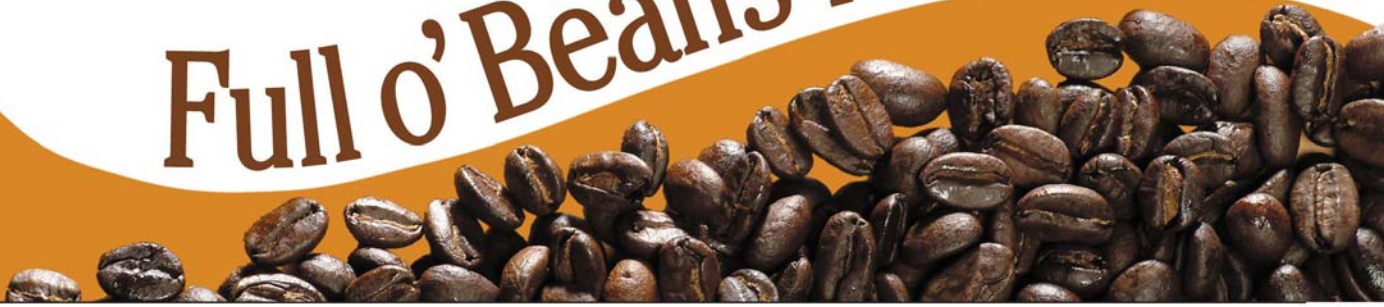




# Full o' Beans News



SPRING 2006

JUST US! COFFEE ROASTERS CO-OP

ISSUE 17



Group from Just Us! being welcomed by the community of Santa Anita in Ecuador

## Fair Trade Tourism?

What do you think? For years we have been talking dreamingly with a coffee co-op in Oaxaco, Mexico about partnering to buy an old hacienda and turning it into a small hotel/museum/eco-tourism centre. It started out as such a big dream, but it would be wonderful to diversify their economy and provide greater opportunities, particularly for women and youth, and contribute to the preservation of their history, culture and environment. It looks now like we might proceed with a feasibility study.

Exactly how would Fair Trade tourism differ from your standard tourism experiences?

- It would bring you closer to local cultures and environments by involving local people in tourism in a fair and respectful way that ensures you an even warmer welcome - a win - win relationship.
- You would travel in smaller groups, allowing you to get to know local people as well as fellow travelers, have more flexibility and access to community life.
- It will give you deeper and more real inter-cultural exchanges where you can give and take in the reality of people's daily lives rather than experiences created just for tourists.
- Its about experiencing nature in a different place, not just looking at it, but being in it, feeling it, smelling it and tasting it.
- You make a difference! Income from responsible tourism promotes local conservation. Local conservation fosters global diversity of nature and cultures. And in the end, Fair Trade tourism could make a small but meaningful contribution to global understanding, harmony and sustainability  
(See [www.responsibletravel.com](http://www.responsibletravel.com))

## Invest in Fair Trade It Makes a lot of Sense

Again this year, we made a public offering to allow Nova Scotians to invest in Fair Trade and receive generous tax breaks. At a time when so many international relief organizations are seeking our support, the benefits of these investments in Fair Trade are really quite impressive. With most "charitable" relief organizations, you do receive some tax benefits for a charitable donation but you may not always know where the money is actually going.

With the Fair Trade investment, you not only receive better tax benefits - a 30% NS tax credit plus RRSP eligibility, but you also know exactly what the money is doing to improve the lives of people both in Nova Scotia and in developing countries and you also get to take it



"Not everything that can be counted counts,  
And not everything that counts can be counted.

Albert Einstein



## 2005 - A Year of Awards

Early in the year we were somewhat flabbergasted to receive two prestigious awards in quick succession - the President's Award for Entrepreneurship from Acadia University and then the Annual Human Rights Awards from the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission for promotion of human rights internationally.

The year ended with a third honour when Just Us! was given the Business Ethics Award by the Better Business Bureau of the Maritime Provinces.

These awards are much appreciated and encourage us to continue to do all we can as a business to give leadership in the areas of social and environmental responsibility, locally and globally.



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## WTO Talks - Empty Promises

It should probably come as no surprise that marginalized agricultural producers in developing countries (2/3 of the world's poor) basically came up empty handed at the WTO talks in Hong Kong in December. The cards are so heavily stacked against the poorest people in the world and the rich and powerful obviously feel no need to make concessions. Some of the promises sounded grand but amounted to very little in the way of change. In the end, poor countries were given greater access to other markets only if they opened up access to their markets and their resources - risking much more than they could possibly gain.

Developing countries were looking for better access to European and U.S markets but more importantly for the removal of all trade distorting subsidies. WTO members agreed to remove export subsidies by 2013 (which are a minor part of the problem) but not touch domestic subsidies which are major. Taking cotton for example, the average U.S. cotton farmer gets \$144,000/year in subsidies (80% domestic subsidies) which allows them to sell their cotton very cheaply in world markets. In Benin, West Africa, where cotton makes up 80% of the country's export revenue, the average person earns far less than \$1 per day. Getting a higher price for cotton is essential for their very survival. Removing the U.S. export subsidy will make little difference for developing country farmers who can't compete with the heavily subsidized U.S. farmers.

Obviously, efforts to promote understanding and support for trade justice are more important than ever. Whether fairer trade practices can ever be achieved under the auspices of the WTO is the real question.

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## Ideals of Fair Trade

"The alliance between producers and consumers is at the heart of fair trade: they agree to follow trade regulations in order not to harm anyone. This trade is both a rebellion and a proposal. It is a different model, a market model within the market, a powerful strategy for producers and consumers to take back the responsibility and actual power to initiate and implement trade alternatives."

Francisco van der Hoff  
Founder of "Fair Trade"

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"Trade is not just about economics and laws of comparative advantages. Trade is about people, their livelihoods, their families and sometimes their survival. It has to work to serve the needs of the producers. Fair Trade reminds us of that."

Peter Mendelson  
European Commissioner of External Trade

## Encounter with Evo Morales

Things are now happening in Latin America which seem to be, for once, beyond the control of the U.S. administration which is rather tied up elsewhere.

For the first time in their history, many of these countries, (within the constraints of international finance) are going to be making decisions in their own interests. This includes Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Uruguay, Bolivia and now Chile and maybe Mexico and Nicaragua.

I feel close to these changes, not only because of my recent trips to Central and South America, but also because of a close encounter with Evo Morales, the new president of Bolivia.

When I was in Bolivia in May, the political atmosphere was heating up over control of natural resources and particularly, it seemed, over the U.S. imposed ban on coca production.

Evo Morales, leader of the coca farmers, was seen as potentially the next president of the country. Coca, which can be processed into cocaine, is also an important medicinal plant for indigenous people in Bolivia. In its natural form, they see only positive properties and none of the problems of cocaine which is derived from a rather sophisticated process of intensification and exported to rich countries.

Quite simply, they appreciate the need to control production of hard drugs but resent the outright ban on coca.

One weekend I had to stay over in Cochabamba to arrange a passport for Paraguay. I found out later it was Evo Morales's hometown and I went for a walk in the central park in the evening where I noticed a rather sizable crowd gathered around a speaker.

As I approached, the speaker noticed me (its not easy for a 6'3" gringo to be inconspicuous) and began to taunt me in a humorous but still somewhat antagonistic manner. From my limited Spanish, I understood "Americano?" and probing questions about "Why are you here?"

Feeling uncomfortable, I simply smiled and said I was Canadian. His taunts subsided and I slipped away. After seeing his photos in the paper as the new president of Bolivia, I believe I was confronted by the same Evo Morales, new President of Bolivia.

I wished I could have spoken Spanish well enough to say I was involved with Fair Trade and, indeed, I wished him well.

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"All across Latin America, indigenous movements are re-drawing the continents political map, demanding not just "rights" but a reinvention of the state along deeply democratic lines"

Naomi Klein  
The CCPA Monitor, Jan. 2006



## Support for Development Projects

Every year Just Us! contributes 10% of our net profits to development projects organized by our producer partners or in their countries so they benefit directly or indirectly. Our projects this year:

- To the Medical Humanities Program of the Dalhousie Medical School to provide increased health care services to combat AIDS in South Africa (\$2000). South Africa is where our rooibos (red bush) tea is produced.
- To the Bio Tea project in Indulgashena, Sri Lanka which was devastated by the tsunami early last year (\$5000). This project is where our teas are produced, the world's first organic tea producer.
- To the CCDA (Co-op of small coffee farmers in the highlands of Guatemala) who are still trying to rebuild their communities after the massive destruction of Hurricane Stan in late summer (\$4000). This is a development project connected with the Tatamagouche Centre called "Breaking the Silence".
- To the municipality of Arroyos y Esteros in Paraguay who want to purchase guitars and other instruments and pay instructors to promote their traditional culture through music (\$1000). Arroyos y Esteros is the central community of the sugar producing area of Paraguay where we buy our organic sugar.

## Bush Bashing

In our last issue we quoted a Nobel laureate, William Blum, on U.S. foreign policy and were accused by an American reader of "Bush bashing to sell coffee". Lo and behold, Harold Pinter, British playwright, accepted the 2005 Nobel Prize for literature and had much the same message. He lamented Great Britain being the "bleating little lamb tagging behind the U.S."

Again, the record is clear. The U.S. are not liberators. "The United States supported and in many cases organized every right-wing military dictatorship in the world after the end of the Second World War. I refer to Indonesia, Greece, Uruguay, Brazil, Paraguay, Haiti, Turkey, the Philippines, Guatemala, El Salvador, and of course Chile. The horror the United States inflicted upon Chile in 1973 (Sept. 11, 1973, to be exact) can never be purged and can never be forgiven.

The crimes of the United States have been systematic, constant, vicious, remorseless, but very few people have actually talked about them." (CCPA February 2006)  
Our interest is not in selling coffee but to remind ourselves, before its too late, that PAX AMERICANA is not the same as building peace in the world.

## Just Us! Vision 2006

Every few years, Just Us! does extensive strategic planning to review where we are going (Vision) and how we're going to get there (Mission).

### Vision:

Just Us! Coffee Roasters Co-op will be a leader, locally and globally, as a socially and environmentally responsible business.

### Mission:

To be a viable, progressive, and leading Fair Trade business serving as a model for worker (community) ownership and social and environmental responsibility.

To serve our customers by giving them the best value on our products and informing them to the fullest extent through sound information, producer profiles, international exchanges and research.

To serve the interests of Fair Trade producers by developing personal and long term relationships that adhere to and indeed go beyond the basic principles of Fair Trade.

To develop relationships with our members, employees, business associates and the community as a whole based on honesty and respect and to maintain an ongoing commitment to education, innovation and collaboration.



**NO FEAR  
NO ENVY  
NO MEANNESS**

Advice of Liam Clancy to a young Bob Dylan

## Good Chocolate News

Our chocolate factory is up and running just in the nick of time. The American Heart Association has recently published research that concludes that a daily serving of 100g of dark chocolate (not exactly moderation) lowered blood pressure and reduced cholesterol.

Dark chocolate contains flavanoids that inhibit blood clot formation, help blood vessels relax and slow creation of LDL cholesterol.

But—they suggest only dark chocolate which contains at least 70% cocoa solids—the more cocoa solids, the higher the flavanoid content. Our dark chocolate fills the bill!

Please feel free - and guilt free - to visit our chocolate factory in Hantsport and try our wonderful hand-crafted chocolate products.



## Chocolate Promises Broken

In 2001, news broke that child slavery was widespread in the harvest of cocoa beans in West Africa, major producers of the world's cocoa. Feigning astonishment, the global chocolate companies came together to adopt the Harkin-Engel Protocol. By this agreement, they promised to develop a system to guarantee their chocolate to be free of slave labour by July 1, 2005. The date came and went with promises undelivered.

In his recent book, Chocolate on Trial: Slavery, Politics and the Ethics of Business, Lowell Satre explains: "One of the reasons for the increased use of child laborers in recent years has been the sharp drop in the price of cocoa beans."

The only hope is to get these larger chocolate companies to pay cocoa farmers a fairer price so they can cover their costs. Ideally, they would adopt fair trade practices, encourage small cocoa farmers to organize into cooperatives and adhere to minimum economic, social and environmental standards.

## New Products

We have been buying small amounts of organic, fair trade sugar mainly for our own use in our bakery. Now our first full container of sugar is on its way from a group of small, but very dynamic,

coops in Paraguay. It is very exciting to be a part of their dreams for a better life and offer their quality sugar at a reasonable price.

In the works—we are also working on organic fair trade herbal teas with a wonderful women's co-op in Ecuador and, believe it or not, fair trade bananas from Ecuador.



Jeff sourcing bananas in Ecuador

## What is Your Centre?

Your choice of chocolate centre can say a lot about you:

**Almond** - Quick thinking and freedom loving, you thrive on change and variety, You can also appear flippant at times and you may have a tendency to flit from one thing to another.

**Coconut** - Creative and artistic, you feel drawn to music, dance and the rhythm of life, but you might appear a bit flighty to others.

**Brazil Nut** - Your life appears perfect and you like to be seen at all the right places. But sometimes, despite outward appearances, you appear vulnerable and anxious on the inside.

**Coffee** - A deep thinker who enjoys the art of conversation and debate, you have an open mind. You may have a tendency to be impatient or to stay so busy and focused on work that you forget to attend to loved ones.

**Caramel, Hard** - People can rely on you and you like to get things done. Routine is important to you. The downside is that you may find it hard to listen to and respect the points of view of others.

**Fudge** - You have a relaxed, graceful approach to life, but it's important to you to make your mark on the world. When you can't achieve what you want, you feel stuck and frustrated.

**Caramel, Soft** - You are comfortable and easygoing - too easygoing sometimes and you don't get the credit or reward you deserve.

**Marshmallow** - You are very sociable and like to party and have people around you. The danger is that you can get bored quickly.

**Caramel with Nuts** - You are everyone's friend. You have charisma but can also be a bit of a temptress or tease.

**Mint** - Cool and sophisticate, you have bags of charisma. It's not that you don't want to commit, it's just that life is too exciting and you love your freedom.

**Cherry** - You have a lust for life and love. Your energy is incredible. Just watching you makes others feel tired.

**Orange** - You need to find meaning in life, to discover yourself and fulfill your spiritual needs. Don't forget that you have physical and emotional needs too.

**Chocolate** - You can laugh at yourself and don't take yourself too seriously. You enjoy the game of life and look into the future with healthy optimism.

Theresa Cheung,  
Utne, Jan.-Feb. 2006

"Chocolate is a perfect food, as wholesome as it is delicious, a benevolent restorer of exhausted power; but its quality must be good, and it must be carefully prepared. It is highly nourishing and easily digested, and is fitted to repair wasted strength, preserve health and prolong life."

Baron Justus von Leibig (1803-73)  
German chemist and dietetic expert

