

# MONMOUTH

COFFEE COMPANY

ISSUE No. 10 • 2017

## 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 where we installed two Petroncini roasters. And now after ten years, we are moving our roasting site again, just a little further east to Spa Terminus in Bermondsey where we are converting 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. We will be moving to the new site over the next few months.

## NEWS

El Mirador, San Isidro (Colombia), Vila Maria (Brasil), and Malacara A (El Salvador) are available for sampling. Las Nubes (Guatemala), La Divina Providencia (El Salvador), Altamira (Colombia), Esteban Quispe (Bolivia) and Guji Uruga (Ethiopia) will be arriving soon.

## SOUTH AMERICA

**Sítio Grota São Pedro**

BRASIL

Carmo de Minas

Bourbon and Catuaí

Pulped Natural Process

Claudio Carneiro Pinto

Organic Certification GB-ORG-04

*Pecans and chocolate with low acidity and medium to full body*

Claudio Carneiro Pinto and his siblings inherited the land which became Sítio Grota São Pedro in the 1960s. In the early 2000s the farm was split, with each brother taking a piece of the farm for growing coffee in their own way. Claudio decided to grow and process coffee organically and over the years has bought the other brothers' land and established his own larger farm. During this time, Claudio has focussed on producing high-quality, specialty coffee and has been rewarded with places in the Cup of Excellence competitions in Brasil.

**Sítio Vila Maria**

BRASIL

Montanhas do Espírito Santo

Red and Yellow Catuaí

Pulped Natural Process

Rafael Silva

*Cocoa and walnuts with prune-like acidity and medium to full body*

This is our first year of buying coffee from this area of Brasil for quite some time! The Montanhas do Espírito Santo is a unique area in the South-Eastern part of Brasil - the farms are much smaller than other regions in the country and the coffees are grown and processed in a similar way to the smaller farms in Central America. With the help of our old friends at Bourbon Specialty Coffees ([bourboncoffees.com.br](http://bourboncoffees.com.br)) great coffee from these farms is now being identified and buyers found who are willing to pay a premium for the quality. Rafael Silva was born and raised at Vila Maria where he learned coffee growing and processing from his father. This year Rafael is going to build covered drying patios and new silos for coffee storage.

**Sítio Senhor Niquinho**

BRASIL

Carmo de Minas

Yellow Bourbon

Pulped Natural Process

Luiz Paulo Dias Pereira Filho

*Dark chocolate and toasted almonds with low acidity and medium 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 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. Please see [carmocoffees.com.br](http://carmocoffees.com.br) for more information about the farm and photos of the coffee processing.

**Finca de Esteban Quispe**

BOLIVIA

Colonia Llusta, La Paz

Caturra and Typica

Traditional Washed Process

Esteban Quispe

*Arriving soon*

Esteban Quispe has grown a terrific coffee again this year and we are delighted that it will arrive soon. The Llusta region has been devastated by Roya (see El Mirador) and as Esteban's neighbour has been greatly affected, Esteban has taken extreme measures to keep the Roya at bay. These include heavy pruning to keep air-flow between the trees moving and planting his new areas with generous spacing which increases the amount of light into the foliage. Roya thrives in dark and humid conditions so any way these can be reduced is beneficial. In addition to managing the farm, Esteban Quispe works with Agricafe ([agricafe.com.bo](http://agricafe.com.bo)) on the Sol de Mañana program. The program provides agricultural and market assistance to farmers in the region.

**Finca El Mirador**

COLOMBIA  
 Los Olivos, Huila  
 Caturra and Colombia  
 Traditional Washed Process  
 Octavio Rueda  
*Tropical fruit with juicy acidity and medium body*

El Mirador is one of my favourite coffees from Colombia and this particular lot will be the first coffee to arrive from our competition in Huila (see Finca Altamira). Octavio has been successful in our competition for years and we now buy his coffee alongside our event in the same way as Finca San Isidro. We have known Octavio for over ten years and have seen his farm develop over that time and learnt so much from him about coffee growing. There are many challenges in coffee; we have discussed previously the Roya or Coffee Rust Disease problem (a fungus which attacks the leaves of the trees limiting the amount of photosynthesis and sometimes killing the tree) which has been causing many problems around the coffee growing regions. In Octavio's words, Roya had him against the ropes in the last couple of years, and he has had to be vigilant and experimental with the controls he has been using. In addition to Roya, there is also difficulty getting enough people to help pick the coffee during the harvest season in this part of Huila. Coffee, like most fruit production, requires harvesting once a year and is often done by migrant labour who specialise in this kind of work, travelling through the coffee areas of Colombia. El Mirador is not a big farm, so if necessary, Octavio and his family can get through the picking with some local help. It makes for heavy work and long days to get the cherry picked and then processed carefully.

**Finca San Isidro**

COLOMBIA  
 El Libano, Huila  
 Caturra and Castillo  
 Traditional Washed Process  
 Alirio Aguilera Ospina  
*Stone fruit and caramel with medium acidity and syrupy body*

Alirio Aguilera Ospina has produced another outstanding coffee this year. We tasted this year's crop during our competition in Huila (see Finca Altamira) and because of Alirio's repeated success in our event we have bought this coffee separately. This means that Alirio receives the same premium as the competition winners and we are guaranteed a larger amount of coffee than the standard competition entry. Finca San Isidro is a fairly small farm with eight of its eight and a half hectares planted with coffee. Alirio has worked hard over the years to get his farm to this size, buying bits and pieces of land around his farm as they have become available. One of his proudest moments in coffee farming was winning the Cup of Excellence Colombia North competition in 2013. During the ceremony another San Isidro farm from Huila was announced in sixth place and Alirio mistook it for his farm until the farmer's name was called out. He was completely delighted when his own name was finally announced in first place. San Isidro is the patron saint of farmers and is a popular name for farms in Spanish. We have another San Isidro arriving from El Salvador later in the year.

**Finca Altamira**

COLOMBIA  
 San Agustín, Huila  
 Caturra and Castillo  
 Traditional Washed Process  
 Sergio Buesaco and Fabio Buesaco  
*Arriving soon*

Finca Altamira is the 3rd coffee to arrive from the competition we held in Huila, Colombia at the end of last year. We hold annual competitions in Huila and Nariño and we are delighted with the new coffees arriving from our latest event in Huila. 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 year, Sergio and Fabio have invested in new fermentation tanks and other improvements to the farm and their homes.

## CENTRAL AMERICA

**Finca Las Lajas**

COSTA RICA

Poas Volcano, Central Valley

Caturra

Perla Negra - Natural Process

Familia Chacón

Organic Certification GB-ORG-04

*Dried tropical fruit with pineapple acidity and syrupy body*

The Natural method is the most simple way to process coffee cherry but very difficult to perfect. Fortunately Francisca and Oscar are experienced and dedicated farmers and they have produced another delicious natural coffee this year - full of juicy fruit flavours. Perfectly ripe cherry is selected specifically for this lot of coffee and then spread onto screens to dry for a few days. The drying cherry requires constant attention to make sure that it is losing moisture evenly and slowly. If the cherry dries too quickly the beans can be damaged, but it must also be protected from rain and high humidity as water-damage can lead to problems in the cup as well. When all the care and attention pays off the end cup of coffee is an interesting mix of ripe fruit flavours and intense sweetness. Francisca and Oscar have been experimenting with perfecting their Natural Process (which they call Perla Negra) for some years now. They usually select cherry from a specific area of the farm which has a particularly full and even maturation. They have also been experimenting with the types of screens they use to dry the cherry including the colour of the material used to cover the cherries overnight and also the optimum amount of drying time. This obviously changes every year depending on the quality and quantity of the harvest. All of their experiments are correlated with how the coffee tastes once it has been roasted and cupped, so that any improvements that are made can be repeated next year.

**Finca Lia**

COSTA RICA

La Legua de Aserri

Caturra and Catuaí

Mechanical Washed Process

Familia Rojas Camacho

*Sanguinello orange and dark honey with balanced acidity and body*

Finca Lia is owned by the fifteen children of Antonio Rojas and Ligia Camacho. Each sibling owns 6500m<sup>2</sup> of Finca Lia and they all deliver their coffee to a local, small coffee-mill which processes the cherry and helps the family market the coffee to buyers. Jorge Rojas, one of the brothers, helps oversee all of the coffee growing and also the processing at the mill. Individually, the amount of coffee which can be grown on each small plot is absolutely tiny and it would be difficult to process with commercial equipment. By acting as a group and collating all of their harvest, the siblings are able to have their coffee processed, graded and marketed. The family also grow banana, peaches and avocados for the local markets.

**La Divina Providencia**

EL SALVADOR

Canton Palo de Campana

Orange Bourbon

Traditional Washed Process

Roberto Samuel Ulloa Vilanova

*Arriving soon*

Roberto Samuel Ulloa Vilanova bought La Divina Providencia nine years ago. When Roberto took over the farm the land and trees were in poor condition having been abandoned in previous years because the extremely low coffee prices at that time drove the farm out of production. Since buying the farm, Roberto has rejuvenated the land and the trees, planted 8000 Bourbon and Kenya trees on an additional area, and installed a complete wet-process mill and drying screens. Roberto uses a tree-training method called 'parras' where the leader branch from a pruned trunk is bent almost 90 degrees and four lateral branches build the structure for future growth. This method is used to improve the productivity and longevity of the tree. We have bought two lots from Roberto this year. The first is to arrive is this Orange Bourbon and we have a Red Bourbon to follow later in the year.

**Finca Malacara A**

EL SALVADOR

Apaneca - Ilamatepec

Red Bourbon

Traditional Washed Process

José Guillermo Alvarez Prunera &amp;

Maria Alvarez De Murray

*Mandarins and caramel with yellow-cherry acidity and 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. Unfortunately during the last few crops the farm was affected by Coffee Rust Disease (a fungus which attacks the foliage) which has reduced the amount of coffee the trees produced. This year, the trees continue to recover but are not back to their usual level of production. 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 and we wish them the very best for next year's crop. Please visit [malacara.net](http://malacara.net) for more information about the farm.

**Finca La Bolsa**

GUATEMALA

La Libertad, Huehuetenango

Bourbon and Caturra

Traditional Washed Process

María Elena Vides de Ovalle

*Muscovado sugar and berries with medium acidity and medium body*

Close to the most western border with Mexico and the Pan-American Highway, La Libertad has the high altitude, plentiful rainfall, lush shade and moderate temperatures needed to grow exceptional coffee. Combine the best natural conditions with Caturra and the noble Bourbon varietal, exacting skill in picking and processing coffee, and we have one of our favourite coffees from this year's Guatemalan crop. María Elena Vides de Ovalle and her son Renardo Ovalle own and manage the farm respectively. María Elena's father - Dr. Jorge Vides - started to grow coffee at La Bolsa in 1958 and was awarded the prestigious Outstanding Coffee Grower award from ANACAFE (the Guatemalan national coffee association) in 1984, just as the world was beginning to acknowledge the potential of great specialty coffee.

**Finca Las Nubes**

GUATEMALA

Esquipulas

Catauá

Traditional Washed Process

Don Fabio &amp; Doña Sonia Solís

*Arriving soon*

Don Fabio and Doña Sonia have been growing coffee at Las Nubes since the late 1980s. The farm is in the isolated area of the El Trifinio mountains where Guatemala meets Honduras and El Salvador. The coffee is grown at high altitude and because of the mild day temperatures and cool evenings the coffee develops and matures slowly, resulting in a clean and sweet cup. The farm today is one of the most beautiful in Guatemala but when Fabio and Sonia bought the farm it was derelict, with every part needing repair and rejuvenation. Over the years new trees have been planted, a tree nursery established, workers' houses and the main house built and roads created with some dynamite and backbreaking work. Fabio and Sonia also built a new micro-mill where the coffee is pulped and washed before being sent for drying. Fabio and Sonia work as a team to bring in and process the coffee harvest. Fabio is in charge of the farm, picking and processing. Sonia takes care of growing food, rearing livestock and cooking for the workers, in addition to driving the freshly processed coffee every day to the main patios for drying in Padre Miguel. This journey through mountainous terrain in full off-roading territory is not easy. We have been buying coffee from Las Nubes for a number of years now and we will be pleased to have the new crop available on the counter very soon.

## AFRICA

### Aroresa

ETHIOPIA

Gedio - Sidamo

Local Varietals

Traditional Washed Process

Aroresa Washing Station

*Black tea and citrus with fresh acidity and zesty body*

The Aroresa Washing Station operates in the Gedio region of Sidamo. Coffee is delivered to Aroresa by approximately 800 small-holding farmers. The farm sizes here are small with each farmer having approximately two acres. The coffee is processed at Aroresa using the Traditional Washed Process (see Karimikui) with an exceptionally long fermentation time of 36 to 48 hours. The parchment-covered coffee is then sun-dried on raised screens which are covered during the heat of the midday sun and covered again overnight to protect the coffee from dew.

### Karimikui

KENYA

Kirinyaga District, Central Province

SL28 and SL34

Traditional Washed Process

Rungeto Farmers' Cooperative

Society

*Tropical fruit and currants with medium to bright acidity and punchy body*

Karimikui is a coffee processing station in the Kirinyaga District of the Central Province. The Rungeto Farmers' Cooperative was established in 1957 and has three processing stations to which some 3500 farmers deliver coffee cherry. In addition to coffee, the farmers grow vegetables for their families and the local markets. During the harvest, the farmers' cherries are picked and transferred to presorting 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) 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.

## ASIA - PACIFIC

### Raja Batak

INDONESIA

Lake Toba, North Sumatra

Various Cultivars

Semi-washed Process

North Sumatra

*Fresh pipe tobacco and spice with herbaceous acidity and medium body*

Raja Batak comes from the western Lake Toba region in the north of Sumatra. This shipment has been processed using the semi-washed method where the sugary layer of fruit (mucilage) is washed off the parchment-covered coffee immediately 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. During this harvest there has been unseasonable rain and high humidity which has been problematic for the ripening, processing and drying. The coffee this year has more fresh spice notes and herbaceous acidity than last year.

## FOR ESPRESSO

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

We currently use Sertao (Brasil) as the base of the espresso, adding Lo Mejor de Huila (Colombia) for high notes and complexity, and La Bolsa (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), La Carretilla (Costa Rica) and Grota São Pedro (Brasil).

## DECAFFEINATED

**Decaffeinated Finca El Pastoral**  
 NICARAGUA  
 Los Cipreses, Jinotega  
 Caturra and Catuai  
 Traditional Washed Process  
 Mountain Water Decaffeination  
 Juan de Dios Castillo Arauz  
 Organic Certification GB-ORG-04  
*Dates and caramel 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 second 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 this 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.

