

Brazil's Fino Grão, an Export Coffee with Extreme Quality Control

Contributed by Geovana Pagel
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About 80% of the green coffee produced by the Veloso family for over 150 years in the city of Contagem, in the interior of the southeastern Brazilian state of Minas Gerais, is shipped to more than 40 different countries since 1991. The United States, Italy, Germany, Spain and Japan are among the leading destinations.

Four years ago, the Veloso family decided to join forces with the neighboring Tavares family and invest in a mill as well. Thus Café Fino Grão emerged, to produce higher value-added coffee. Initially, the focus was more on the domestic market, but little by little the opportunities came up abroad as well.

"We have a client in England, which maintains several points of sales in London, and we have already exported to Norway too," says Pedro Veloso, one of the owners of Fino Grão. Now, the company is seeking ever more distant markets, such as the countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

According to Veloso, one of the main differentials of Fino Grão in foreign countries is the fact that it possesses the Utz Kapeh certification, from Russia, which attests to environmental reserve control and sustainability.

"In a sustainable manner, respecting people and the environment, Café Fino Grão uses knowledge and technology in every step of the production process," says Veloso.

The mill counts on 170 employees and there are another 450 at the farms, which rise to nearly 2,000 employees at the time of harvest. The exporter branch counts on 140 employees.

Fino Grão has just launched the first edition of Fino Stillu Project, by which the brand, in partnership with the Design Course of the Foundation of Education and Culture of the State of Minas Gerais (Fumec), is going to encourage and value young talents in the field of product design in the state of Minas Gerais.

The Veloso family, a traditional producer and exporter of green coffee, started to expand in the 1970s and turned into one of the largest producers in Brazil. "International farming techniques, selection of saplings and quality control earned us recognition in production of fine coffees," says Veloso.

The Tavares family is traditional in the roasting process, and has been a coffee reseller in the state of Minas Gerais for over 58 years. Based on this experience, market vision and constant innovation, it managed to become a reference in the national and international coffee markets, and became one of the industry leaders.

From that combination the Velta Group was created, bringing innovative solutions in sapling planting and selection, in addition to product development. Café Fino Grão already ranks among the leading coffee brands in Minas Gerais.

All of the grains of coffee processed by Velta are either produced at the Veloso Farms or purchased from farmers under supervision of the laboratories of Veloso Trading, with strict selection of grains and chemical-free genetic improvement.

According to Veloso, quality control starts with the purchasing of raw material and is maintained throughout the production chain. At the mill, control starts as coffee arrives. A sample of the batch received is sent to the company's own laboratory, where it is analyzed.

The grains are stored under adequate conditions and tagged, the roasting process is automatic, ensuring the standardization of the end product, as well as milling control, made with each lot processed.

In order for the coffee to be cleared, a sample is sent to the quality lab, for the beverage to be tested, and the product is only packed after being approved by an experienced taster. Packing is automatic, and the packaging has a modified atmosphere so as to ensure greater aroma and taste to the end product.

Service

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