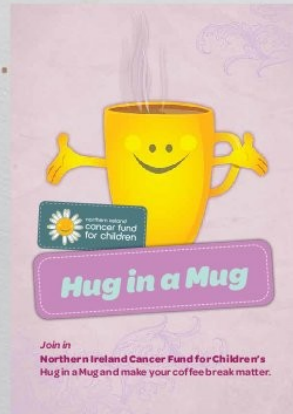


Ristretto News.

Ristretto support Hug in a Mug Campaign



This autumn we have continued to support the Northern Ireland Cancer Fund for Children by helping with their annual "Hug in a Mug" campaign.

Every week in Northern Ireland three more families are told the devastating news that their child has cancer. Family life changes dramatically. Along with frequent hospital visits and gruelling treatment, there are also the everyday practical concerns that come with a childhood cancer diagnosis like financial issues as one parent generally has to give up work to care for the child.

"Hug in a Mug" is aimed at encouraging friends, work colleagues and organisations to hold a coffee morning to raise much needed funds for the NICFC. Inside each of the 2500 "Hug in a Mug" promotional packs distributed throughout Northern Ireland Ristretto provided a bag of freshly roasted speciality coffee for each recipient to enjoy. We hope this makes their fund raising efforts more enjoyable as they raise money for this very worthy cause.

The Northern Ireland Cancer Fund for Children

supports each family member through the cancer journey, so that they in turn can support each other. Vital services include qualified youth and family support, residential and social weekends at Narnia, the charity's log cabin, grants to ease the financial burden of looking after a sick child, as well as the provision of family respite care at Shimna Valley House nestled at the foot of the Mourne Mountains, Newcastle.



Industry News.

World Barista Campships

We had the privilege of attending the 11th Annual World Barista Championships held in London back in June.

This was the focus of the eyes of the speciality coffee world, both online and at the host event, Caffe Culture, held in association with the Speciality Coffee Association of Europe (SCAE). It was another epic event as Mike Phillips of Chicago, USA, walked away with the 2010 crown. 53 national barista champions in total were cheered on by an audience of over one thousand people, with a total internet audience of 29,600 over the course of the 3-day event via a new GoLive streaming video project.



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grind.

A quarterly publication by Ristretto



Feature Story.

Guatemala field trip part two

In the previous issue we focused on the first few days of our trip to Guatemala. During this time we travelled around the famous Antigua region, sampling some wonderful coffees before moving on to the Acatanango and breathtaking region around Lake Atitlan. Next on our agenda was to head north to see what delights these regions had in store.

At first light on Friday we began a five hour journey towards the Mexican border. The roads were surprisingly good as they weaved around mountain after mountain blanketed by thick forest. Throughout the journey the landscape was littered with tiny homes built from wood or rocks and the really fortunate people seemed to have found pieces of corrugated tin for their roof. We finally arrived at our destination, Huehuetenango (pronounced waywaytenango) early in the afternoon. This region is the highest and driest under cultivation thanks to the dry, hot winds that blow from Mexico which was only about ten miles away. This town felt very Mexican so we thought the best way for two white boys to blend in was to go into a local eating house and get some Tortillas and a big steak!

On Saturday morning we set off on a one hour journey in 4x4's. These dirt tracks snaked high up into the mountains, brushing steep ravines which we tried

to pretend didn't exist! Somewhere up in the dense rainforests we would hopefully find Finca El Injerto, a Cup of Excellence winning farm. If El Injerto's coffee was as dramatic as its location we were in for a treat!

On arrival we were greeted by Arturo senior and junior, third and fourth generation owners of Finca El Injerto. After our bumpy trek up to the farm we gladly accepted their offer of a cup of their finest coffee. The coffee was superbly light with bright acidity and a smooth, delicate aftertaste.

Following refreshments we proceeded on the back of a truck up through the lush coffee plantations, through the cool mist to altitudes of 6500ft. Occasionally we would hop off the truck and walk through the dense plantation looking at the different varieties of coffee grown. In certain sections of the plantation the cherries were a deep red and in other areas the bright yellow varieties of Bourbon, Catuai and Pacamara were just ready for harvesting. After visiting the plantation it was time to visit another section of the farm. The next stage in the process is to remove the coffee beans from the cherries and that is known as wet milling. The ripe coffee cherries are fed into a pulping machine and the beans are pushed out of the cherry. The waste

—continue reading on page 2

Welcome to grind.

This is the second issue of grind. Ristretto's quarterly publication which keeps you informed with what is happening in the Ristretto community and coffee industry as a whole. Grab a cuppa, enjoy the read and keep on making incredible coffee!

Mark and Gregg

Ristretto
The Art of Coffee



Feature Story. Guatemala field trip

Mark and Gregg with Sonja and Fabio Solis at Las Nubes

Finca Las Nubes farm in Guatemala

cherries are stored for future use as compost while the coffee beans are sent into a fermentation tank. Coffee beans covered in mucilage (gel) are left to ferment in these tanks for up to 48 hours. Experts continually test the coffee while in the fermentation tanks and at just the right time the beans are flushed out of the fermentation tanks with clean water.

After leaving the fermentation tanks, clean water forces the beans down a series of concrete channels to remove all the mucilage (gel). At this stage beans are still protected by an outer shell (parchment).

With the mucilage all removed the next stage in the process is to dry the coffee. In Guatemala most coffee is initially patio dried for five to six days before mechanical dryers reduce the moisture content to about 11%. While on patios the coffee is moved around regularly so that it dries uniformly and at night it is raked into large piles and covered to protect from moisture. Having tried moving the coffee around myself I realise just how strenuous this job is.

The wet milling process uses large quantities of water but as we discovered throughout our trip, Guatemalans are great at recycling. Everything is recycled, from the water used for washing the coffee to the pulp for compost.

The way in which coffee is processed can dramatically affect the taste in the cup. There are so many stages at which the coffee can be adversely affected therefore great care must be taken throughout every stage of the milling process.

When the coffee has been sufficiently dried the next stage is known as dry milling. This is

where the outer shell (parchment) is removed from the beans. The green beans are then graded by size, density and colour before being put into 68kg sacks. The parchment is subsequently used to fuel the mechanical dryers.

This visit to Finca El Injerto was inspiring but deeply humbling. Around 4pm exhausted men, women and children arrived back to the farm carrying heavy sacks, bulging with coffee cherries, hand picked that day. Hundreds of people of all ages thronged the weigh in area, eating complimentary tortillas provided by Arturo while they waited for their hard earned pay. Pickers here are well paid by Guatemalan standards receiving on average 50 Quetzal (£4.00) per day for collecting one Quintal (45kg) of coffee cherries. I couldn't help but notice how happy and content everyone looked despite their hardship, yet with all the luxuries we enjoy at home we still complain and always want more.

On Sunday we took a nine seat plane from Huehuetenango airport to the Coban region. As we bounced onto the tiny airstrip in Coban and pulled up on the tarmac we were met by a significant military presence, all carrying machine guns. Ordinarily we may have felt alarmed but because we were from Northern Ireland it wasn't just as big a shock.

With only a few farms left to visit before our return we left for Las Nubes farm early Monday morning. We journeyed for about an hour through dense forest in 4x4's to get to this boutique little farm visible only from the air. Every farm we visited, we were warmly welcomed but this welcome was

rapturous to say the least! Fabio Solis and his wife Sonja practically opened their home to us, fed us and opened twenty-three year old local Zacapa rum for us!

Following a great lunch at Finca Las Nubes we moved on to Las Delicias Farm in nearby Camotan. On arrival the farmer took us on foot up steep mountain slopes through the coffee plantation where we talked to us about the plants. While we stopped for a breather, Mark felt something bite his legs. Glancing down towards the ground his trousers were black with a million marching ants. He had inadvertently stood on an ants nest and they were not too happy with him! He proceeded to do a dance that Bruce Forsyth would have been proud of. After a few minutes of panic (and laughter from on lookers) we continued up through the plantation and occasionally met workers coming down with their days picking.

Before leaving for the airport to head home on our final day we had breakfast with Sergio Barillas Escamilla and his wife Marion. We have bought the fabulous San Francisco Tecumburro from Sergio for the past four years so it was great to get to know him better and to tell him just how much our customers enjoy his coffee.

We have returned home rich with new found friendships and excited about our coffee discoveries. The image of entire families labouring in mountainous coffee plantations remains etched on my mind! These families, although never without a smile, deserve the chance of gaining an education and this will inspire us to continue paying not just a fair price but a good price for the coffee we buy.



Coffee beans are extracted from the coffee cherries



Coffee beans in fermentation tank



Coffee is sun dried on the patio

Barista Training Focus. good baristas make good coffee

Would you let an untrained member of staff into your kitchen to bake those scones you are so well known for? Can any member of staff go into the kitchen and pop the 12oz steak on the pan, turn it over a few times and when they think it is ready, serve it to your loyal customer? Of course not... So why would you let an untrained person near your espresso machine and risk damaging the good reputation you work tirelessly to achieve.

You can see the importance of having trained baristas so we would encourage you to avail of our complimentary barista training services by calling us to arrange a time that suits you best. In the meantime lets kick off this series of articles with a reminder of how to make a great espresso.



The Training Lab at Ristretto's roastery



load
Knock out old coffee grounds and wipe basket clean using dry cloth. Over fill the basket with freshly ground coffee. Use your index finger to evenly distribute ground coffee until it is level with top of basket. Be careful not to compact the coffee with your finger during distribution.



tamp
Gently tamp ensuring the tamper is held perfectly horizontal. Tamp again, more firmly this time, with 30 pounds of pressure. Release pressure then lightly twist tamper to polish the surface for an even extraction. Before inserting the portafilter, flush the grouphead for a couple of seconds to clear old coffee grounds from showerscreen.



brew
The aim is to evenly extract the good flavours from the coffee in 25-28 seconds. The espresso should be a dark cinnamon in colour and have a syrupy consistency. Taste it frequently it to make sure it's tasting incredible!

In Season. El Salvador El Borbollon 100% Red Bourbon

CUP PROFILE.

El Borbollon has a great balance between sweetness and acidity, it is very bright and juicy with pronounced notes of cherry.

Eduardo, producer of El Borbollon



Each quarter we highlight a coffee that is currently in season. Coffee is a natural product and its harvest is dependant on the country of origin. In this issue we introduce you to 'El Borbollon', a coffee that we have bought every year since we began in 2005.

The Alvarez family have been growing coffee in El Salvador for over 100 years and across four generations. Their award-winning farms are located on the lush green hills of Santa Ana, in the west of the country, whose rich volcanic soils and mild climate

provide ideal conditions for growing coffee. The beans which together make up El Borbollon come from two small neighbouring farms - La Reforma and El Cerro. They are hand-picked and collected in traditional hand woven baskets from December until March by pickers who have been specially trained to select only the best and fully mature coffee cherries.

The Alvarez family offer considerable support to local communities, with schools for children aged from 5 to 15 years and health clinics provided free on their farms. The family are also committed to developing sustainable practices in order to protect and preserve the natural environment. All of their coffee is grown under a canopy of shade trees, which enrich and conserve the soil and provide an important habitat for birds and other wildlife.

This years crop has just arrived into our warehouse and preliminary cupping has indicated that it is as good if not better than previous years!

