

OUR DIRECT
TRADE PRACTICES



**PILOT COFFEE
ROASTERS**

HOW DOES PILOT COFFEE ROASTERS SOURCE THE FINEST COFFEE?

COSTA RICA

BY STAYING TRUE TO OUR MISSION:

“

*We want to roast great coffee & work
with great people to do it...*

”

BUT
WHAT DOES
GREAT COFFEE
MEAN?



OUR MISSION

IT MEANS:

Trade relationships that support sustainable development and positively impact the communities at origin.

Coffee that is at the vanguard of innovation and pushes the boundaries of industry convention.

Reducing our impact on the environment, educating our employees and our community, and building mutually respectful and supportive relationships within the industry.

“

*What guides us is our commitment
to quality, relationships, sustainability
& exceptional service.*

What drives us is our passion.

”

BUILDING LONG-LASTING RELATIONSHIPS

The first step of realizing that mission is finding the most amazing green beans this world has to offer, beans that have a depth of flavour that tells the story of where they come from.

There's a lot of coffee out there and countless ways to buy, sell, and distribute it, and at Pilot we have our own method, one that aligns with our goals, values, and ethics.



PRODUCER LUIZ ZANETTI, BRAZIL

PRODUCER NICHOLAS HAMMOND, CATALAN DE LAS MERCEDES GUATEMALA
WITH ANDY WILKIN (PILOT CO-FOUNDER + GREEN BEAN BUYER)

OUR DIRECT TRADE POLICY

*If our commitment is to quality & sustainability,
we have to back that with the best coffee on the market,
acquired in a way that is ethical, responsible & caring.*

1 COMMUNICATING

We are in direct communication with the farmer and we have visited the farm in person.



2 UNDERSTANDING

We open up our business to our producers and show them how we work, and in turn they help us understand their business so we can meet each other's needs.



3 COMMITTING

The coffee must be of exceptional quality and the farmer must be committed to sustainable and ethical practices.



4 HONOURING

In return we guarantee a price at least 25% above the Fair Trade price.

SOURCING OPTIONS

We want our coffees to reflect the complex factors that make them special, from the varietal of the bean, to the climate, soil & altitude of the growing region, to the care & skill of the farmer.

So how do we go about that finding these exceptional coffees? Before we get into specifics, we'll briefly explain our sourcing options, to give some context to how we make our decisions. Most coffee on the market can be divided into two categories, commodity and specialty, each with different ways of judging and pricing beans.



EL QUIZARRA, COSTA RICA

COMMODITY COFFEE

This makes up the majority of coffee consumed around the world. That run-of-the-mill stuff you'll find at fast food chains and the like.

Mainly traded through the New York Board of Trade, the price is set by the open market. It's graded for quality in its own way, but within each grade the coffee is treated as a uniform product, pretty much ignoring all the nuances of origin that impact flavour and distinguish beans from one another.

SPECIALTY COFFEE

This grading system puts a lot of stock in the unique influences of origin, and places the highest priority on overall quality.

Specialty coffee is traded either through specialty importers or directly between roasters and farmers. The price depends on the quality and is often four or more times higher than the price of commodity coffee.

Since high quality coffee is difficult to grow and care for, specialty coffees almost always come from small lots owned by those dedicated farmers who devote a lot of time and attention to their craft.

ALL OF
PILOT'S BEANS
ARE SPECIALTY-
GRADE.

TRADE MODELS

The next step is acquiring the beans. There are two trade models to consider for getting coffee from the farm to our roastery.



THE PILOT
TRADE MODEL
OF CHOICE

FAIR TRADE BASICS

Fair Trade began as a way to make farmers less vulnerable to shifts in the global coffee market. Because coffee is a difficult crop to grow, and farms can't easily switch to producing other crops if they're facing challenges, producers are at the mercy of fluctuations in prices. Minor changes can have huge impacts, especially on small farms, and Fair Trade seeks to minimize the risks for the farmers.

In this model, coffee is bought and sold through democratic cooperatives made up of small producers. The price is pegged at a minimum slightly higher than that of commodity coffee, which gives farmers some stability.

In return for this premium, cooperatives must ensure their members are putting funds back into community development, promoting environmental sustainability, and implementing ethical labour practices.

Fair Trade coffee is classified as specialty coffee, even though the system of pricing and quality control looks similar to commodity coffee.

DIRECT TRADE BASICS

Direct Trade is all about building lasting relationships that create the most mutual benefit. In this model, there are no brokers, cooperatives, or any other intermediaries between the roaster and the producers.

While Fair Trade is an important system, and there are many ethical importers, direct relationships truly allow for full transparency between buyers and sellers. Roasters see first-hand the growing and working conditions at each farm, so we know exactly who we're buying from, and can be sure we're supporting sustainable and ethical practices.

These relationships open up the lines of communication, allowing both buyer and seller to understand each other's costs and agree on a price that reflects those realities. That translates into better prices for producers, and higher quality coffee for roasters. These coffees come in at prices quite a bit higher than Fair Trade, and they're totally worth it.

DIRECT TRADE: THE PERFECT FIT

Face-to-face connection matters, and we value that every step of the way.

Going straight to the producers lets us select the highest quality coffee first-hand, and building relationships with passionate farmers means we get to work with great people in every part of our business.

We're putting the time and resources into traveling to origin to build new relationships and support existing ones, so we can source as much of our coffee as possible through Direct Trade.



OUR STANDARD



DIRECT TRADE

When you see the Pilot Coffee Roasters Direct Trade stamp on our coffee bags you will know it has met this standard.

OUR MANTRA:

“

*The perfect roast is only possible
if it begins with the perfect green bean.*

”





THANK YOU

If you have any further questions
about our Direct Trade practices please
don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

E. INFO@PILOTCOFFEEROASTERS.COM

T. 416.546.4006

PILOTCOFFEEROASTERS.COM