



SOUTHLAND MERCHANTS

TASTE THE ORIGIN

Bela Vista Farm

Grower: Valeria and Silvano

Region: Mantiqueira de Minas

Altitude: 1150 MASL

Packaging: 30 Kg specialty paper bag

Variety: Catuai 2SL, Catuai

Process: Natural and Fermented Natural

Harvest: May to September



Farm info



Valéria was born and has lived in the São Bartolomeu neighborhood, and since she was a kid, her family has a coffee plantation. She remembers always helping in the coffee plantation with her brothers. In 2002 she married Silvano, who is also from the same place and has always worked with coffee. There, coffee is an inheritance and it goes from parents to children.

Silvano used to grow coffee in a mountainous region - 1.200 to 1.300 MASL. His coffee was of great quality and he had a partner, his brother and best friend. Both used to have a partnership in everything. Their first coffee land was an inheritance from their father, but it also belonged to five other people.

Because of that, It was difficult to work there, and it was also very far from Valéria's house and the access through the road was very bad. So in 2005 Valéria and Silvano bought a closer property. That was a dream coming true. What a joy!

Up to 2006, from monday to saturday Valeria harvested the coffee, then in 2007 the harvest had grown and she was pregnant with her first daughter, so she had to stop harvesting. Because of that she started to take care of the terroir and of the dryer, an activity which she still does to this day. In 2009 they bought another piece of land, Valeria, her husband and his brother. They increased the crop and through financing they bought a tractor, a dryer, and in 2013, a desired coffee beneficiation machine.



In 2013, on 6th september, they were very happy because it was the last day of a cropping period. But they didn't know it would be the worst day of their lives. Silvano's brother was called Deosdedett, he was 32 years old, and in the morning of that 6th september, he went to unload the rotative dryer of fifteen thousand liters of coffee. He fell in the box, and died. They have lost their ground and they are still impacted to this day.

He was a hardworking lad, he used to do all the bureaucracy work of the employees, settlement of accounts, among many other things. When Silvano's brother died, Valeria and Silvano became lost and bewildered. Silvano stopped liking coffee, he was no longer in the mood to work with that, he had lost the reason.

Then Valéria began to help him, getting closer, insisting with him that the main point was never the quantity of coffee, but the quality. At that point they were harvesting 2000 coffee bags. She was the one who held them together. Because of her, Silvano didn't give up on the coffee.

In 2006, the Ministry of Labor fined them R\$50k. They didn't have a stitch sheet, bathroom on the farm, it wasn't a bad intention, it was simply a matter of custom. After that, they adjusted everything required and nowadays they have everything according to the law.

With that "hit", Silvano has started working with corn, but he has made a big investment and has not received a satisfactory return. They have outsourced the care of the coffee plantation and up to this day they pay for that. They say It is very expensive not to take care of your own plantation.



They have worked a lot in order to improve the quality of their coffee, and after fermenting some lots they started receiving compliments on the quality of their coffee. It was the first time they have sold their coffee for R\$ 500,00. Even though their lands were in a good region, the lack of knowledge made them lose quality and beans in their post harvest. Also because of that, it was very common for them to accept the prices set.

They have started doing courses at SENAI, so they started knowing more about everything that surrounds the coffee plantation. They always have sold their coffee to cooperatives and before Southland Merchants, they have never exported directly. In 2016 they were among the 30 finalists in the Mantiqueira de Minas contest.

Currently they have about 39 acres of plantation. But they also have some plantation in the land of Silvano's mother. Last year they harvested 500 bags of coffee.

Valeria says: " I have learned to love coffee even more, after that painful experience. Coffee is everything that we have, everything that we earned was through coffee. How could we not love what brings our daily bread? I love coffee!"



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