



Cafe Agricola

Cerrado Mineiro, Serra do Cabal, Brazil

Partner since: 2021

Traceable to: Single Estate

Altitude: 1,100

Varietals: Typica, Yellow Bourbon, Buriti, Chicha, Mundo Novo

Processing: Coffee is harvested by hand then placed to dry on patios for 7-11 days, or until 11.5% MC, then taken indoors and rested at consistent, cool temperatures for 3-5 weeks before milling.

Harvest: July August September

Booking: November December

Arrivals: January February



EcoAgricola is serious about putting the environment first; they reminded us not to separate 'eco'

from 'agricola' (agriculture) when writing their name. They are located in a region known as Serra do Cabal, a geographically isolated plateau known for the State Park which, despite being only 300km from the state's capital (Belo Horizonte), is a bird sanctuary and protected habitat for an 'intact' ecosystem, all the way up to jaguars. The company is an active participant in this park, one program being that they maintain a community nursery to provide coffee plants as well as other native seedlings, along with education, to anyone interested.

That's because the team behind EcoAgricola got started in forestry in the 1970s, which by the early 2000's led them to the concept of introducing coffee to the area as a buffer crop. They knew from the start sustainability required a focus on specialty, and so started their own nursery in 2006 and became the first in the region to harvest a coffee crop in 2009. By 2014 the farm was winning local awards (e.g., Illy), by 2017 they were regularly taking 1st place in the cup of excellence across multiple categories (naturals and pulped).



Brazil is to other coffee-growing countries as Jupiter is to other planets – huge, and deserving a category of its own. But despite its size, we don't look to Brazil as a source of specialty; we were once told that asking for a sample of SSFC 17/18 is like asking for a sample of a 'big mac'.

This, however, is an old view from an older generation. We now have a younger crop of farmers entering the specialty scene – this generation was raised with the Internet, knows 21st-century coffee, and are excited to find out what's possible for their family's farm.

But it's a struggle to convince parents that this new approach is not just youthful fantasy – with one approach working so well for so long, it's hard to take specialty seriously. This battle seems to be happening inside households across Brazil, as city-dwelling, college-educated sons and daughters return to the family farm to help their baby-boomer parents prepare for retirement.

Despite this tension, wherever we look we see small successes building a case for specialty, one win at a time. It could be glowing feedback, a good yield, a high price or even just the smallest

recognition by someone outside the family. And the case is growing especially strong in the area around Sao Gortado where we find Yuki Minami and Aequitas coffee educating farmers on what they have and what it's worth. Here we find farmers in their 20s and 30s standing on the shoulders of giants; they are looking near into the future, and see specialty where we in the US have not yet