

Green Coffee: What to Buy, How to Roast It, and How Not To

Eight coffees a small roaster will meet. Start with the first four. Prices are per pound in a 65 lb box, shipping included, October 2026.

COFFEE REFERENCE CARD

Coffee	Tastes of	Green price	Roast it to	How to roast it	How NOT to roast it	On the stall
START HERE: FORGIVING, AND LIKED BY ALMOST EVERYONE						
Colombia, washed	Caramel, nuts, mild citrus	about \$6.10	City+ to Full City	A dense, hard bean: give it strong heat early. Finish 1½–2½ minutes after first crack starts.	Low and slow: a flat, drawn-out roast tastes baked. Or dark: the sweetness burns off.	The house coffee
Guatemala, washed	Chocolate, nuts, a little fruit	\$7–\$8	City+ to Full City	As Colombia: a hard bean that likes firm heat	Stopped at the first pops: sour and grassy	A second medium; the pour-over
Brazil, natural	Nuts, chocolate, low acidity, heavy body	about \$5.75	Full City to Full City+	A softer, lower-grown bean: gentler heat than a Colombia. Expect a lot of chaff.	Light: flat, peanutty, woody. Or with high heat early: the surface scorches.	The dark roast; the base of a blend
Decaf (Colombia sugarcane, or Swiss Water)	Like its origin, softer	\$6.55–\$7.20	City+ to Full City	Starts brown, so go by sound and time. Use less heat.	On regular-coffee settings: decaf roasts faster and darkens quickly. Or judged by color.	One decaf, always
ADD NEXT						
Ethiopia, washed	Lemon, flowers, tea	about \$7.35	City to City+	Small, dense beans that roast fast. Keep it short; stop soon after first crack ends.	Dark: everything worth paying for is gone by second crack. Often arrives very dry and finishes darker than planned.	The light roast
Sumatra, wet-hulled	Earth, cedar, spice; heavy body	\$7.50–\$8.40 (20 lb price)	Full City+	Roasts unevenly and looks lighter than it is. Go by smell and the first snaps of second crack.	Light: raw wood and green pepper. Or by color: it misleads.	A dark roast with character
LEAVE UNTIL THE ROASTING IS CONSISTENT						
Ethiopia, natural	Blueberry, strawberry, wine	\$6.80–\$7.00 (full-bag price)	City+ to Full City	Unevenly sorted, heavy chaff. Smaller batches, good airflow, steady heat.	As a first coffee: uneven beans roast unevenly, and the chaff is a fire risk in a small drum.	A special, later
Robusta	Bitter, woody, heavy; high caffeine	\$6.65–\$8.85 (1 lb price)	French	Dark and long; it is meant for condensed milk	Light or medium: rubbery and harsh. A Behmor cannot take it dark enough.	Phin coffee only

- **Keep green coffee** in the house at room temperature, dry and dark, in its liner. It holds for 6 to 12 months. Not the refrigerator or freezer.
 - **Buy small first:** 1 lb and 5 lb lots to find the line-up, then 65 lb boxes of what sells.
- **Write down every roast:** coffee, weight in and out, time to first crack, total time. Weight lost shows how dark it went.
 - **Chaff is fuel.** Naturals shed the most. Clean the roaster on the maker's schedule.

Sources: Mill City Roasters, "The Best Green Coffee to Start With"; Behmor 2000AB Plus manual (heat by origin, decaf, chaff); Sweet Maria's on arrival moisture and storage; Genuine Origin, Sweet Maria's and other seller prices read 2 October 2026. Roast-by-origin advice beyond those sources is common roasting practice: confirm it on your own roaster.

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