

BEVERAGE

artisan

Rock Canyon Coffee

Craig Fulmer, Heidi Johnson and John Farrell



Craig Fulmer, Heidi Johnson and John Farrell with Rock Canyon's new 25-pound batch roaster.

2015 was Rock Canyon Coffee's busiest yet. In May, founders Craig Fulmer and Heidi Johnson moved the 4-year-old operation from their garage to a 750-square-foot commercial space in Basalt. In June, Rock Canyon Coffee hit the shelves of Whole Foods Market, where the couple holds monthly tastings similar to their educational farmers' market gigs. July welcomed third partner John Farrell as strategic planner. And in October, head roaster Fulmer nearly doubled production with a new, 25-pound batch roaster.

"Our coffee looks different: dark chocolaty brown, not black and oily—that sparks conversation with people," Johnson says. "Our philosophy is that we don't burn the beans because that's disrespectful to the farmer working hard in another country on the other end of the process. We want to showcase that."

Rock Canyon's adventurous spirit was born when Fulmer and

Johnson fled coastal corporate jobs to become coffee artisans in Colorado. Their West Coast importer visits coffee farmers and cooperatives in Africa, Indonesia, South America and elsewhere to ensure sustainable organic or "passive organic" (following guidelines without certification) practices. Six varieties of Rock Canyon Coffee serve hotels, restaurants and convenience stores from Crawford to Parachute to Aspen; is available in 20 states; and through the online store that ships throughout the US. Coming soon: single-origin varietals, or beans from one place, boasting pure flavors and notes of terroir.

"Coffee is a comfort food," Johnson explains. "It's a ritual. It's an art to treat coffee beans well so that when they end up in the cup, it's a happy experience."

Indeed, Rock Canyon—"Great Coffee for Great People"—warms us up. RockCanyonCoffee.com *EA*