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## Coffee Confidential

by Cathy Whitlock

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### The Scrupulous Palate's Guide

Whether your passions run to superior brewed coffee or exquisite espresso, your pursuit of spe puts you in valuable company. In the \$40 billion domestic-coffee market, the specialty-coffee bu claims \$14 billion of that, with independent coffee stores leading the recent charge. Most telling showing that the specialty-coffee consumer now outnumbers the wine-drinking population, acco Strand.

"Scarcity is driving the interest in the small coffee producers," Strand explains, discussing the ze which java lovers snap up the latest, greatest small-batch productions. "Coffee is becoming the was before wine became so popular." To procure the absolute finest, here's what belongs on yo



*Know your beans.* Sam single-origin coffee bea wine connoisseurs, you know growing regions a you prefer as you devel stronger sense of the fl: profiles best suited to y Whereas your penchan to Central and South Ar might occasionally find or Middle Eastern prod your need for a truly me cup. Belonging to a coff that curates the planet's

beans, following sustainable, fair-trade practices, sets you on the right path. A Citizen Bean mer provides you a pound of coffee each month. \$199 per year, citizenbean.com

And it can't hurt to inquire at places specializing in posh. Colin Walsh, food and beverage direct Rosewood Mansion on Turtle Creek, trains his staff to keep an eye out for the guest who wants special in coffee. "When we know who will appreciate it, we offer Sanani. It's not only robust anc and rich, but it has this great story that we like to tell our guests."

One of the latest single-origin coffees to impress palates, Sanani comes from Yemen on the sol Arabian Peninsula. Originally shipped from the port of Mocha to other ports in the 16th century, strong coffee imparts the slightest chocolate hint on the nose. \$24 for a 8.8-ounce box of whole [sanani.com](http://sanani.com)

*Romance your roaster.* Because the world's best coffees come from single farms, your personal relationship with a roaster buying from such growers guarantees you the world's finest finds. The insiders' list of the most-reputable roasters typically includes PT's Coffee Roasting Company, Intelligentsia Coffee & Tea, and Counter Culture Coffee. The name that comes up the most, however, is Stumptown Coffee Roasters, based in Portland, Oregon.

"Our reputation, without exception, hinges on sourcing the best coffee from the top producers in the world," says Matt Lounsbury, Stumptown's director of operations. "In some cases, we're buying the entire farm and we often pay two, three, or five times what our competitors will pay." Although Stumptown offers retail locations in Portland, Seattle, and New York, customers everywhere can mail-order via the company's website. [stumptowncoffee.com](http://stumptowncoffee.com)

Particular palates wanting to roast their own beans order from Sweet Maria's, a coffee-roasting supplier that also buys the world's most desirable lots at auction and ships green beans to individuals to roast at home. [sweetmarias.com](http://sweetmarias.com)

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