

History of Coffee in India

India's romance with coffee goes back nearly 400 years when a Moslem pilgrim, Baba Budan, is credited with secretly bringing back seven coffee seeds from a pilgrimage to the holy land. He is said to have planted these near his mountain cave in Chikmagalur, Karnataka State, now considered the cradle of Indian coffee.

Commercial cultivation of coffee in India began in 1840 when the British established Arabica coffee plantations throughout the mountains of Southern India. They found the tropical climate, high altitude, sunny slopes, ample rainfall, soil rich in humus content, and well drained sub soil ideal for Arabica coffee cultivation.

Coffee plantations were extended to lower elevations in India around 1900 with Robusta plants imported from Indonesia.

Coffee Production Today

Today, India is the sixth largest producer of coffee in the world, behind Brazil, Vietnam, Colombia, Indonesia, and Mexico. India produces about 320,000 MT of coffee each year, of which 104,000 MT is Arabica and 216,000 MT is Robusta. India grows some of the best Robusta in the world and the markets have rewarded them with some of the highest prices.

Most of India's coffee is grown in three Southern states: Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, the first two account for nearly 90 percent of total production. Much of the coffee in Kerala and Karnataka is grown in the Western Ghats, a mountain chain that runs parallel to the coast line and about 100 miles inland from the Arabian Sea.

India exports nearly 70 percent of the coffee it produces. These exports consist mainly of high grade beans from both the Arabica and the Robusta growing regions. Most of India's export goes to Europe, Japan and the Middle East where the well balanced nature of Indian coffee is greatly valued. Italy, importing 50,000 MT each year, is

the largest importer of coffees from India, because they perform particularly well in espresso blends.

Indian coffees have always been known for its well-balanced cup and outstanding aroma. William H. Ukers, the well known authority on coffee, wrote many years ago:

**“Indian coffees are noted for their.....
liquoring qualities. The producers have
always taken a stand on quality and,
accordingly, Indian coffee has commanded
a premium on the European market.”**

Shade Grown and Bird Friendly

Coffee plants require about four hours of sun each day, and hence, all coffee in India is grown in the shade. The shade used in coffee plantations falls into two categories: an upper, permanent canopy and a lower, temporary canopy.

Upper canopy shade consists primarily of original jungle trees (Silver Oak is a popular variety) that may tower 100 feet or more above ground level. The lower canopy

is traditionally populated by Dadap (Erythrina Lithosperma) trees, which managers can easily prune to regulate the amount of sunshine and rain reaching the coffee plants.

The increasing variety of overhead shade trees provide a sanctuary for birds and enhance the quality of natural organic matter introduced to the soil from falling leaves. This decomposed organic matter enriches the soil, conserves moisture, and reduces the need for chemical fertilizers. Shade trees also control the growth of weeds on the estates and reduce the incidence of insects, pests, and leaf disease.

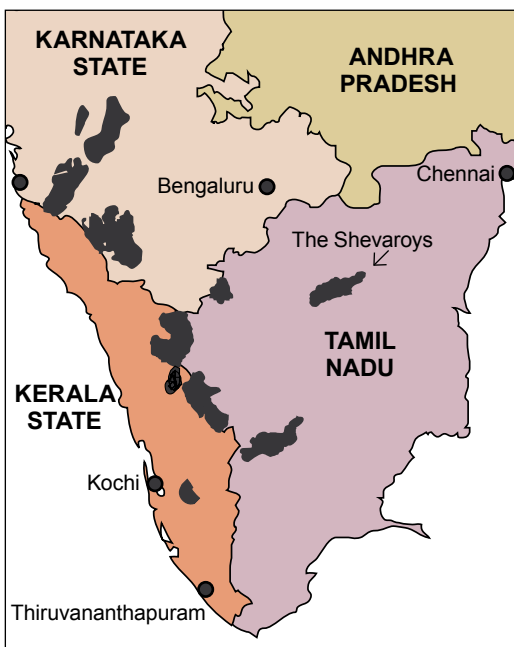


Hand Picked and Sun Dried

All coffee in India is hand picked without the use of machinery so that only the fully ripe beans are harvested. Under-ripe beans are allowed to remain on the plants and ripen further, requiring the pickers to return to a plant four or five times in a two-month picking season. This process ensures that India's beans are picked at the peak of flavor.

After picking, coffee berries are sorted to remove any over-ripe or green cherries that were accidentally picked. They are pulped within hours after they are picked, to avoid fermentation of the fruit.

The pulped cherries are then naturally fermented for 12 to 18 hours, mechanically washed to remove the mucilage, and soaked under water to improve its color and cup characteristics, before they are sun dried on patios lined with brick, stones, or concrete. Although this process takes much longer than mechanical drying, growers believe the slower drying actually enhances the flavor in the beans.



Map of South India showing both Arabica and Robusta Growing Regions

Grades of Indian Coffees

As in most producing countries, India processes coffee by the washed (or wet) as well as the natural (or dry) methods. Rigid control of Quality and Grade Designations by India Coffee Board, an agency of the Government of India, ensures the export of only the finest and the most aromatic of India's hand picked coffee beans.

Washed Arabica is known in India as **Plantation Coffee** and washed Robusta as **Parchment Coffee**. Natural processed coffee beans, both Arabica and Robusta, are called **Cherry**. Coffee beans are further graded based on size of beans and percentage of imperfections.

Mysore Nuggets Extra Bold

This Specialty Coffee grade was first introduced in 1992 and marks India's formal entry into the Specialty Coffee Market. These are washed Arabica that follow all the prescriptions for Plantation coffees, but with much more stringent grading and sorting requirements. The beans are **Extra Bold** (90 percent larger than 7.5 mm in size and 100 percent larger than 6.65 mm). It tolerates no defects. No peaberries, broken, bits, blacks, or extraneous matter is permitted.

This is a truly premium coffee and represents the **best of the best** from India. It is actually produced by re-grading and re-sorting Plantation-A coffees.

Versatile Coffee with Many Uses

Mysore Nuggets Extra Bold beans are bright green, very uniform in size, and display the result of good preparation. Moisture content is 10.5 percent.

In the cup, this coffee is medium acid, medium body, with full aroma and taste; in other words, a well balanced coffee. It is smooth and lively; its aroma is more complex and its taste more spicy. It performs well as a straight varietal as well as an important component of an espresso blend.

Josuma Coffee Company

Josuma Coffee Company imports fine specialty coffees exclusively from India for distribution to brokers, wholesale roasters, and roaster/retailers in the United States and Canada.

Josuma Coffee Company, located in the San Francisco Bay Area, was formed in 1992 to function as a knowledgeable importer of Indian coffees and to act as an effective liaison between the producers in India and the Specialty Coffee market in North America.

All the coffees we import are the result of "direct trade," buying them directly from the estates where they are grown, picked, and processed to meet Josuma's exacting standards. We do not buy any of these coffees from the trade in India. By eliminating several layers of intermediaries, we are able to pass on those savings to you.

This coffee is available thru:

Imported by:

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Menlo Park, CA 94026
Tel: 650-366-5453
Fax: 650-366-5464
e-mail: info@josuma.com
web site: www.josuma.com

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COFFEE COMPANY

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India