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ARTISAN FEATURES

THE NEW PORTLAND COFFEE MICRO ROASTERS

Kathleen Bauer / photos by Rob Finch

“...each coffee needs to be treated with the utmost respect...”
Andrea Spella



Andrea Spella caught the roasting bug early, having grown up in an Italian bakery family. He sees coffee roasting as "the ultimate challenge of a lifetime" because each batch of coffee is different and needs special attention.

SPELLA CAFFE
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Roasting for: 2 1/2 years full time. On and off for 13 years.

Inspiration: When I realized 13 years ago that this would be the only way to make my dream espresso a reality. Being

raised in a bakery, we had coffee and espresso all the time. It was a natural and fundamental part of our lives. Having worked in fine dining for many years it became clear to me that this was a viable road for me to take. It had a lot to do with me finally being ready for my own business. I realized that I had a vision and, most importantly, a palate for how true Italian espresso should taste. Once I developed that blend it was time to offer it to others.

Learned to roast by: The first job I got was at a cafe as a manager. It was owned by one of the main people at Allegro Coffee, and they put me through the wringer. Kevin Knox was the roast master and green bean buyer and Paul Songer was the owner of the cafe as well as technical adviser and roaster for Allegro. Two epiphanies came to me when studying with Kevin: Ethiopian coffees are the coffees that sing to me and make life worth living. The other was when we roasted several different Guatemalans at the same time that were all from the same micro-region but each had subtle differences. This taught me that each coffee needs to be treated with the utmost respect and that no matter how much you have dialed in "scientifically," the beans will react differently. I realized I had the ultimate challenge of a lifetime, something that continually changes and will keep me changing and learning.

Why Portland and coffee? Portlanders are a people of high caliber and standards when it comes to food and drink; you can't sneak one over on them. I feel people are waiting for the "next wave," which is what we know as the current micro-roaster movement. And, no, the climate doesn't have everything to do with it. People drink coffee all year long.