



Marcelo Assis, Bioma Cafe

Cerrado Mineiro, Campos Altos, Brazil

Partner since: 2018

Traceable to: Single Farm

Altitude: 1206 MASL

Varietals: Red Catuai

Processing: Natural processed, dried on patio for 5 days in 3 cm layers, turned over to 12 times a day until 18% humidity, placed in bags to rest for 10 days. Repeated until reaching 12% humidity, then rested with the outer skin for 30 days before hulling.

Harvest: July August September

Booking: November December

Arrivals: January February



Community Context

Bioma Café's is a partnership between Marcelo Nogueira Assis and Flavio Marcio Silva dating back to 2001. Flavio came from managing the family businesses, and Marcelo was a recent graduate in the technical school of agriculture. By 2010 the two were ready to found their first coffee farm – dedicated 100% to specialty production – in Campos Altos region, Minas Gerais. The time between was spent evaluating each piece of land that they would later buy – a scientific search for the perfect terroir. A 1200m high plateau in Cerrado Mineiro was eventually selected, 229 hectares divided into six zones. Olhos D'água is the central plot, where the processing happens. For 2023, Bioma Cafe experimented with pyramid drying on their patios in small lots, making use of wild yeasts from Selvatech.



Country Context

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.