

MONMOUTH

COFFEE COMPANY

WHAT WE DO

We source and roast coffee from single farms, estates and cooperatives. When we taste a coffee that we like, we want to know where it comes from and who grows, picks and processes it. We travel extensively throughout the year, visiting the producers and cooperatives with whom we currently work and looking for interesting varieties of coffee and new farms from which to buy. During these visits we talk to farmers and cooperative members, learning more about the coffee they grow and process and the challenges that they face. We then look to establish a relationship with the grower and exporter of that coffee. We believe that where such a relationship exists, quality, quantity and price requirements can be discussed in an open and equal way. We see this as sustainable, fair and equal trade.

OUR HISTORY

We started roasting and retailing coffee in 1978. At the beginning we roasted in the basement of our shop on Monmouth Street, Covent Garden, using rather old-fashioned, direct-flame machines, first a small UNO and then a 1930s Whitmee. Almost thirty years later in 2007, having opened another shop in Borough Market and outgrown our basement in Covent Garden, we moved into three converted railway arches in Bermondsey. And now after ten years, we have moved our roasting site again, just a little further east to Spa Terminus in Bermondsey where we have converted five arches into a roasting, tasting and office space. In the new roastery we have installed two roasters from Loring in California, USA. Loring roasters combine air roasting technology with energy efficient design.

NEWS

Our new website and online shop is one year old! Visit monmouthcoffee.co.uk to find our delivery details and shop opening hours. We are also very pleased that our Saturday shop at our new roastery in Spa Terminus is now open. See spa-terminus.co.uk for more information about our food-producing friends in the neighbourhood.

This winter we have chocolate back on our retail counter! We have been fortunate over the years to work with some of the best chocolate makers, and we are pleased to be able to support our very own Nick Willson in his new side business - Loctoa Chocolate. Nick sources the cacao and then roasts, cracks and winnows, grinds and conches, tempers, and then moulds into bars. We have three bars in our shops now - Bolivia with notes of honey, vanilla and raisins, Guatemala which has plum, fig and cherry flavours and Peru full of caramel, prunes and muscovado sugar. See loctoa-chocolate.com for more information about Nick and the chocolate.

Happy New Year!

SOUTH AMERICA

Fazenda Alta Vista

BRASIL

Cristina, Minas Gerais

Yellow Bourbon

Pulped Natural Process

Robson Vilela

Toasted hazelnuts and dark chocolate with low acidity and full body

This is our first shipment from Alta Vista for this crop. Each year we travel to Brasil to taste and select coffees from Carmo Coffee - the exporters we work with in Carmo de Minas. We tasted this lot from Alta Vista and were delighted with its sweetness and caramel-like body. Robson Vilela bought Alta Vista in 2001, after retiring from his dentistry practice. Robson had his practice for 25 years and it was always his ambition to retire to a farm and grow coffee. Robson planted two varietals; Yellow Catuaí and Yellow Bourbon which are both prized for their clarity of fruit and sweetness. The coffee trees are protected from the sun and occasional strong winds by the banana crop which provides an additional income to the farm. The farm also has a small lake with carp, tilapia and trout for the family and farm-workers. Recently, one of Robson's micro-lots from this year's natural crop came second in the Cup of Excellence – Brasil Late Harvest competition!

Sítio Senhor Niquinho

BRASIL

Carmo de Minas

Yellow Bourbon

Pulped Natural Process

Luiz Paulo Dias Pereira Filho

Caramel and chestnuts with low acidity and medium to full body

Luiz Paulo Dias Pereira Filho is a partner in Carmo Coffees - the exporter in Brasil with whom we work. Luiz Paulo and his cousin, Jacques Pereira Carneiro, decided to start Carmo Coffees in order to help the family farms find international buyers and to establish Carmo de Minas as one of the best coffee-growing areas of Brasil. In recognition of Luiz Paulo's efforts over the years his grandfather bequeathed to him Sítio Senhor Niquinho. Luiz Paulo grows Yellow and Red Bourbon as well as Catucaí and Catuaí and he processes his coffee at Fazenda Irmas Pereira. Please see carmacoffees.com.br for more information about the farm and photos of the coffee processing.

Finca Galeras

COLOMBIA

Consacá, Nariño

Typica, Colombia and Castillo

Traditional Washed Process

Roberto Melo

Cranberries and muscovado with medium to bright acidity and citrus body

Finca Galeras is the first coffee to arrive from the competition we held in Nariño, Colombia this year. We hold annual competitions in Huila and Nariño and we are delighted with the new coffees arriving from our latest event in Nariño. During the competition we invite farmers to submit samples and we then spend four weeks hulling, sample roasting and tasting all of the coffees, culminating with a presentation and award ceremony. The premium paid to all the winners helps to pay off mortgages, build new houses and invest in farm maintenance and equipment. This is the fourth year that Roberto has placed in our competition and he proudly displays his winner's certificate next to his cycling trophies in his dining room.

Finca Carrizo

COLOMBIA

Consacá, Nariño

Caturra

Traditional Washed Process

Omaira Zambrano

*Red currants and cane sugar with
winey acidity and medium body*

Finca Carrizo will be the third coffee to arrive from our competition in Nariño this year (see Galeras). Omaira Zambrano bought Finca Carrizo with her husband Jesús Morales in 2006. At the time it was being used to keep pasture for horses with just a small amount of coffee planted. They grew beans for a while but now concentrate exclusively on coffee. This year Omaira plans to continue to refurbish their wet-mill and finish planting more trees - Carrizo is a small farm (in comparison to other areas of Colombia) and they need to make full use of all the land they have.

Finca El Troje

COLOMBIA

Funes, Nariño

Caturra and Castillo

Traditional Washed Process

Juan Diego Males Romero

Arriving soon

Finca El Troje will be the fourth coffee to arrive from our competition in Nariño this year (see Galeras). Juan Diego and Maria Elena started El Troje in 2010 and live on the farm with their three children. Juan Diego grew up on a larger property in Funes and learned agricultural practices from his father who managed it. When the owner died, he and his father established their own farms close to each other and together they have entered our competition three times now. Juan Diego manages the property and the plantation at El Troje while Maria Elena takes care of the processing and drying. Their micro-beneficio and fermentation tanks are kept incredibly clean and both believe that the key to achieving the potential in their coffee is dependent on immaculate processing and drying conditions. In the last few years they have installed a small irrigation system for the coffee which has helped through the recent drought. Unfortunately, they have also had some problems with Coffee Rust Disease (see Malacara) like other farms in the area and are having to prune some trees very hard to stop it spreading. They also grow coriander for seeds, mandarins, oranges, corn, yucca, plantain and granadilla - maximising all available growing spaces on the three-hectare farm.

CENTRAL AMERICA

Finca Chico

COSTA RICA

Ojo de Agua León Cortéz

Yellow and Red Catuaí

Mechanical Washed Process

Francisco (Chico) Rojas Camacho

*Seville orange marmalade with**medium to bright acidity and**medium to juicy body*

Finca Chico is a tiny (two hectare) farm south of San José in Costa Rica. The farm was a parcel of land given to Francisco Rojas Camacho by his parents. Originally Finca Chico was part of his parents' farm, and as their children grew up it was split into fifteen sections, one for each of the children. Francisco planted his land twenty years ago with coffee and avocado. There was some concern at the time that because of the high altitude (1800m) there would be a risk of frost, but as the local climate has gotten a little warmer the likelihood of extreme lower temperatures has declined. The coffee trees have survived and are doing well, but sadly less than ten percent of the avocado has made it. Francisco uses every square inch of his two hectares, if there is a little space then something is planted in it – he has an established vegetable garden, as well as peach, plantain and chilli growing. Making a living from two hectares of coffee in Costa Rica is not easy, and Francisco has a job driving the local school bus to help make ends meet. For the last two years, Francisco has also had the help of AFAORCA which is a local coffee cherry processing facility which helps farmers find buyers willing to pay the premium for the micro-lots that Chico produces.

Montes de Cristo

COSTA RICA

San Juan de Naranjo, West Valley

Caturra

Honey Process

Beneficio Montes de Cristo

Organic Certification GB-ORG-04

*Clover honey and limes with zingy**acidity and medium body*

We first tasted coffee from Doña Carmen's farm Montes de Cristo a few years ago and were impressed with the balance between its acidity and sweetness. We have a small shipment of this coffee which was prepared using the honey process method (see Raja Batak). The Montes de Cristo farm has almost three hectares of coffee and only produces a small number of bags a year. We feel fortunate to have coffee this year as it continues to be difficult times for the farm. Roya (Coffee Rust Disease) hit Central America severely over the last couple of years and Doña Carmen has had to take some drastic steps to ensure a crop for this year and the next few years. Whilst getting the farm back to full productivity Doña Carmen has also been incredibly busy sewing tutus for thirty young ballerinas from the local ballet school who will be dancing in a Nutcracker production this Christmas.

Finca Malacara A

EL SALVADOR

Apaneca - Ilimatepec

Red Bourbon

Traditional Washed Process

José Guillermo Alvarez Prunera &

Maria Alvarez De Murray

*Mandarins and orange-blossom**honey with yellow-cherry acidity and**light to medium body*

Malacara translates as 'bad face' which is an incongruous name for such a wonderful farm. Finca Malacara was established by Rafael Alvarez Lalinde. Coffee has been grown on this farm since the 1800s and it has been owned and managed by the Alvarez family since 1889. As the farm has been passed down through three generations it has been separated into three farms, Malacara A, B and C. José Guillermo Alvarez Prunera and Maria Alvarez De Murray have grown another fantastic crop this year despite continuing difficult circumstances. The farm is still recovering from a particularly destructive attack of Coffee Rust Disease (a fungus which attacks the foliage) a few years ago which has reduced the amount of coffee the trees produced. This year, the trees continue to recover and are almost back to their usual level of production. In some cases, José Guillermo and Maria have re-introduced a traditional pruning and training technique on the trees called Agobio Parras. Using this method, the main tree stem is bent past 45 degrees (to nearly horizontal) and fixed into the soil with an old branch shaped like a hook. From the upper side of the bent stem, new branches grow and one to several of these are selected for the future growth. The tree will now have more than three main stems from which the future new crops will develop. After some years of production, but before the yield starts to decline substantially, the stems are stumped, and new off-shoots establish themselves. From these new off-shoots, new stems will once again be selected, and the method will be applied again. It takes a number of years for a coffee farm to recover from an attack of CRD however we are pleased to be able to say that Malacara is making progress using the Agobio method and new planting where the disease has destroyed some trees. Please visit malacara.net for more information about the farm.

Finca Capetillo

GUATEMALA

Alotenango

Bourbon, Caturra and Pache

Traditional Washed Process

Capetillo S.A.

*Candied oranges and chocolate with**medium acidity and caramel body*

Coffee has been grown and processed on Capetillo since the 1880s. The first shipment of Capetillo to London was a small lot of thirty bags in 1889 (not to us). Originally, the farm was a sugar plantation, but slowly over almost one hundred years it was converted to a coffee estate. The waterwheels, which powered the sugar mill, were built in Glasgow by Mirrlees & Tait in 1865 and are still in place and functional. The farm is currently modernising the system to provide more sustainable power for the coffee mill. The farm lies in-between the Acatenango and Agua volcanoes at an average of 1500 meters which is a bit too high for extensive sugar production but great for growing exceptional coffee. In June this year another volcano, Fuego, close to Capetillo erupted. Luckily for the team at Capetillo the volcano erupted from its far side, meaning that the initial ash, lava and stones didn't reach the farm. Later in the week though, the highest areas of the farm suffered from a rain of small volcanic stones and the trees were damaged. The farm manager, Pedro, decided to prune back the affected trees, sacrificing ten percent of this year's crop in order to help the trees recover from the foliage loss. The shade of the volcanoes helps cool the farm's micro-climate ensuring a slow maturation of the cherries which along with the high altitude, careful selection and processing, produces delicious coffees from Capetillo, but unfortunately Guatemala lies on the Pacific ring of fire and eruptions and earthquakes are a frequent part of life here.

Finca Los Laureles II

GUATEMALA
 Huehuetenango
 Caturra and Bourbon
 Traditional Washed Process
 Mario Roberto Sosa
*Cocoa and prunes with chocolatey
 acidity and full body*

Mario Roberto Sosa was born in 1927 and started his working life in 1939. In 1947 he bought one truck, establishing a local transportation business, before marrying Raquel Lopez and going on to raise seven sons. Mario and Raquel started growing coffee in 1966 and in 1972 established Los Laureles II, planting the farm with cultivars traditionally used in the area - Pache, Caturra and Bourbon. Lately, they have been planting Maragogype and Gesha as they have been replacing the older trees. Different cultivars have different requirements in terms of climate and maintenance, which can make dealing with the variety on the farm tricky. However there are advantages of having multiple cultivars on one farm. The crops come in at slightly different times across the season which expands the time that revenue is generated, and they have unique flavour characteristics which means a potentially larger and diverse range of buyers interested in the coffee. We bought this coffee for its classical plum fruit and cocoa notes and we look forward to visiting the farm later in the year. At 91, after a working life spanning 79 years, Mario is still very much on the farm, supervising the care of the trees and the harvest with the support of his sons.

Finca El Pastoral

NICARAGUA
 Los Cipreses - Jinotega
 Caturra and Catuaí
 Traditional Washed Process
 Juan de Dios Castillo Arauz
 Organic Certification GB-ORG-04
*Caramelised pecans and cocoa with
 low to medium acidity and medium
 to full body*

This lot from Finca El Pastoral is exactly the same coffee as our Decaffeinated El Pastoral, but not decaffeinated. Having the two coffees on the counter at the same time gives us an opportunity to taste the effect decaffeination makes to the flavour. Juan de Dios processed this lot using the traditional washed method and it was then sent to Sebaco, a small town with an extensive area where coffees are dried. As Sebaco is much lower in altitude than El Pastoral and its neighbouring farms, it is a lot flatter and dryer making it an ideal location for drying washed process coffees. From November to March every year there is not a single flat surface that does not have coffee drying on it. Getting the crop harvested, processed and organised for shipment has been challenging this year. Juan de Dios's patience and determination has enabled him to ship his coffee and prepare for the new harvest starting at the beginning of January. And despite this year's nationwide unrest, he has also managed to continue with new planting on the farm.

AFRICA**Mirie Jillo**

ETHIOPIA
 Gora Kone - Sidamo
 Local Cultivars
 Traditional Washed Process
 Mirie Jillo
*Bergamot and apricot tea with lively
 acidity and light body*

We bought this lot from Mirie Jillo through the Operation Cherry Red programme and auction platform set up by Trabocca (trabocca.com). Trabocca have been instrumental in developing the structures for traceable, great-tasting and sustainable coffee trading in Ethiopia. The Operation Cherry Red auction showcases some of the amazing coffees Ethiopia has to offer using the newly created regulations that permit small-holder farmers to sell their coffee directly. This is a fundamental development in coffee in Ethiopia and we are delighted to be bringing in four lots from the auction. Mirie Jillo comes from a coffee harvesting family and now owns his own farm in the Sidamo region where he grows coffee, bananas and pineapples. Mirie processed his coffee with the help of the Gora Kone washing station.

Alemayehu Daniel Miju

ETHIOPIA

Worka Chelbesa - Yirgacheffe
Kurume, Wolicho, 74110 &
74112

Natural Process

Alemayehu Daniel Miju

*Dried berries and pear drops with
funky acidity and syrupy body*

We bought this lot from Alemayehu Daniel Miju through the Operation Cherry Red programme set up by Trabocca (trabocca.com – please see Mirie Jillo). Alemayehu's grandfather established the farm in 1946 planting it with coffee from Kochere. Alemayehu started running the farm in 1998. This coffee is processed using the Natural method – where the cherry is picked and then left out on raised platforms to sun-dry. The cherry is turned every few hours to ensure uniform drying and to prevent over-fermentation or mould growth. The coffee reaches the ideal moisture level six to eight weeks after picking and then it is hulled and milled to remove the dried skin and parchment. A delicious natural process coffee is a tricky thing to get right, but coffee in Ethiopia has been processed this way for centuries (since coffee was first roasted and ground for brewing) and the farmers have generations of experience and tradition behind them.

Karuru

KENYA

Embu - Central Kenya
SL28 and SL34

Traditional Washed Process

Kiru Farmers Cooperative Society

*Black and red currants with fresh
acidity and juicy body*

Karuru is a coffee processing station in Central Kenya owned by the Kiru Farmers Cooperative Society. The Kiru Cooperative has 3000 members, each farm is between one to three hectares of coffee. During the harvest, the farmers' cherries are picked and transferred to pre-sorting mats or tables where unripe and damaged cherries are removed before a soaking stage which enables the removal of immature cherries. Immature cherries float and can be easily separated from the mature coffee. The remaining cherry is then sent through a pulper where the skin is removed and the resulting parchment-covered coffee, complete with its mucilage (sticky covering), is soaked in water tanks. The soaking enables the mucilage to ferment and detach from the coffee. The parchment-covered coffee is then washed (hence the process name - traditional washed process) with fresh water, sent through water channels for grading (the sinking coffee is considered the sweetest) and then dried on raised screens before final milling and removal of the parchment. Most of the coffee grown in this area is of the SL28 and SL34 varieties. Both cultivars have Bourbon and Moka heritage and are named after the laboratory that promoted their wider distribution in Kenya during the early 20th century - Scott Laboratories, now the National Agricultural Laboratories of Kenya.

ASIA - PACIFIC**Raja Batak**

INDONESIA

Lake Toba, North Sumatra
Various Cultivars

Honey Process

North Sumatra

*Leafy tobacco and spices with fruity
acidity and medium to full body*

Raja Batak comes from the western Lake Toba region in the north of Sumatra. This shipment has been processed using the honey process method where the sugary layer of fruit (mucilage) is mostly retained on the parchment-covered coffee after the cherry skin is removed. The initial drying period is done at each farm before the coffee is sent to the local processors who remove the parchment; this is done while the moisture level is still high in comparison to methods in other countries. The coffee then goes through a second stage of drying before being graded and prepared for shipment. In comparison to last year, there has been dryer and warmer weather which has been better for the ripening, processing and drying.

FOR ESPRESSO

MONMOUTH ESPRESSO
*Toasted almonds with smooth body
 and balanced fruity acidity*

We currently use Alta Vista (Brasil) as the base of the espresso, adding Lo Mejor de Nariño (Colombia) for high notes and complexity, and Capetillo (Guatemala) for cocoa notes.

ORGANIC ESPRESSO
 Organic Certification GB-ORG-04
*Floral and sweet with fruity length
 and cocoa aftertaste*

Our organic espresso is a combination of our certified coffees from Suke Quto (Ethiopia), Garavilias (Costa Rica) and El Pastoral (Nicaragua).

DECAFFEINATED

Decaffeinated Finca El Pastoral
 NICARAGUA
 Los Cipreses, Jinotega
 Caturra and Catuai
 Traditional Washed Process
 Mountain Water Decaffeination
 Process
 Juan de Dios Castillo Arauz
 Organic Certification GB-ORG-04
*Dates and shortbread with soft
 acidity and medium body*

We chose this coffee from El Pastoral for decaffeination because its body and balance are crucial to producing a full-flavoured decaffeinated coffee. We sent it for decaffeination to Descamex who use the Mountain Water Process. This is the third year we have bought coffee from El Pastoral and we are delighted to be using their non-decaffeinated coffee in our Organic Espresso and to have this decaffeinated shipment available on the counter. Juan de Dios Castillo Arauz is an agronomist and worked on his father's farm before working at a local cooperative. Juan left his job in 2004 to fulfil a life-long dream of having his own coffee farm; growing and processing coffee in his own way as he had imagined he could. The farm was already organic when he bought it and since taking over Juan has managed to triple his production by good management and control of the available shade. We look forward to visiting the farm again next year.

SUGAR

Whole Cane Sugar
 COSTA RICA
 Tayutic Valley
 Assukkar S.A
 Organic Certification GB-ORG-04
Caramel and molasses

Producing this organic, whole-cane sugar is an amazing process which involves a huge amount of manual work. The sugar cane is cut and delivered to the ingenio (like a coffee beneficio but for sugar) where the cane is fed through a series of crushers which separate the juice from the fibre. The used cane fibre is dried and later used as fuel in the furnaces that heat the boilers. The sugar juice then goes through a series of boilers, each time losing more water and becoming thicker in consistency and darker in colour. In the last boiler (made in Glasgow 1944) the sugar becomes 'honey' – as it changes form it changes name – by slowly simmering and reducing until it is a thick consistency and caramel colour. At the critical moment the honey is let out of the boiler and into big vats where men with large metal paddles mix it, releasing the heat and the last of the water. This mixing continues until the honey dries into a crumbly mass of 'dulce' – the specific name for this type of sugar.