

# Merchants of Green Coffee

## SUMMER 2003 NEWSLETTER

### ABOUT MERCHANTS OF GREEN COFFEE

This summer at Merchants of Green Coffee, we undertook two main projects: 1) coffee shop upgrade; and 2) website overhaul.

Both are now ready to service you better - a destination place for: (1) the very best in certified green arabica coffee beans, (2) select tools for home roasting and brewing, and (3) information on coffee growing & processing, roasting & brewing, issues in the industry, and the Merchants of Green Coffee 'Sustainable Coffee Program'. Our webstore will look just like our real brick and mortar Coffee Shop. Members will get access to enhanced features and benefits, such as coffee availability and customized ordering.



Come 2 Matilda and have some fun! Stop in Monday to Friday from 12:00 to 6:00 pm and weekends from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Or join us at an upcoming event:

- coffee school – Saturdays from September 20 to Dec 27.
- planet in focus – film festival – Sept. 27— 28.
- food & wine show – Nov. 21 — 23
- one of a kind show – Nov. 27 — Dec. 7

### COFFEE SCHOOL

**KNOW Logo - Understanding the importance of certifications in coffee.**



Many people ask us about the different certifications that are associated with coffee. Certifications are important because they lend credibility and add transparency to the product or service being sold. This is a boon for consumers, because it gives confidence that their choices are supporting the things they are meant to support. Although there is not enough space here to describe the precise details of each certification, we would like to briefly describe each one for you so you can better understand what they represent. For more complete descriptions simply visit our website.



1. **Fair Trade:** Fairtrade Labeling Organization (FLO) - Started in Holland in 1987, FLO is the worldwide Fairtrade standard setting and certification organization. FLO guarantees that products sold anywhere in the world with a Fairtrade label conform to fair trade standards and contributes to the development of disadvantaged producers. In Canada, this is done by TRANSFAIR CANADA, an independent certification organization for fair trade coffee, tea, cocoa and sugar. Fairtrade is the foundation for any sustainable coffee. A guarantee that farmers are paid a minimum price of US\$1.26/lb. This is a real price – a living wage – and profit that can be reinvested back into communities and farms.



2. **Organic:** International Federation Of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM) - Started in Europe in 1972, IFOAM is the worldwide organization for organic agriculture, with about 750 member organizations and institutions in 100 countries all over the world. IFOAM's goal is the worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems that are based on the principles of Organic Agriculture. The use of intensive chemical application in crop production not only pose serious health risks to wildlife, but also to man and land. Organic agriculture significantly reduces external inputs by avoiding the use of agrochemicals. Soil fertility is seen as the key to successful production.



3. **Biodiversity/Shade:** Smithsonian Migratory Bird Centre (SMBC) – Started in USA in 1991, SMBC has defined the minimum shade management practices necessary for a coffee plantation to be considered biodiverse. Certification is provided through the SMBC Bird Friendly Coffee Program. The production of tropical commodities such as bananas, sugar and coffee takes a toll on the environment, farm workers and surrounding communities. These crops grow where tropical forests once thrived. With the rapid destruction of pristine forests throughout much of their wintering grounds, many migratory birds are becoming increasingly dependent on alternative habitats, including traditional shaded-coffee farms.



4. **Sustainability:** Environmental Choice Program (ECP) – Started in Canada in 1988, ECP was the second national government ecolabelling initiative in the world. There are now three dozen such programs worldwide. Through certification and marketing, ECP exposes companies selling environmentally preferable products and services to consumers who want to buy them. In 1999, the Government of Canada working in conjunction with Merchants of Green Coffee established the world's first criteria for growing and processing coffee under sustainable conditions. Sustainability in coffee production must look at all aspects of the business equation – economic, social and environmental. ECP certification for coffee is based on the standards established by Fairtrade Labeling Organization, Organic Crop Improvement Association, Smithsonian Migratory Bird Centre, and produced in conjunction with the MesoAmerican Development Institute and Cooperativa Montes De Oro.

## COFFEE SHOP

---

### **Feature Product: MGC Corporate Gifts**

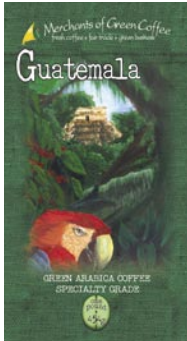


Merchants of Green Coffee is excited to offer corporate gifts this fall. Priced for all. All about enjoying the taste of fresh roasted coffee. Packages can be tailored for any client, partner, or associate who might appreciate the gift of a great cup of coffee.

Packages range in price from \$25 to \$500 depending on what goes into it. Minimum orders apply to some orders. Discounts available on volume orders. Green beans can be customized with labels displaying your name, company logo, or greeting on it!

- **Home Coffee Roasters** – oven, electric.
- **Specialty Arabica Coffees** – from Africa, Asia and Latin America - certified organic and fair trade.
- **Home Delivery Program** – roasters and green beans delivered to a home or business anywhere in North America.
- **Grinders** – Krupps, KitchenAid, Solis.
- **Makers** – MGC Coffee Spring, MGC Brewing Kit (for steeping) and more. See new website in Oct. 2003.

### **Feature Coffee: Guatemala, El Paradiso**



A new company favourite, the story behind this coffee has a bright side (its wonderful taste) and a dark side (its history). Coffee from El Paradiso is grown on the mountains surrounding Lake Atitlan in central cordilla mountains of Guatemala by a small farmer cooperative.

In 1995, a peace treaty was signed in Guatemala ending 20 years of civil war. At this time, students from the University in Guatemala City organized to help El Paradiso access higher paying markets in North American. In 1996, the first shipment was made to coffee roasters in Canada via a Student Union at the University of British Columbia. The coffee arrived safely but the Guatemala students went missing; all had been murdered by others with interests in maintaining the status quo. Ever since, the UBC Student Union has continued to support the farmers of El Paradiso by bringing this coffee market. The flavour is surprisingly sweet, with hints of berry and nut.

## INDUSTRY NEWS

---

### **Coffee Prices, Mad Cow, SARS, West Nile, Coffee Prices.**

If you are to browse the web and check out the websites of coffees main international associations such as NCA, SCAA, ICO, it is good to find that apparently everybody in the coffee industry is worried and doing their part to help solve the current coffee crisis. These coffee sites are operated by those involved in the international coffee trade and are quick to acknowledge the significance of this global product to billions. These are good sites to check out as they have good information on coffee for the both the consumer and industry and get better every year.

The cause of the coffee crisis is fairly straightforward: unregulated production + over supply and decreasing consumption + an all time low in world coffee prices ( $\pm \$0.65/\text{lb.}$ ) = crisis for producers. And there is no correlated decrease in the price of a cup of coffee to the consumer. If anything it is increasing. The balance of 'supply and demand' has tipped under a pile of mad cow fertilizer. Coffee production affects the livelihood of 125 million people. Current prices are now below the cost of quality coffee production.

### **MGC Comment:**

The severity of the crisis is diluted by companies with good marketing campaigns and who frequently use 'sustainability' with careless ease. We will see more of this kind of marketing in the future. What seems to be missing is any any consensus and strategy on how we might deal with the present imbalance and prepare for the future to make it truly sustainable. The consumer is and will remain to be the most important part in the balancing of the supply chain. Drinking coffee sourced by Merchants of Green Coffee, and those like us, is the way to go.

### **Fresh is for the taste and Fair Trade is for the soul.**

### **GET FREE COFFEE!!**

---

#### **CUSTOMER REFERRAL PROGRAM**

Word of Mouth is our best advertising, and members of our home roasting club are the best sponsors of fresh coffee. So to reward our members for spreading the word we'll give you 3 lbs. of green beans for FREE for every friend of yours who signs up due to your recommendation.

*\*referrals must be given at time of sign up.*

