



**New openings** There's no let-up in the number of new venues opening in London. Silkies at Sonos Studio, Shoreditch, is a social and collaborative space serving Volcano coffee, combined with a hi-tech sound experience and contemporary art. Grind has opened a store at 34 Royal Exchange, Press Coffee's third branch can be found at 11 St Bride Street and Store Street Espresso has opened in Paddington.



## DIRECT LINE TO COFFEE

**Online community allows roasters to source and buy beans straight from the farmers**

Wandering around the recent World of Coffee trade show in Dublin was an overwhelming experience: there were familiar faces from all over the world around every corner, bags of coffee thrust at us every few steps, and new technology vying for our attention from the stalls. But despite all that, and the cheering from the World Barista Championship stage, one start-up stopped us in our tracks and prompted us to ask: "Why has no one thought of this before?"

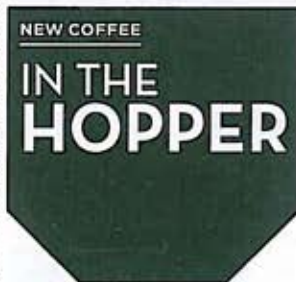
Described to us as a sort of Facebook marketplace for coffee growers and roasters, Algrano is an online platform connecting roasters directly with the farmers, with both able to

post updates as you'd see on other forms of social media, providing immediate access.

All the green beans are Q graded. Samples are sent to roasters on request and then bean orders are shipped in grouped containers, allowing roasters to purchase any quantity they require directly from their chosen farms.

One of the best features of the site is a completely transparent breakdown of the costs involved, so the farm price, exporting fees, freight and logistics are all clearly listed for both parties to see.

Since its launch in June last year, Algrano has built a base of 500 users from 52 countries and is seriously challenging the way farms and roasters buy and sell coffee. "In 20 years of working in coffee, this is the first time I've seen producers able to decide at which price they offer their coffee," says Sergio Regina, an agriculture engineer from Brazil. "Algrano is the future of coffee trading," concludes roaster Benjamin Hohlmann, 2014 Swiss Brewers Cup champion. See for yourself at [algrano.com](http://algrano.com).



We are in the middle of African coffee season, which for us can only be a Very Good Thing, although if that's not to your tastes there are also a few sweet Colombians out there that took our fancy. This issue's cupping session took place at Assembly Coffee, who have plans for a new roastery (stay tuned for more details).



### COLONNA

Gitchathaini AA, Kenya, 250g  
This coffee is part of Maxwell Colonna-Dashwood's Discovery series, showcasing "more exciting and unusual" beans. The tasting notes mention forest fruits, but we got more citrusy notes such as grapefruit when warm, mellowing when cooler, with great body and mouthfeel. [colonnacoffee.com](http://colonnacoffee.com)



### ASSEMBLY

Nano Chala, Ethiopia, £12 for 300g  
This great coffee is produced by a cooperative that exists thanks to non-profit organisation Technoserve, partially funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It's a fantastic clean, sweet, syrupy and balanced coffee with peachy and nectarine flavours. [assemblycoffee.co.uk](http://assemblycoffee.co.uk)



### RED BANK COFFEE ROASTERS

Kiriani, Kenya, £7.75 for 250g  
This is the first time we've been sent anything by Red Bank Coffee Roasters. We haven't seen these beans from anyone else, either, and they're well developed and sweet, with real blackberry flavours. If you prefer fruitiness in your coffee, give it a try. [redbankroasters.com](http://redbankroasters.com)



### HORSHAM COFFEE ROASTER

La Dorada Micro-Lot, Colombia, £7.20 for 250g  
If you like your coffee sweet with a touch of funk, this is the one for you. This pulped natural did well in the AeroPress. It is perhaps a little thin and quick on the finish, but it has summery fruits in abundance. [horshamcoffee.roaster.co.uk](http://horshamcoffee.roaster.co.uk)