

BLANDI COFFEE PODCAST

ALL COFFEE NO SUGAR

with Patrizio Blandi



Episode 7 Competition Coffee

Welcome to the Blandi Coffee Podcast, all coffee, no sugar. I'm your host, Patrizio Blandi. I'm also the owner and coffee roaster for Blandi Coffee. In this episode, I don't want to talk about how to enter a coffee for a competition or what is involved in a coffee competition.

In this episode, which is number 7, I want to give you five tips to ensure you are getting an award winning coffee if that's what you're buying. Today, I want to share and really zero in on the roasted coffee beans that have won awards or competitions. So two important questions to ask yourself about the award winning coffee, the first one is, are you really getting the same coffee as what was entered into the coffee competition? Is the coffee still an award winning coffee? And what I mean by that is the way the coffee store, handle, and display subtract from the quality of the coffee itself. So these are the very important questions to ask. I really believe that you as a customer go and buy coffee and you put a lot of trust in coffee roasters and coffee companies and you give them a lot of respect to what they say to you when you buy coffee from them. But are you really treated the same way and with the same respect.

A little bit about what is involved in coffee competitions and how a coffee is scored highly. The judging of these coffee competitions is fairly intense and the coffee have to score highly on all aspects of what makes a great coffee. Coffee that enters the competitions are judged on the following qualities of the coffee. I don't know if every individual coffee competitions what their protocol in what defines a great coffee so what I've done is I looked up a sample on the SCA website. This is the Special Coffee Association of America. It's a judging template and the coffees must score highly on all the following areas.

TASTE THE WORLD WITH US

It's broken down to seven categories. The first one being the aroma and fragrance of the coffee. The second one is the flavour of the coffee. The third one is acidity. The fourth one is body. The fifth one is the uniformity of the coffee. Number six is how clean the cup is and number seven is the overall taste of the coffee itself. These seven qualities listed can only score highly on the following basis and this basis is how I enter my coffees. It must meet three criteria. The first criteria it must meet is using a high quality coffee bean. Now, by using a high quality grain coffee bean, it means that the actual quality selection process, everything about the getting you that green bean is taking more time spent to get you a better quality and consistency of the green bean. What I mean about that is a high quality green coffee bean, the actual size of the beans are sorted so that they are similar size.

When you roast, that's very important because if you have a coffee bean that is of a similar size, you're roasting will be similar on each coffee bean. If the coffee beans vary in size, then your coffee roasting will change. So that means, consistency and taste will be different on each bean because of the variance in sizes. Now, by having a high quality green bean, the cherries when they're at peak, they're picked at similar maturity when harvested from the tree. When the farmers go out to pick the coffees, they spend more time. They're only picking coffees that are ready to be picked, that are matured, that are ready for

Master The Way You Make Coffee
www.blandicoffee.com

BLANDI COFFEE PODCAST

ALL COFFEE NO SUGAR

with Patrizio Blandi



Episode 7 Competition Coffee

processing. Anything that's not ready is left on the tree. Anything that's over matured is taken off and put in a separate batch. It's the mixed up in the batches. So you have a coffee that's ready for processing and then you have the coffee that's overripe. It's in two separate batches so it gives you the consistency there again.

Another criteria I look for is when I make up my blends, I look at the single origin coffees I use and the single origin coffees I use must complement each other if I use it in a blend. It makes up what the other one lacks. What I mean by that is, if I use three different coffee beans in my blend, if I have one coffee bean that lacks body, I will use another one that will complement that flavour will complement that coffee and add body to that blend. Then, if out of those two coffees I'm lacking acidity, I will add another coffee bean to that mix that will enhance the acidity plus complementing the flavours together. And that will give me a very unique blend and a balanced coffee overall.

If I'm using a single origin on its own then I will be looking for a coffee that's well balanced and has the high levels of each of those seven areas that are outlined before. The third thing I'd implement is when I roast my coffee, it has to be a specific roasting profile to bring out the very best out of the coffee and the coffee entering the competitions is fresh. By the time it gets to the competition, it's less than seven days old. By that time the coffee has reached its peak and it's going to give you the very best. That's why I'd really insist on the coffee being fresh. These are some important factors I consider when entering coffee in competitions and when winning an award.

TASTE THE WORLD WITH US

When you go and buy coffee it's very hard to look at the green beans and what kind of quality the green beans are and stuff like that. I would say, assume that those elements have been adhered to if the company and the coffee roaster wants to give you the same experience as what they've entered into competition to what they want to give you as a coffee to be the same. It's hard to see the quality of the green coffee bean especially if it's not blend because the actual coffee beans might be different to each other. If it's a single origin, you could see even if it's roasted that coffee bean sizes are similar. But if it's a blend, it's a bit harder to see that. There is one really important aspect of all that. If we assume that coffee roaster have used high quality green bean and they've mixed the similar origins to complement each other, we assume that that step is being followed then the last bit of it, the way it's being roasted is very important. That's how you can tell coffee if it's met the criteria. If they can't follow a basic step like this, the coffee bean freshly roasted, then you really wonder if the other steps are being followed.

So this is the most basic element in providing a fresh, high grade competition coffee and it really fires me up because I see this all the time when I go to coffee shops or I go to roaster shops that sell coffee in house. They don't deliver this very basic point and this is again 20% that gives you the 80% result. It's a very

Master The Way You Make Coffee
www.blandicoffee.com

BLANDI COFFEE PODCAST

ALL COFFEE NO SUGAR

with Patrizio Blandi



Episode 7 Competition Coffee

important step and just following that it gives you very big results and it really bugs me because even if they followed all their steps, they're just failing on the first basic step of all by giving you a fresh coffee.

By personally entering coffees for competition and I have one award for my coffees, now, the way I enter the coffees is exactly the same way I give it to my customers. There is one reason why I stuck to my coffee roaster machine that I have. It is small that gives me flexibility to roast whatever amounts of coffee I need for my roasting cycle. The larger sized coffee roasters out there have huge coffee roasters ranging from 30-60-120 kilo roasters. This is about meeting supply and demand, not about providing fresh coffee to their customers. The bigger the range of coffees a coffee roaster have, for example, they have 10 or 15 coffees that provide to you and they sell, it's very hard to keep all these coffees fresh especially if they have huge coffee roasters like 120 kilo coffee roasters.

To do one batch of coffee roasting is a 120 kilos. To do anything less, it won't be economical on that machine, so they have to roast a 120 kilo batch. By doing that, all those coffees might not sell. You might have some coffees that are a slow seller or some that are high sellers. Coffees that are slow sellers, it will take longer to sell, so, you might pull over the four week period and you're not getting that coffee fresh, you're getting stale coffee. You've got to be wary of coffee companies that offer you huge amounts of variety but they can't offer you that freshness.

TASTE THE WORLD WITH US

Other things to look out for in the way they store the coffee beans when you walk into a shop or you go into a coffee roaster and you see how they supply you. It's very basic and these are the five important steps to consider when you go and buy a coffee. The first point to consider is the container or the bag they're using to store the coffee, airtight. Now, what is airtight? When I walk into a coffee shop or coffee roasters that sell roasted coffee, they have their coffees on display. They have them on these beautiful, clear canisters, dispensers. You can see the coffee and you dispense it, brass looking and stuff. It looks very pretty but it's not airtight. The other thing I see when they supply coffee, they have them in huge tubs. They put them in a huge tub with just a lid that screws on and off. Again, you see huge amounts of coffees there and when they add new coffee, what can they really do is add on top that. So the storage container they're using is not airtight.

It has to be a sealable container, whether it's putting to bag straight away with a one way valve or it's putting to containers that are airtight and air doesn't get into them.

The second thing to look out for is where is the coffee stored? The containers are transparent so you can see through or are they container that you can't see through them so the coffee stays in a dark place or in a

Master The Way You Make Coffee
www.blandicoffee.com

BLANDI COFFEE PODCAST

ALL COFFEE NO SUGAR

with Patrizio Blandi



Episode 7 Competition Coffee

dark bag. And that's very important because some light can destroy coffee. And that's the third point, where are they storing the coffee? I see a lot of coffees displayed next to the window to the front edge of the shop and that's where sunlight comes in and that destroys and degrades the coffee. So, that's another important factor when buying coffee. Where is it stored in relation to the sunlight? What kind of form is the coffee when they sell it to you? Is it whole bean or ground?

When you're buying coffee, it should be in a whole bean. Whole bean last longer than being grounded. As soon as you ground the coffee, it's going to start to go stale. You must use it within three minutes. There are some coffee companies that sell pre grounded coffee that are pre grounded, sealed in a bag, ready to go, so, that again is not ensuring that freshness.

The fifth and the most important point to look out for is, is the coffee fresh? How fresh is fresh? Well, my rule of thumb is, the coffee that you buy should be no more than a week old. If people order my coffee online, by the time I roast it and ship it out, it's within seven days. I pretty much guarantee that. So if they received coffee that's more than seven days old, it's free. I will refund the money. That's a very important factor in my philosophy about coffee. It has to be fresh. The reason why I say can't be more than a week old is because if you order coffee and you should be ordering coffee no more than two weeks supply. So by the time you receive it, it's a week old, you use the coffee, last you about two weeks, that's three weeks, your final coffee.

TASTE THE WORLD WITH US

Your coffee bean in the bag that remained at the end is about three weeks old. So you fall within the four week period and that's the peak of the coffee. That's why I really insists that the customer should be getting coffee that are at least, no more than a week old.

Now, how can you tell if you are getting what you've paid for. It doesn't really matter what coffee you are buying or what they're claiming, award winning coffee, freshly roasted coffee, there are boutique coffee roasters, it doesn't matter what they are. artisan coffee roaster, hand crafted coffee, it doesn't matter what the label is. The following tips will help you. Just to reinforce what I've said before, I'm breaking down to five things to consider when you buy the coffee.

The first point, the roast label. The label on the coffee bag should have a roast date on it. It should state when the coffee was roasted. No expiry date or best before date, it's still date when the coffee was roasted.

The second thing to look out for is a batch number. The reason why, important factor about batch number is, I can go back into when the coffee was roasted and the roasting profile. So that's a very important thing.

Master The Way You Make Coffee
www.blandicoffee.com

BLANDI COFFEE PODCAST

ALL COFFEE NO SUGAR

with Patrizio Blandi



Episode 7 Competition Coffee

If any of my customers want to check out the date of that particular batch number, I can give it to them straight away. I keep all my roasting logs.

The third factor to look out for when buying coffee is it's kept in airtight containers. You're not buying it from one of those dispenser coffee displays or in a container that's open with no lid or it's a screw lid. It's not air tight. That's an important factor. Is it in a bag that's really sealed? That's fine. The fourth factor to look out for, where is the coffee being kept or stored? Is in front of the shop, in front of the window where the sunlight shines?

Coffee kept in a dark place and not in clear bags is ideal. And the fifth factor to consider is the coffee bean whole bean, not grounded, pre grounded or grounded coffee?

Whole bean as I explained last four weeks, grounded coffee last three minutes, so it's important that the coffee bean that you buy is whole bean, you have a grinder at home and you grind it yourself. You grind only what you need and that's the best way to enjoy the coffee.

If you follow those five steps, you will get coffee that is amazing. And other thing to consider is you're getting these coffee at its peak and its well looked after. You're going to get things in coffee that you've never had, aroma, a full flavour coffee, you can actually taste coffee, beautiful, sweet notes of chocolate, caramel, you get all that in the coffee because it's within that timeframe. Anything over the three or four weeks, you're going to start deteriorating that and you won't get those notes and you won't get the full potential of the coffee so I really, really insist to get fresh coffee. And that's the whole point of it, if you're entering a coffee for competition, go early to make sure when you enter the coffee, you're giving a coffee that's of a high calibre. You must do the same for your customers. You can't just enter a coffee and say, I want a competition, now, I can do whatever I want with it.

I can see that a lot of people hype on about winning awards but they don't follow through what they've entered. You don't need to be an expert, you just need to follow those five steps when you go and buy coffee. You can physically see it and easy to remember so you don't need use of experience to buy coffee, you just need to follow those five important factors. You might say that you've got coffee that's less than a month old when you bought it or the coffee is like a month and a half, whatever the case is. My strong recommendation is less than a week old, when you received it then you got the two weeks to enjoy it and by they time you finish it, it should be within the 3-4 weeks and it fits comfortably in that peak zone.

You must be given a date, an exact date, not an expiry or a best before date, it's the date the coffee was roasted. Follow those, that's enough, I'm all about progress and not progress the nation. Go to your local coffee roaster or cafe and look for coffee that's freshly roasted. Look for a label that gives you a date. This is

Master The Way You Make Coffee
www.blandicoffee.com

BLANDI COFFEE PODCAST

ALL COFFEE NO SUGAR

with Patrizio Blandi



Episode 7 Competition Coffee

not as easy as you think and that's the only thing I want you to go in and have a look at. Believe me, it's very hard to find and if you do find it, try it and see how you go just because it's fresh, it doesn't mean you're going to like it. If you don't like the coffee at that point, it's because your flavour is like mine. Some people might like more some people like white wines. So it's to your personal preference. So by buying it fresh, at least you know that's what the coffee has to offer. It can't get better than that. I hope you have enjoyed the show. If you believe the show has helped you in any way, review the show on iTunes and give it a five star rating it's deserved.

You only make it more visible to people like you. By making it more visible to people like you, it's going to help more people. The aim of this podcast is to help as many people as possible. People like you that are really passionate about making your coffee better and enjoying coffee much more. Thank you once more for joining me on this episode. I hope to see you on the next one. That's it for me and enjoy your coffee.



Master The Way You Make Coffee
www.blandicoffee.com

BLANDI COFFEE PODCAST
ALL COFFEE NO SUGAR
with Patrizio Blandi



Episode 7 Competition Coffee



Master The Way You Make Coffee
www.blandicoffee.com