

Sant' Eustachio[®]
il caffè
dal 1938 a Roma

THE COFFEE FROM ST. HELENA ISLAND

A SPECIALITY AMONG THE GOURMET COFFEES

The lost and untouched St. Helena Island has volcanic origin and it is famous all over the world because it was Emperor Napoleon Bonapartes' place of exile. But few people know the existence of a production of coffee, which can be considered unique among all the existent ones, both because of its high quality and its history. The Island is small, measuring 6x8 miles, and it is distant 1,200 miles from the African coast and 1,800 miles from Brazil.

Everything started long ago, on the 10th February 1733, when "The East India Company" on board of the "Houghton", Captain Philips' ship, brought to the Island from the port of Mocha, in Yemen, a **special Arabica Blend, called Green Tipped Bourbon**. All the countries that used to produce this variety had stopped cultivating it; on the contrary, in St. Helena, in the nineties, an Englishman called David Henry saved, little by little, the old plantations from tropical plants, clearing the soil from weeds, pruning and reinvigorating old plants. He fulfilled his dream of bringing the plantations back to the ancient splendour of the colonial era in order to produce a delicate coffee.

These magic coffee beans absorb all the advantages given by the position of the island: located in the South Atlantic Ocean, in the path of the South-East winds, St. Helena has one of the purest environments in the world. The volcanic island is rich in guano, the only natural fertilizer used, which is picked up from the rocky coasts and put on the plants. The coffee is wet processed using pure spring water descending from the Island's peaks and ridges. Currently, the coffee is grown under the shadow of local forest trees (such as Ebony and St. Helena Andira tree) which cannot be found anywhere else in the world and are on the verge of extinction. One of the functions of the forest trees is to protect coffee plants from strong winds.

Despite all the difficulties and without any help, David Henry managed not only to bring the ancient cultivation back into favour, but also to produce a **superior quality coffee**: only the "perfect" cherries are harvested, and this careful picking up must be repeated every week, making the control of quality unique in the world and incomparable with coffee plantations of larger extent. Moreover, the environment, the purity of the water and the careful preparation of coffee guarantee the sustainability of the production.

The result is a green bean with the typical shape of the Bourbon variety, with a magnificent brightness, such as the Ethiopian Yerga Coffee. This "delicate" coffee is perfectly balanced, has a pleasant acidity and full body. Its bouquet (flavour) is superb and fragrant without side tastes, with an aroma ranging from floral to fruity and an enjoyable slight contrast between lemon and caramel. Also strongly present is the essence of Yemeni coffee. The roast must be extremely delicate; as a consequence, the coffee is **lively with acidity with a hint of citrus and mild body, it is chocolatey and spicy**, some years mostly with the aroma of pepper. The acidity, aroma and finish of this coffee are absolutely unique.

The Island belongs to the U.K. and as such is served only by the ships of the "U.K. Royal Navy" approximately once in a month. In its journey, the coffee goes to Capetown, where it is sent by air to different destinations. We are glad to offer to curious expert coffee lovers the precious St. Helena coffee, one of the rarest and most valued coffees of the world.