



Sao Luiz Estate

Minas Gerais, Cerrado Mineiro, Carmo do Paranaíba, Brazil

Partner since: 2018

Traceable to: Fausto do Espirito Santo Velloso and family

Altitude: 1050 - 1160 MASL

Varietals: Red and Yellow Catuai, Mundo Novo

Processing: Pulp-natural; cherries are floated then pulped and dried with muscilage 3-5 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



This is the Cerrado Mineiro region of Minas Gerais; an area best described as a high-altitude savannah, and best known as the carrot capital of Brazil. In addition to producing nearly half of the country's carrots, this region also grows onions, garlic, onion, potatoes....and coffee.

Coffee was the most recent to join the party, starting in the 1970's. Quality has always been high, but the coffee has never made it to export before being bulked, and has traded at commodity. But now, a new generation of farmers has returned to talk about 'specialty coffee'.

Cerrado Mineiro's newfound reputation for coffee was in many ways earned by work done at Sao Luiz Estate. São Luiz Estate is in Carmo do Paranaíba, and the first in this region to pioneer the pulp-natural process fully — 20 years ago. This was under the eyes of Fausto do Espirito Santo Velloso, who is in the process of passing farm management on to son Lucio, and daughter Ana. This new generation is moving aggressively into the next stage of specialty. Ana left a career in marketing to come back to the family business, bringing with her an understanding of what the market wanted, whereas Lucio stayed on as the farm's head of production. They are a perfect pairing of curiosity and capability, and a great example of the future of specialty coffee in Brazil.



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.