

# Haraaz Red - Mahal Aqeeq Ul Yemen



There's every reason to believe that Yemen is going to be the coffee-producing country everyone is talking about—and it's about time, since it is the second-oldest coffee culture in the world, and possibly the origin of the beverage we know, recognize, and love as true coffee. Yemen has been cultivating coffee plants since at least the 16th century, if not earlier, but coffee hasn't always been the first thing to come to mind with mention of the place: The country has been in the midst of a brutal civil war since 2015, and its other seemingly most-newsworthy characteristics are its water impoverishment, increasing dependence on the narcotic plant *qat*, and appearance on the U.S.A.'s recent "Travel Ban."

Naturally we're interested in Yemen as a global neighbor, but we at Cafe Imports are also interested in how we can make a difference to the Yemeni people by doing what we do best: Sourcing, buying, selling, and proselytizing about the best coffees we can find.

A few years ago, Cafe Imports' head of sourcing, Jason Long, was on a long hunt for spectacular Yemen coffees—the kind the coffee-history books are literally written about—and he finally found some in the mid-2010s, when he met Shabbir Ezzi, an entrepreneur and the owner of exporting company Al-Ezzi Industries. Shabbir has invested not just money, time, and energy, but also his life by relocating to

ID# 12409

Origin	Yemen
Region	Sharqi, Haraaz
Farm	Various smallholder farmers
Variety	Tuffahi, Dawairi, Jaadi, various other heirloom varieties
Altitude	1900–2440 masl
Proc. Method	Natural
Harvest Schedule	October– March

## The Cup

"Very berry with strawberry, citrus fruits and chocolate flavors; sweet and clean with tart acidity and a smooth mouthfeel."



Yemen in order to make high-quality coffee a viable, sustainable, and empowering pursuit for the farmers in and around the coffee region of Haraaz. Shabbir had the passion for improving Yemeni coffee, but not necessarily the background in quality development: Jason requested that Al-Ezzi focus on buying fresh (not dried) cherries from producers, and to dry the cherries evenly on raised beds rather than the traditional patios and rooftops. Shabbir agreed, and the collaboration has had remarkable results. Al-Ezzi still works with producers in the traditional way as well, and is able through their efforts in sourcing and sorting to buy coffee at different levels of quality and traceability from producers in Yemen.

The ways that Al-Ezzi does business in Yemen's coffee market is substantially different from the norm. Here are the main points that make their model appealing to us at Cafe Imports.

- Farmers are paid a high base price for bringing their coffee to Al-Ezzi's own or participating receiving stations, and are given premiums for coffees that meet certain standards of moisture, quantity, and quality selection.
- Coffee farmers are voluntarily issued ID cards, which are used not only as a point of pride and respect but also to keep track of their deliveries and ensure proper, timely payment.
- Each farmer's individual contributions are meticulously recorded, which means the coffees are traceable down to individuals—highly unusual in a country where the average farmer produces less than 100 kilos of cherry.
- Fresh, ripe red cherries earn an additional premium over dried cherries (how coffee is traditionally sold at market), as buying fresh cherries allows Al-Ezzi to ensure ripeness and quality before drying, and to control the drying process for evenness.

Because of this alternative way of doing business with coffee farmers in Yemen, Al-Ezzi and Cafe Imports are able to offer different "tiers" of product from these growers, who are paid according to their quality and volume.

- **Moka Yemeni** - Workhorse coffees of reliably good quality purchased as dried cherry and milled in Sana'a at Al-Ezzi's facility. These coffees are a blend of different types and grades of coffees and have limited traceability

but a classic Yemen profile.

- **Haraaz Traceable** - Dried cherries purchased directly from producers who hold Al-Ezzi-issued producer ID cards in order to allow for both proper distribution of funds and full traceability.
- **Haraaz Fresh** - Fresh coffee cherries purchased directly from producers in the Sharqui Haraaz microregion, where Al-Ezzi receives coffee at local collection points. Fully traceable through the producer ID cards. Coffee is dried on raised beds and milled in Sana'a.
- **Haraaz Red** - Fresh cherries purchased directly from producers who have picked or sorted perfectly ripe fruit and delivered it immediately after harvest. Fully traceable through producer ID cards. Coffee is dried on raised beds and milled in Sana'a.
- **Haraaz Microlot** - Fresh red cherries purchased from a single producer or small cooperative in a quantity great enough (at least 5 bags) to keep isolated and marketed under the grower or growers' name.

For more information about coffee production in Yemen, visit our [Yemen Origin Page](#).



## Gallery Haraaz Red - Mahal Aqeeq Ul Yemen

