

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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**Report Name:** Spilling the Beans about Specialty Coffee in Taiwan

**Country:** Taiwan

**Post:** Taipei ATO

**Report Category:** Beverages, Coffee

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**Report Highlights:**

In 2022, Taiwan imported US\$ 279.1 million of coffee, an increase of 35.2 percent. It has one of the highest densities of coffee shops in the world. Consumers increasingly treat their coffee as an enjoyable experience rather than a simple drink, and a significant number of chains are providing specialty coffee to meet their need. This report includes details of the specialty coffee available in the market, as well as suggestions for U.S. exporters.

## **Market Overview**

Taiwan was first introduced to coffee when it was colonized by Japan; the Japanese found its weather and soil optimal for coffee cultivation. However, after the Pacific War in 1941, the colonizers decided to replace coffee farms with rice, so as to supply the troops. It was not until after the massive 921 earthquake in 1999 damaged a significant amount of farmland that coffee was reintroduced.

Taiwan was originally tea oriented, but now it is rich with coffee culture. There are more than 4,000 self-roast coffee shops in Taiwan. There are also chain coffee stores and convenience stores that sell surprisingly high-end coffee. This brings the total shop count to over 20,000. This number increase 160 percent over the last 10 years. Taiwan has one of the highest densities of coffee shops in the world.

Taiwan produces much less coffee than what consumers demand, and is highly dependent on imports. In 2022, Taiwan produced US\$ 21.4 million of coffee and imported US\$ 279.1 million. Total import value has been growing steadily.

<b>Coffee Importation (HS Code 090111, 090112, 090121, 090122)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Import Value from USA (US \$)</b>	<b>Total Import Value (US \$)</b>	<b>Top 5 Countries (%)</b>
2022	34,967,000	279,142,000	1. Brazil: 16.15 2. Ethiopia: 14.56 3. USA: 12.53 4. Colombia: 12.28 5. Guatemala: 8.29
2021	30,543,000	206,541,000	1. USA: 14.79 2. Colombia: 11.95 3. Ethiopia: 11.86 4. Brazil: 11.76 5. Guatemala: 7.60
2020	36,941,000	199,916,000	1. USA: 18.48 2. Ethiopia: 11.83 3. Colombia: 10.72 4. Brazil: 10.27 5. Indonesia: 8.24

Source: Taiwan Ministry of Agriculture

## Specialty Coffee in the Market

Specialty coffee is a term coined in 1974 by Erna Knutsen, who later became a founder of Specialty Coffee Association (SCA), one of the most prestigious coffee organizations in the world. She defined specialty coffee as coffee with unique flavor profiles that was produced in special geographic microclimates. Today, the industry generally refers to specialty coffee as beans that receive more than 80 points in Coffee Quality Institute's grading process. With the high number of independent coffee shops in the market, Taiwanese consumers are very familiar with specialty coffee, especially single origin ones. Some of the shops also offer tasting and brewing classes; therefore, besides buying freshly brewed coffee, it is also extremely common for consumers to buy beans to grind and brew at home. Among the various brewing methods, including French press, aero press, syphon, and espresso machine, most consumers prefer the pour over for an easy brew. Below are some of the most popular independent coffee shops in Taiwan that serve specialty coffee.

### Independent Coffee Shops



- Name: [Simple Kaffa](#)
- Beans: Sourced from Taiwan, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Tanzania, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, and Kenya
- Price: 12oz/NT\$ 500-4,200 (US\$ 16.67-140)
- Simple Kaffa was founded in 2011 by Mr. Berg Wu, who won the 2016 World Barista Championship hosted by SCA. The shop was ranked number one of the top 50 coffee shops in Asia in 2019 and Best Coffee Shop in Taiwan in 2020 by online media [Big 7 Travel](#). All beans used in the shop are roasted in house. Besides coffee drinks, the shop also carries beans in 12, 50, 100, and 200g bags, as well as drip bags.



- Name: [Fika Fika Cafe](#)
- Beans: Sourced from Taiwan, Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, and Kenya
- Price: 12oz/NT\$ 180-440 (US\$ 6-14.67)
- Fika Fika was founded in 2016 by Mr. James Chen, who won the espresso category in the 2013 Nordic Barista Cup. He is the first competitor outside northern Europe to ever win the category. Besides coffee drinks, the shop also carries light, medium, and dark roast beans, as well as drip bags. It also offers gift boxes with coffee that scored points as high as over 89.

Specialty coffee is extremely accessible in Taiwan. Take Starbucks and 7-Eleven as examples: Starbucks entered Taiwan in 1998 and opened their Starbucks Reserve in 2013, which is a more unique

store line that offers specialty coffee. 7-Eleven started to offer freshly brewed coffee in 2001 and debuted their specialty coffee in 2019. These show the market is deep in the third-wave coffee phase, meaning the consumers are treating coffee as enjoyable experiences rather than a grab-and-go beverage. Varieties, origins, environment, and stories behind the farms are factors affecting consumer decisions. Below are different kinds of specialty coffee from some of the biggest chains in Taiwan.

## Convenience Stores



- Chain: 7-Eleven
- Brand: [City Prima](#)
- Beans: Heirloom from Guji, Ethiopia, and Caturra, Catuai, and Bourbon from Antigua, Guatemala
- Price: 12oz/NT\$ 80 (US\$ 2.67)
- Their specialty coffee is sold in 6,000 stores around Taiwan. Their coffee business achieved US\$ 500 million of sales in 2022



- Chain: OK Mart
- Brand: [OK Cafe](#)
- Beans: Arabica from Ipanema, Brazil
- Price: 12oz/NT\$ 35 (US\$ 1.17)
- Their specialty coffee is sold in 700 stores around Taiwan

## Chain Coffee Stores



- Chain: [Louisa Coffee](#)
- Beans: Yirgacheffe Kochere, Arabica, and Mandheling Gayo Mountain from Kenya, Colombia, Brazil, and Indonesia
- Price: 12oz/NT\$ 60-100 (US\$ 2-3.33)
- Their specialty coffee is sold in 500 stores around Taiwan. They are branching out to oversea markets and now have two stores in Thailand



- Chain: [85°C](#)
- Beans: Yirgacheffe from Ethiopia, Guatemala, Brazil, Colombia, and Rwanda
- Price: 12oz/NT\$ 39 (US\$ 1.3)
- Their specialty coffee is sold in 400 stores around Taiwan



- Chain: [Cama](#)
- Beans: Arabica, Yirgacheffe, and Golden Mandheling from Ethiopia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Brazil
- Price: 12oz/NT\$ 85-115 (US\$ 2.83-3.83)
- Their specialty coffee is sold in 150 stores around Taiwan



- Chain: [HWC](#)
- Beans: Sourced from Colombia, Brazil, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, and Kenya
- Price: 12oz/NT\$ 70-140 (US\$ 2.33-4.67)
- Their specialty coffee is sold in 70 stores around Taiwan



- Chain: [Starbucks](#)
- Brand: Starbucks Reserve
- Beans: Papua New Guinea Ulya and Rwanda Hingakawa
- Price: 12oz/NT\$ 180-210 (US\$ 6-7)
- Their specialty coffee is sold in 24 Reserve stores around Taiwan

## **Suggestions for U.S. Exporters**

Taiwan is full of opportunities for U.S. coffee, especially high-quality Hawaii coffee. ATO Taipei encourages U.S. coffee producers and exporters to consider exhibiting in the [Taiwan International Coffee Show](#), the biggest coffee show in the country. It is organized by the Taiwan Coffee Association to promote coffee trade and culture. Held annually in November, the show has exhibitors from the US, Taiwan, Indonesia, India, Brazil, Peru, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and visitors from the US, China, Malaysia, Japan, Canada, the Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, and Vietnam.

The show is gaining popularity because the prestigious Specialty Coffee Association has decided to hold their [2023 World Latte Art Championship, World Coffee in Good Spirits Championship, and World Coffee Roasting Championship](#) at the show, from November 17-20. ATO Taipei is seizing this rare opportunity to promote U.S. coffee, dairy, and spirits in the Championships.

Hawaii coffee producers are encouraged to work with the [Hawaii Coffee Association](#) and the [Synergistic Hawaii Agriculture Council](#) to take advantage of their marketing resources and promotion support in Taiwan.



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**Attachments:**

No Attachments.