

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.

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 El Fuerte

BOLIVIA

Santa Cruz, Samaipata

Caturra

Traditional Washed Process

Fincas Los Rodríguez

Medjool dates and honeyed figs with low to medium acidity and medium to creamy body

Finca El Fuerte is one of Agricafe's farms in the Samaipata region. Agricafe (agricafe.com.bo) is the processor and exporter we work with in Bolivia. They started their farm project to help develop the new coffee growing area in Samaipata - a region they believe to have potential for specialty coffee. Agricafe have five farms in Samaipata in the Fincas Los Rodríguez project on which they are planting with Caturra, Bourbon and Gesha cultivars. This is the third year we have had coffee from El Fuerte and we are pleased with its caramelised mandarin sweetness.

Finca El Plan

COLOMBIA

Yacuanquer, Nariño

Caturra

Traditional Washed Process

Nidia Adriana Morales López

Fresh plums and tangerines with medium to bright acidity and medium body

Doña Nidia has been growing coffee at El Plan since 2012. Nidia and her brother Alfredo Morales run El Plan together and over the last seven years have been slowly converting the farm from onion and pulses to coffee. El Plan is the sixth coffee to arrive from our competition (see El Paraiso) in Nariño. With the premium from this year's competition, Nidia is going to continue to improve her coffee-drying facilities. The coffee at El Plan is dried in small poly-tunnels which allow the coffee to dry under protection from rain and high humidity. The conditions within the poly-tunnels are monitored and the sides are opened or closed to allow more or less air-flow over the coffee. Drying coffee is an important part of the processing which can be over-looked or rushed in an effort to get the coffee to market. Too slow, and the coffee can start to mould and go through an unwanted secondary fermentation; too fast and the coffee will lose flavour potential and start to taste aged before its time. Depending on the micro-climate, coffee can take about a week to ten days to dry to a humidity level appropriate for dry-milling.

Finca El Paraiso

COLOMBIA

La Florida, Nariño

Caturra, Castillo and Colombia

Traditional Washed Process

Braulino Exequiel Hernández

Damson and blackberry jam with medium acidity and juicy body

El Paraiso is the seventh coffee to arrive from the competition we held with the help of the exporters we work with in Nariño, Colombia last year. We hold annual competitions in Huila and Nariño and we are delighted with the new coffees arriving. During the competition we invite farmers to submit samples and then we spend a few weeks hulling, sample roasting and tasting all 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. El Paraiso is a young farm, planted in 2011 with Caturra, Castillo and Colombia. Braulino Exequiel Hernández and Aura Delia Manchabajoy live at the farm and manage El Paraiso and another farm, El Mandarino, with the help of their daughter Leonela. Coffee is their main source of income, however all of the farms in this area will be growing produce for the house such as guamo, plantain, banana, lemon and oranges. The taller trees provide the coffee with shade which is important in some areas of coffee production. The coffee cherry can ripen too quickly with too much sun and there can be a danger of sunburn on the trees. Shade is carefully managed on all farms and will often be another source of income, whether it be from fruit trees or timber. The taller trees also provide a more diverse environment which benefits the soil and migratory birds that come through the region. This year Braulino would like to expand the space in which he dries coffee and make some improvements to his micro-beneficio.

Finca Buenos Aires

COLOMBIA

Samaniego, Nariño

Caturra and Colombia

Traditional Washed Process

Roiman Cortez

Arriving soon

Buenos Aires will be the eighth coffee to arrive from our competition (see EL Paraiso) in Nariño last year. Roiman has been growing coffee for thirty years and also has crops of avocado, green beans and citrus. This year he has made improvements to his wet-mill area and drying patio. Drying and transportation are Roiman's key challenges over the next few years as Samaniego is a four and half-hour drive from Pasto, the nearest town for delivery to coffee buyers and the Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia (the Colombian Coffee Grower's Federation). The Federation is an important part of the internal market as they buy all qualities but importantly also act as a buyer of last resort. Last year, Roiman was elected as a representative in the Federation's Samaniego Regional Coffee Farmers Committee. Elections in which only coffee farmers can stand and vote are held every two years. This is an important position in the community as the representative is the link between the Federation and the coffee growers in the area. Roiman's two sons will be helping him on the farm during this time.

CENTRAL AMERICA**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 danced in a Nutcracker production last Christmas.

Finca Malacara A

EL SALVADOR

Apaneca - Iamatepec

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 Santa Catalina

GUATEMALA

San Miguel Dueñas, Antigua

Caturra and Bourbon

Traditional Washed Process

Pedro Echeverría and Manuel

Echeverría

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

The Echeverría brothers own and manage Santa Catalina. They have 95 hectares, 70 of which are planted with coffee and the remaining 25 are a forest reserve close to the Acatenango volcano. The altitude on the farm ranges from 1550m to 2100m. The higher slopes are planted with Bourbon and the comparatively lower areas with the other cultivars: Caturra, Catuai and Pache. The two coffees in this shipment come from the Caturra and Bourbon. Bourbon is an early ripener and planting it at the higher altitude with the correspondingly cooler temperatures slows its maturation down considerably. This means all of the farm's coffee ripens at approximately the same time making it easier to harvest the crop. During the harvest the cultivars and plots are kept separate all the way through the picking, processing and drying. The harvests are then tasted and either kept as individual lots or blended together. This year Pedro and Manuel have just completed a long-standing project of digging a well. The well has been dug to provide drinking water and irrigation for the farm in an extreme drought. It has been a complex and lengthy undertaking, but this will be the first year that they won't have to truck water in for the farm workers for the harvest season.

Finca El Guatalón

GUATEMALA
 Mataquescuintla, Jalapa
 Caturra
 Traditional Washed Process
 Guillermo Juarez
*Cocoa and prunes with fruity acidity
 and medium body*

Finca El Guatalón is a family owned and managed farm established by Guillermo Juarez's grandfather. Each generation has brought new cultivars to the farm including Typica, Mundo Novo, Pache, San Ramon, Caturra, Catuaí and most recently Villa Sarchi, Pacamara and Maragogype. Guillermo Juarez is a retired agronomist who started working on El Guatalón over a decade ago. The farm is separated into five micro-regions by soil type and altitude. The different cultivars flourish in slightly different circumstances and each is planted in the area to which it is best suited. The Mataquescuintla region was affected greatly by Roya in recent years, but Guillermo has managed to stave off any serious ingress of the fungus and his farm is doing well.

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. 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**Nigasu Wesy**

ETHIOPIA
 Mokonisa - Yirgacheffe
 Dega, Kurume and Walisho
 Natural Process
 Nigasu Wesy
*Dried strawberries and fresh melon
 with funky acidity and syrupy body*

We bought this lot from Nigasu Wesy through the Operation Cherry Red programme set up by Trabocca (trabocca.com – please see Tessema Edima). Nigasu Wesy and Obesie Worera grow coffee and false banana on their farm in Yirgacheffe. False banana is an extremely handy plant and has many uses including starch for bread, feed for animals and shade for coffee. It is the staple crop in Ethiopia and will become more important world-wide as it is generally hardy and productive in a wide variety of climates. Our coffee from Nigasu 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.

Tessema Edima
 ETHIOPIA
 Onacho - Sidamo
 Dega and Kurume
 Traditional Washed Process
 Tessema Edima
Bergamot and lychee tea with lively acidity and sparkly body

We bought this lot from Tessema Edima 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. Tessema Edima started working in coffee from an early age and grows false banana for the local markets as well as coffee. He remembers helping his father and his uncles pick coffee from small patches of land around the local area. The coffee here grows in an almost semi-wild state with little interference or management.

Karii
 KENYA
 Kirinyaga - Central Kenya
 SL28, SL34, Batain and Ruiru 11
 Traditional Washed Process
 Kiru Farmers Cooperative Society
Blackcurrants and cocoa with fresh acidity and juicy body

Karii is a coffee processing station in Central Kenya owned by the Mutira Farmers Cooperative Society. The Mutira Cooperative has 4000 members, and the Karii Factory has around 600 farmers delivering coffee cherry. 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 varietals. 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. Changes in the local climate are beginning to affect this part of Kenya – many of the farmers are now planting macadamia and avocado as shade trees to reduce the amount of heat and light reaching the coffee trees.

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 Catalina (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), Bolinda (Bolivia) and El Pastoral (Nicaragua).

DECAFFEINATED

Decaffeinated Lo Mejor de Nariño
 COLOMBIA
 Nariño
 Caturra, Colombia and Castillo
 Traditional Washed Process
 Mountain Water Decaffeination Process
 Lo Mejor de Nariño Winners
Plums and molasses with medium acidity and chewy body

This year we enlarged our competition in Nariño (see San José) to include our requirements for decaffeinated coffee for the next six months or so. Coffees were selected through the competition and were then sent to Mexico for decaffeination by Descamex (descamex.com.mx) using the Mountain Water Process. The coffee is then re-bagged and sent on to us. Seven farmers contributed to this lot: Cristian Oliber Getial, José Florencio Morales, Ezequiel Macario Castillo, Jairo German Rosero, Roberto Ricardo Bravo, José German Cabrera and Pedro Nel De La Cruz. All of the farmers received the winners' premiums and it was a great opportunity for us to extend the competition's reach and rewards.

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.