

Whight & Co. Presenting Sri Lankan Coffee As Never Seen Before



Freshly roasted Sri Lankan coffee beans

Setting new heights for coffee making, Gabby and James Whight reveal their enthralling journey with the local coffee brand.

Words Nadhwa Mohamed **Photographs** Indika De Silva

Twelve years in the making, Whight & Co. opened making avail the finest selection of local coffee products. Whight & Co. began with selections of coffee samples from all round the hill country, which were then sent for testing around the world. The promising results persuaded them to follow their dream of making the exquisite coffee.

The best coffee sample came from Maturata Valley, from the lineage of 'Sri Amma'—the mother plant, which can be traced back to Ethiopia from over a century ago. The driven couple started with 2000-3000 plants in a nursery, which has since developed drastically. Today there is an impressive 100 hectares of coffee plants.

With an ever-expanding clientele, the café has become hugely popular since its launch. Sporting a minimalistic interior, wooden accents and sleek decor, the café spans over two floors and boasts views of the Indian Ocean.

Treasured among coffee aficionados, the café keeps you constantly intrigued. An extensive list of caffeine drinks span over their two menus; the breakfast menu and the lunch and dinner menu. They offer the compulsory classics found in every coffee shop including espressos, cappuccinos and lattes as well as a few drinks that are still very new to Sri Lanka.

The Pour Over is a mild drink that comes from a filtering apparatus and the Ca Phe Sua Da is a customer favourite, being a sweet coffee drink of Vietnamese

origin. Cold drip, prepared over a span of eight hours from a large imported apparatus that was a first in Sri Lanka and resembles a science experiment straight out of a chemistry lab—leaves customers quite fascinated. The rich coffee serves as a fun experience of mixing and fusing ingredients according to the customer's preferences. Here, you will find that specially trained baristas present steaming cuppas topped with charming coffee art complementing the pleasing flavour, while their well received international dishes are a gastronomical delight.

Sweet courses ranging from tarts and brownies to desserts of Australian origin such the Lamington cake and Cold Cheesecake are highly appraised. Another creation distinct to Whight & Co., is their Ruby Harvest Ice Cream—homemade and free of preservatives. Indulge in their ice cream or even their tiramisu, which is infused with flavourful Sri Lankan coffee. Further, the dessert tasting platter containing their Cold Cheesecake, Chocolate Brownie and a Mango Passion fruit Tart is savoured by all sweet toothed customers. What's interesting is that their lunch and dinner menus offer a range of wines, beer, spirits and alcohol based drinks as well.

Their coffee brand is named after one of the idiosyncrasies of Sri Lanka—precious gems. The ruby reflects the bright red cherries of the coffee plant and Ruby Harvest offers 100 percent Arabica beans which are famed for their rich aroma and taste.

Gabby and James keep busy, personally involved with every process from the planting and picking to the processing and roasting. The coffee is grown and processed in an immensely natural and eco-friendly environment. The coffee berries are carefully handpicked by local women of the village and processed in natural, pure spring water. The machine extracts the beans from the cherry, which is then raw and thus, green. These beans are then sun dried on long tables, their outer husks removed in a process called hulling, and sorted before being roasted.

The roasting room in the cafe is seen through a large glass window, offering a complete view of the roasting machine and packing equipment. With the intent of inviting guests to witness the compelling roasting process, the couple highlights the importance of not over-roasting the beans and preserving its purity.

Having acquired his knowledge of the intricate procedure in Korea, James shares

that their roasting process takes place every week, ensuring fresh and fragrant end-products, sealed and packaged in the room, either as a ground blend or whole coffee beans.

Trust Whight & Co. to satisfy your coffee cravings.

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