



**Maria Soraia,  
Fazenda Salitre**

**Cerrado Mineiro,  
Serra do Salitre,  
Brazil**

**Partner since:** 2019

**Traceable to:** Single Farm

**Altitude:** 1180 MASL

**Varietals:** Red Catuaí, Arara

**Processing:** Natural processed; cherries are floated then dried 7-10 days on patio, until 15-16% moisture, supported by mechanical dryers if needed down to 11.5% before resting in warehouse.

**Harvest:** July August September

**Booking:** November December

**Arrivals:** January February



While Maria Soraia's family has 35 years experience in coffee, it was not until 2017 that they received their first premium for specialty. Coffee starts with her uncle, who used to plant coffee in the city of Serra do Salitre. At that time Soraia worked with dairy cattle, but made the decision to get into

coffee in 1999 with her uncle's guidance. Motivated by the recognition she began receiving,, Soraia has been pursuing her own education in coffee since then, focusing on post-harvesting techniques and how to apply them on her farm.

Unique for her region, coffee on Soraia's farm is picked by hand, not by a harvester. In this and every other way, Soraia is a careful producer, following up on everything that happens on her farm, from crop management to processing and employee development.

Her son Augusto works with her. Together they have brought in awards from Cup of Excellence, the Minas Gerais State Coffee Quality Awards, Cerrado Mineiro Region Coffee Awards and Florada Contest – the last one focused on women producers. Soraia is very excited about having her coffee in the USA for the first time and is already eagerly looking forward to the next harvest.



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.