


Merchants of Green Coffee

SPRING 2003 NEWSLETTER

ABOUT MERCHANTS OF GREEN COFFEE

As this is our very first Newsletter, we would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves. Merchants of Green Coffee is first and foremost a green bean business - importing, sourcing and merchandizing specialty grade green arabica coffees. The company was established in 1994 after discovering the true taste of fresh coffee. Our mission is to deliver the best tasting coffee experience to consumers. Our mantra: fresh coffee, fair trade, green business.



As with wine, the taste of coffee depends on the quality of the fruit, and the way that fruit is transformed into a beverage. The finest coffees grow at high elevations, in the shade of other trees, in an ecologically diverse forest. Unfortunately, large-scale coffee producers have done away with shade-grown coffee, and instead created vast plantations of "sun" coffee. But coffee trees do not grow well row-upon-row in the open sun. It's unnatural for the species; creates unhealthy, vulnerable trees; and an overwhelming dependence on chemical fertilizers and pesticides. These megaplantations simply do not have the natural conditions necessary to create great-tasting coffee beans. In recent years, the quality of coffee on the market has declined dramatically.

Merchants of Green Coffee, in its efforts to secure a reliable supply of high quality coffee, has established the Sustainable Coffee Program (SCP) - a network of independent growers throughout Central America (and like minded importers in North America) who supply superior "raw" coffee beans grown and processed under sustainable conditions. Sustainable coffee is defined as: purchased from the farmer at a fair price, grown organically in a biodiverse ecosystem, and processed with eco-friendly technologies and methods.

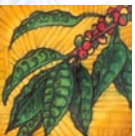
MGC has pioneered sustainable coffee certification and is the only company with coffee certified under the United Nation's Global Eco-labelling Program via the Government of Canada's Environmental Choice Program.



COFFEE SCHOOL

Like the grapes of fine wines, arabica coffee beans acquire unique taste characteristics from geography (i.e. soil, climate, ecosystem). As with freshly baked bread, fresh roasted coffee has a short shelf life – maximum of 5 days – regardless of packaging. Freshness is the key to enjoying the sweet and many distinctive regional flavours of coffee.

The three 3 keys to making a perfect cup of coffee are:



1. Quality Green Beans – the best beans produce the best cup of coffee:

- Specialty grade arabica coffee
- Grown at high elevations on small biodiverse tropical farms
- Picked ripe and processed with care



2. A Fresh Roast – for coffee to be fresh it must be consumed within:

- 5 days after roasting
- 3 hours after grinding
- 15 minutes after brewing



3. Proper Brewing – time and temperature:

- Steeping (and espresso) is the best method for brewing
- Brewing is the extraction of coffee oils from roasted grounds using hot water
- The best temperature for optimum extraction is "just off the boil" (195°-205°F/ 90°-96°C)

COFFEE SHOP

Feature Product: MGC Brewing Kit



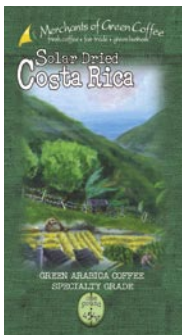
Steeping coffee in hot water is one of the best way to brew coffee. The MGC Brewing Kit proves that you don't need an expensive brewer to make an excellent cup of coffee. This kit features: (1) a classic stainless coffee pot for steeping, (2) a glass wine carafe for serving, (3) the Coffee Spring for filtering, and (4) a cleaning brush. We use this system to hand-craft our coffee every day and will never change!

The MGC Brewing Kit is simple and effective and has several advantages:

- Brews 1 to 20 cups of coffee at one time.
- Beautiful, durable and ideal for making coffee or tea!
- Coffee Spring cotton filters are quick, easy to clean and re-usable for up to 1 to 2 years.

The price is \$59.99 (\$49.99 for members.) *Until July 1/2003, add one extra Coffee Spring for just \$9.99.*

Feature Coffee: Costa Rica



Montes De Oro is a coffee farming cooperative located two hours northwest of San Jose in the Central Cordillera mountain range of beautiful Costa Rica. Destroyed by hurricane in 1985, Coope Montes De Oro is now a world leader in sustainable coffee production. Two of the innovative tools used at Montes De Oro include: (1) natural water filtration ponds; and (2) solar powered coffee dryers.

Depulping and washing is the first step in processing and preparing coffee for export. The natural water filtration ponds at Montes De Oro use local plants and lilies to remove 99% of the pollutants in the wash water before returning it to the local river and streams. Drying the beans after washing is last step in processing. The solar dryer uses solar energy (by day) and bio-mass energy (by night) to dry coffee at low temperatures. It is a major advancement in processing technology, eliminating the use of wood burning dryers and weeks of back-breaking labour on the patio. It is affordable for the small farmer to buy and extremely cost effective to use. This is a very special coffee not to be missed. Harvest '03 arrives in June. Place your advance order today!

Taste: Clean, bright, medium body with sweet blueberry tones.p

Recommended Roast: Medium to dark.

Certifications: Certified Sustainable – Government of Canada and United Nations.

WORLD NEWS: ETHIOPIA



For Ethiopia, coffee is more than just a hot beverage, it is a treasure of national importance. Ethiopia is the birthplace of coffee. Woven into the fabric of everyday life, coffee is consumed with great ceremony and represents 60-70% of Ethiopia's cash exports. Due to the extremely low world coffee prices and another year of drought in the lowlands, the government of Ethiopia, which relies heavily on coffee revenues, is nearing bankruptcy. Ethiopia's prime minister Meles Senawi made reference at an recent international conference to the fact that the Ethiopian farmer receives less than one percent of the price the consumer pays for coffee. "There cannot be a more damning indictment of the global trading environment than this. There cannot be a starker proof of the totally unfair global trading environment."

Today coffee is the 2nd most popular beverage in the world next to tap water and is produced by more than 60 countries worldwide. On a global production scale, Ethiopia is a small player. It does however, produce some of the best quality c the shade of other trees, without the need for pesticides and tended by small farmers. This represents a great opportunity

Not only does Ethiopia produce great coffee, it plays a far greater role than any other coffee producer in that it alone is the steward of the of the most diverse collection of coffee genetic resources, "the world reserve of disease resistant coffee trees." With the current market oversupplied with cheap low grade coffees, Ethiopia deserves special attention as the mother of coffee and steward of coffees genetic history. All should know her story. Try our Ethiopia Fair Trade and Organic green beans. Every purchase works to ensure that the story of Ethiopia Coffee has a bright future and a happy ending. ☘

