic full flavoured coffees.

Both Arabica and Robusta cherries (unwashed coffees) are used for the preparation of monsooned coffees. However, better quality beans make a significant difference to the final product.

Monsooned beans are traditionally only available for shipment from September to March. The annual production in India ranges between 3,500 and 5,000 tonnes depending on that year's general coffee production.

International demand for monsooned coffee has increased dramatically over the last few years. The monsooned style of coffee is extremely popular in Scandinavian countries, Norway, Switzerland, Germany, USA and Japan.

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