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## Peter Weckström still roasting strong

**Coffee World is a chain of cafés created by Global Franchise Architects. Their aim is set to sell as good of coffee as possible and, since they could not find any coffee brand to meet their standards, decided to open their own coffee roasting plant, which is already in operation under the eye of Finnish coffee man Peter Weckström.**

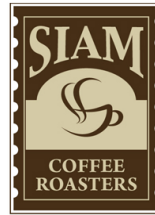
"I came to Thailand in 2007 to start this roastery, buy the machinery and get it going," says the Helsinki born coffee man as we walk along the isles of his empty roastery.

"The roastery is empty because not every day is a roasting day yet." Working at full capacity the plant can produce 50,000 500 gram packets of coffee.

"Being a Finn, you probably know Paulig coffee roasteries in Vuosaari," he asks me to give a scale to things. Then he tells that Paulig's roasteries give out about 250 times more coffee than this place in Bangkok.



"We are only making coffee for Coffee World to start with, he says, but we start exporting pretty soon."



### Who said that big is beautiful?

"The point of Siam Coffee Roasters is not to produce coffee - it is to produce excellent coffee."

"Only 10 % of all coffee beans produced throughout the world can be used for gourmet -coffees and 90 % are bulk

merchandise." "That's why it is virtually impossible for the coffee giants to make good coffee," he adds. "Take any big coffee brand, like Juhla Mokka or Presidentti in Finland, that have been around for decades. Each cup has to taste the same or otherwise the consumer loses his faith in the product. Therefore all big producers have to settle for bulk merchandise while we can pick up the best coffee beans available since we do not compete with quantity, only with quality."

When talking about Paulig and Finnish coffees Weckström sure knows what he is talking about since it was **Robert Paulig** himself who taught young Peter his ambitious attitude towards coffee.

### Quality starts from coffee beans...

"After the best of the very best coffee beans have been selected and bought it is very important to store them accordingly."

"I bet you that we are the only ones in Thailand who have an air-conditioned warehouse for coffee beans." "It is very important that the coffee beans have the exact humidity level of 12%. It is so unfortunate that so many coffee roasters spoil their merchandise at this stage," Weckström says just like talking about people who cannot treat their pets the way they should be treated.

### ... and continues during the roasting process

The coffee man was given *carté blanche* when buying all the machinery for the new roastery so only the very best was accepted.

"We are using hot air for roasting our coffee beans." "Coffee beans are sort of floating in hot air so that they become roasted all around and do not have any connection with metal which is the case when using older technologies." "If you are roasting your coffee in a big cylinder the quality will never be the same and metal also leaves its own taste in your coffee beans."

At this point we have come to the room where the coffee is being packed into 500 gram packages.

"You have to understand that good coffee beans are very hard to find. They just do not come around like water or rice. Therefore they must be treated as well as by any means possible, he says with a serious look in his face."

### **The result will be a good cup of coffee...**

We have travelled from the roastery to the company's head office in downtown Bangkok where Peter gives me some background information about Global Franchise Arcitects.

"Would you like some coffee," he suddenly asks.

I thought you'd never ask!

We go upstairs to the company's product development department where their head barista **Suporntip Phatanayindee**, who is also the chief of this department, makes us an espresso like never before. This is a once in a lifetime experience and I try to make it last as long as possible.

While upstairs we also have an opportunity to exchange a few words with the company's founder and CEO, **Fred Mouawad**.

"We were lucky to find a man like Peter," Mr. Mouawad states.

To end our day in the world of coffee, Mr. Coffee man wants us to have a taste of his latest invention. It is a Vienna style coffee

which he believes will touch the Scandinavian coffee palate gently.

### **... if you have stored it right**

"What do you think?" he asks impatiently and makes me ask for half sugar in order to have good comparison with the Saludos and Lövbergs Lilas that I usually drink. This feels like a wine tasting event. *Hmm... Long lasting aftertaste and rich bouguee but I do not think that this travels very well.*

- It has got something different in it, I finally can say. It is very much like our coffees but takes a step or two towards christmas coffee. Anyway, I see no reason to ask all friends and relatives to bring me coffee anymore when they come to Thailand since coffee like this is available domestically.

I return the glass jar which contains the coffee we are drinking as it almost freezes my fingers.

Why is this so cold?

"We always store our coffee in the freezer since it is the best place for it. Coffee contains so many different aromas and oils that if you store it at room temperature in an open container you will surely spoil it in one day."

"Another good piece of advice is also not to take your coffee out of its original package."

"Coffee becomes older every time it is in contact with air. Keep it in its original package and close the package carefully after each time you have opened it."

