

BRAZILIAN COFFEE FROM POÇO FUNDO, SUL DE MINAS

IMPORTED BY ALTROMERCATO AND ROASTED AT CAFFÉ SANT'EUSTACHIO

Poço Fundo is a village of approximately 17,000 inhabitants, situated in a mountainous district, rich in woods and watercourses, in the south of the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. The landscape is full of coffee plantations, which constitute the predominant activity of the area – Minas Gerais is the main producer of Brazilian coffee. In 1991, the small scale farmers of Poço Fundo organized to found “**Associação de Pequenos Produtores**” (Association of small scale producers), with the objective to promote cooperation between them and improving their own quality of life and work.

The Association of Poço Fundo turned into a co-op named **COOPFAM** that counts **250 associates** and produces, with the help of all the associates' families, mainly coffee (an average of 12,000 bags per year) and some other products. The associates cooperate with 5 other associations from the nearby villages and run various social and charity programs in Poço Fundo. In 1997, they applied for Fairtrade (Max Havelaar) and Organic (AAO- Association of Organic Agriculture) certifications. Since 2002, Coopfam is certified by Sapucaí, a local organization that helps Coopfam to sell its organic vegetables, chickens, eggs and cereals in the district. In the same year, Coopfam was BSC OKO certified. Nowadays, with the certifications of FLO Fair Trade Label Organization, Naturland, UTZ and Rainforest Alliance, Coopfam sells most of its coffee, obtained by organic and conventional farming methods, to the United States, Japan and Europe. The trade relationships rely on Organic and Fair Trade certifications so that fair prices and social dignity are guaranteed to the producers.

COOPFAM owns about 300,000 plants of **organically grown Arabica coffee**, Catuaí and Mundo Novo varieties. The coffee plants are grown using no chemical fertilizers or pesticides, with the help of “clean” techniques, different from conventional cultivation. “Some of the associates are still in the process of switching to organic cultivation; but that is a hard challenge because organic implies hard work and the price of the sales does not pay back all the efforts. The farmers do it because they believe in a way of producing which is fair for themselves, for the earth and for the environment”, says the president of the Association. The beans are slowly dried in the sun, in a natural way, so that the coffee, as well as being free from pesticides, does not lose the properties acquired with the growth. The result is a drink with characteristics similar to a high quality coffee from Central America, with an equilibrated acidity. A complex and extremely fine coffee.

Who is Ctm Altromercato?

Ctm Altromercato is a Consortium made out of 120 non-profit organizations that are active in the fair and supportive trade in Italy. Altromercato cooperates with organizations of small scale farmers and crafters from Africa, Asia and South America; it is involved in the financing, the production and the sale of typical food and craft products and it offers training on the problems linked to the economical relations between North and South of the world. In 15 years of activity, Altromercato started cooperation programs with more than 150 groups of small scale producers from 40 countries. Altromercato guarantees a fair import of products that values the effective costs of production, guaranteeing a minimum price considered as fair to producers; it assures clear and long term trading relationships; it partially pays in advance (up to the 50% of the cost of the ordered product) and it actively supports organic farming. Ctm (originally Cooperazione Terzo Mondo – Third World Cooperation) was born in 1989 in Bolzano. Today it manages 118 World Shops (called Botteghe del Mondo), with 230 points of sale in Italy. It employs more than 200 people helped by the contribution of about 3,000 volunteers. In 2003 it had sale proceeds of 30 million euro, with a rate of growth exceeding 30% during the last years. Currently, it is the most important Italian Fair Trade organization (the second in the world).

