

# BETTER COFFEE • BETTER WORLD COFFEE CONNOISSEURSHIP

with



## FARM TO CUP PIONEER

The mountains of Brazil are not an easy place to grow coffee. Farming on steep slopes, at an altitude of 1,250 meters, makes the use of modern machinery impossible. Here, every bean is touched by human hands, much the way my great-grandfather harvested and selected coffee when he arrived in this place from Portugal over a century ago. Even then, he realized that these slow-maturing beans held a promise of perfection. To grow this coffee is a special calling, passed down to me through generations.

In 1999, I saw a poster that would change my life. The poster was put there by illycaffè, a coffee buyer I had never heard of, requesting coffee samples to compete for the Brazil Quality Award for Espresso Coffee. I took a sample of my beans to the city of Varginha, to a famous coffee taster who could properly prepare them for submission.

He thought I was crazy, telling me that illycaffè will not be impressed with a small farmer in the south of Minas Gerais. I sent my coffee anyway, hoping another person would appreciate its excellence.

Dr. Ernesto Illy was that man. He had the idea that fine coffee is too beautiful to be traded like oil or iron, that it is deserving of respect and should pass directly from grower to buyer with a handshake. Our common belief in the potential of Brazil and its coffee marked the beginning of a partnership—and a friendship—that binds our families today. Helping my farm to achieve quality, while attaining environmental and social sustainability, enables more than 100 people to live and thrive here. There is nothing that distributes pleasure and prosperity around the world more effectively than coffee. You might think of coffee as a delicious beverage. Here, coffee is life.

Right now, I am preparing my sixteenth harvest for illy, with my best effort destined for Trieste, Italy, and the illy blend. My Brazilian mountain coffee will bestow body, sweetness and balance as it mingles with beans purchased from growers across four continents. Inside each can of illy reside the best efforts of many people, each contributing in their own way to the shared goal of the most perfect possible coffee. In the growers, shippers, roasters, blenders and consumers of illy, I am joined by a family of others like me, people who will not let something as small as a mountain stand in the way of a better coffee, a better world.

—Adolfo Henrique Vieira Ferreira

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Adolfo Henrique Vieira Ferreira, fourth-generation coffee grower, seven-time national finalist for the Ernesto Illy Quality Award for Espresso Coffee, and elected Sustainable Supplier of the Year in 2010.

