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THE NEWS MAGAZINE FOR THE RETAIL TEA AND COFFEE TRADES

# Boughton's COFFEE HOUSE



Old-time starch  
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January 2005



## Lavazza calendar girls are back!

The Editor makes no apology for being pleased that the latest Lavazza calendar is available - the quite amazing photography which is a known feature of Lavazza's annual work continues, and we are told that the 2005 theme is 'circus' - which accounts for the wild creatures on display.

Meanwhile a sustainability website, quoting from the *Guardian*, reports that Lavazza is involved in work with the Rainforest Alliance. The company has confirmed that a test project in retail is going ahead.

Lavazza is reported to be working on its Tierra brand, which is to involve farms in Colombia, Peru and Honduras. The Italian coffee company is said to have invested £320,000 in community schemes since it began working with the Rainforest Alliance last January.

# World's newest coffee arrives in UK

A new 'origin' coffee has arrived in Britain, with potential for those who want to add something different to their speciality drinks - it is Australian, but not like those already known here. It is from a very unusual source, grown at a newly-established coffee farm less than six years old, possibly the most southern coffee plantation in the world.

Andrew Ford of Mountain Top Coffee, located a couple of hours south of Brisbane on the east coast, was in Britain last month to meet roasters and show off his coffees.

In fairly typical Aussie style, he told Brits that he wants to be recognised among the world's finest single-estate coffees, and for his innovative farming techniques to be seen as a new model farming method.

"We have no pests and no diseases, and therefore we use no pesticides. We use one-tenth of the chemicals that other farms do - we have a unique computerised monitoring system, from which we can monitor individual trees, and feed them individually when they need it. I've seen nothing like it in the world.

"We also have a very unusual climate - our nearest neighbour has never ever seen frost! And although we get big rains, we manage it through irrigation."

The unusual result of this is a grassy coffee farm. It looks like a country-house lawn, and kangaroos nest under the trees (although fortunately they do not care to eat the crop).

The farm is a true virgin area - until six years ago, it was natural cedar forest. It is also unusually low, at about 300 metres.

"Typically, the coffee world talks about altitude as the main factor in quality, but our key attribute is a balance of altitude and latitude which gives us days of short, light, sun. What this means is that the



Andrew Ford of Mountain Top

coffee hangs on the trees, with a long, slow ripening. As it is sunlight which turns starch to sugar, this has an effect on sweetness, and overwhelmingly, the profile we are getting is a 'sweet and blueberry' style."

Coffees from Australia have normally been seen as best in filter coffees, but Mountain Top has

already developed an espresso which has been used by the last two world barista champions in their winning drinks.

One of the British traders who tasted Mountain Top told *Coffee House*: "It was undoubtedly superior in every respect to other Australians tasted beside it. My feeling is that, in the same way as Australian wine, they have created an 'easy to drink' product, with repeatability year on year, but maybe without the excitement, character and complexity of other origins."

The Mountain Top coffees are available here through Mercanta.

The importer says that Mountain Top coffee is currently rare. The first British shipments, to be despatched early January, will be in 20kg bags, making them useful for the micro roaster fraternity.

Tel: 0208 439 7778

## BSA - the 2005 Experience

The Beverage Service Association is to repeat its well-received awards for caterers, the Best Beverage Experience. Last year's contest drew over seventy nominated entries from coffee-houses, tea-shops and restaurants.

The awards, which this year will probably carry the more entertaining and shorter name of the Bev-e, are intended to promote excellence in the trade and to highlight to the general public the skill involved in making and presenting all kinds of beverage.

Any kind of hospitality outlet involved in serving drinks 'in the cup' direct to the consumer is eligi-

ble for an award, and the judges will be looking for an imaginative and creative attitude to the serving of tea, coffee and chocolate-based drinks.

It is not necessary to be a member of the BSA to enter, and judging will probably be by a panel of mystery shoppers, who will be awarding regional and national prizes in the autumn.

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