

EXPRESSION

ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

KITTISAK PATTAMASAEVI

'COME BACK TO SORRENTO'

AIM FOR THE PERFECT BREW

TURBO CHARGED – MERCEDES-BENZ AMG A45



ESPRESSO YOURSELF

Cafés Richard Master Roaster Michael McCauley speaks passionately about what makes for the perfect brew.

Coffee drinkers can rejoice, there's a growing body of research which points to that fact that coffee despite its caffeine is not all that bad. In fact it just might do you good provided you drink it in moderation. Now if you are going to limit your coffee intake why would you waste your allowance on an indifferent cup of coffee. Have less, have the best, and brew it the way its is supposed to be brewed. Time has now come for coffee drinkers in the Kingdom to walk past the indifferent brew served in chain coffee shops and demand a decent cup. But is there serious coffee to be found?

The answer is, practically everywhere. You no longer have to hunt for those secret, practically underground coffee shops known only to the people in the know. The café culture is flourishing, brave new neighbourhood cafes are brewing only the best and multiplying like the proverbial rabbits. The coffee drinker has grown up, Bangkok is serious about its coffee now. As for prices? They are comparable to your bigger coffee chains. Anticipating this demand was Pinnacle Gastro Co., Ltd., the importers of Ronnefeldt tea and Cafés Richards, a premium coffee brand from Paris, a city known for its passionate love affair with the brew.

Cafés Richard is a traditional French-style coffee roaster. Evolving from the Maison Richard founded in 1892, it has remained a family business throughout the years. Pierre Richard runs the business today along with his children: Arnaud Richard and Anne Richard Bellanger. Originally a wine company with around 14 chateaux in France, in the 1950s the company decided to add coffee to its portfolio. Their passion and expertise honed by the wine business come in to play right from carefully selecting the best quality beans to assuring the perfect roast. Today, the



coffee has become bigger than their wine business with over twenty thousand clients in France alone. Cafés Richard also has a certified training organisation in its Académie du Café, ensuring that the coffee bean is handled with the respect it deserves.

The proof is in the tasting, all possible at the nine Comptoirs Richard (Café Richard gourmet retail boutiques) in Paris. And of course in select restaurants and cafes around the world where they export their precious coffee to (twenty countries). Fortunately for Bangkok, it came on the Cafés Richard radar about a two years ago, and the brew is to be found in a number of cafes/restaurants around the city (check the list alongside). Cafés Richard Master Roaster Michael McCauley was in town recently when *Expression* caught up with him to ask a few questions. A New Orleans native he is passionate about his brew.

What constitutes the perfect cup of coffee?

My favourite coffee is a single origin Arabica. But the perfect cup is the coffee you like. I can't say Brazil is better than Ethiopia or Colombia, it is a matter of taste. A good cup of coffee is one that respects what the coffee is in the beginning. We just don't realise the number of lives that a cup of coffee touches and we also need to appreciate the passion that has gone into the growing, picking, processing, roasting a coffee bean. You also have to respect the way you are making it. The perfect cup of coffee for me is one that respects the way it's going to be prepared. That's why we train people right from how many grams of coffee to use for a cup to the right grind, the right temperature of the water, the tamping, how to preserve the coffee.... With the fruity ones I like to do a filter coffee or a really nice espresso. I love making cappuccinos and every week I have a different coffee.

What is the best roast for coffee?

Respect that fact that coffee is a fruit and roast it in such way that you keep the fruitiness of the coffee alive. The more you roast the coffee the less fruitiness and acidity it has, and you have more bitterness. That's exactly what Starbucks did initially with their French Roast; they hooked the Americans that wanted a strong cup of filter coffee with a real dark roast. But in France coffee is not roasted so dark. At Cafés Richard we respect that each coffee has its own roasting profile, it's own flavour profile and depending on how it's going to be prepared, it is roasted – that's the French style of roasting. No over roasting.

How do you rate the French Press?

Probably the best way for people to make a nice cup of coffee at home. You get a direct infusion of coffee in the water with a metal filter; the coffee has consistency and body. There's no paper filter that will take out the aromatic oils in the coffee. Push the plunger down after four minutes for a good brew. Not for you if you like a clean, light cup of coffee.

How connected are you with the source of the coffee beans?

I go to coffee producing countries often to source out coffee directly and connect with the producers so they know exactly what we want in our coffee. Where we can't go, we work only with importers who have a local presence from where the coffee is from.

How much of the coffee you deal in is fair trade?

We are the biggest sellers of fair trade coffee (to the hospitality industry) in France but that's not all we do. We also do organic coffee, Rainforest Alliance coffee... I am working on a Sumatran coffee that will start at the end of the year called Sumatra Orangutang Coffee. The inspiration was this lady in Sumatra who has for the last 20 years run a hospital protecting orangutans; their habitat was being encroached upon by farmers. So this coffee will give money directly to farmers who move away from palm oil to coffee. Fifty cents from every kilo will go to the coffee grower and 50 cents to the hospital. ■



A TASTE OF CAFÉS RICHARD

Try the Cafés Richard coffee at the following places and find out if it's the brew you seek.

In Bangkok: Aldo's Mediterranean, Le Beaulieu, Chez Charlie, Grand Hyatt Bakery Erawan, Patio Sukhumvit Soi 26, Full Stop Café, Praya Palazzo, Olive Kebab Ekamai, Le Petit Zinc Yennakart and White Flower Cafe @ Siam.

In Hua Hin: V Villas Hua Hin and Le Bistro Hua Hin.

In Chiang Mai: 137 Pillars House and Chez Marco.

In Phuket: Boathouse Phuket.

In Samui: The Scent Samui and Peace Resort Samui.

www.pinnaclegastro.com or email info@pinnaclegastro.com