

A close-up photograph of a coffee branch. The branch is covered with several green coffee cherries, which are oval-shaped and have a smooth texture. One cherry, located in the lower right quadrant, is bright red, indicating it is ripe. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a dense coffee plantation. Sunlight filters through the leaves, creating a bokeh effect of bright, circular light spots. Several water droplets are visible on the green leaves, some of which are in sharp focus, showing their spherical shape and the way they catch the light.

CAMEROON COFFEE HAND BOOK
2025 Edition



Before the cupping, what matters more ?

- Mr. Yamamoto, UMINOMUKOU
2025.02.29. Douala



The coffee grown in Madame Joséphine's natural farm carries a rich fruity aroma with a lingering black tea finish. She lives with her son and father in a humble one-room house. We were the first foreign buyers to purchase coffee cherries directly from her, offering twice the local market price. Our only request was that she harvest only fully ripe, red cherries. With dedication, she and her son handpick the cherries themselves, managing to gather only about 200 kilograms each week. We promised her to come back every year.



Madame. Joséphine



Information on the Republic of Cameroon:

✓ **Language:**
Cameroon is effectively a French-speaking country.

✓ **Geography:**

Located in Central West Africa, Cameroon has a coastline along the Gulf of Guinea. The capital is Yaoundé, and the economic hub is Douala, a coastal port city through which all coffee are shipped. Stretching from the southern edge of the Sahara Desert at 13°N (bordering Chad) down to the equatorial rainforest at 1°N (bordering the Republic of Congo), Cameroon lies within the ideal latitudinal range for coffee cultivation. However, its mountainous regions—suitable for high-quality coffee—are mainly concentrated in the Northwest and Southwest Provinces, which together make up less than 10% of the national territory.

✓ **Climate:**

Cameroon's coffee-growing areas experience a distinct wet and dry season determined by the interaction between the warm Saharan air (from the north) and the tropical monsoons from the South Atlantic. There are no marked four seasons. Particularly in the Littoral and South West highlands, rainfall is among the highest in the world, with over 150 days of heavy rain from May to October annually. If the rainy season starts a month early, it negatively impacts coffee drying and storage. If the dry season is delayed by more than two weeks, it adversely affects coffee flowering.

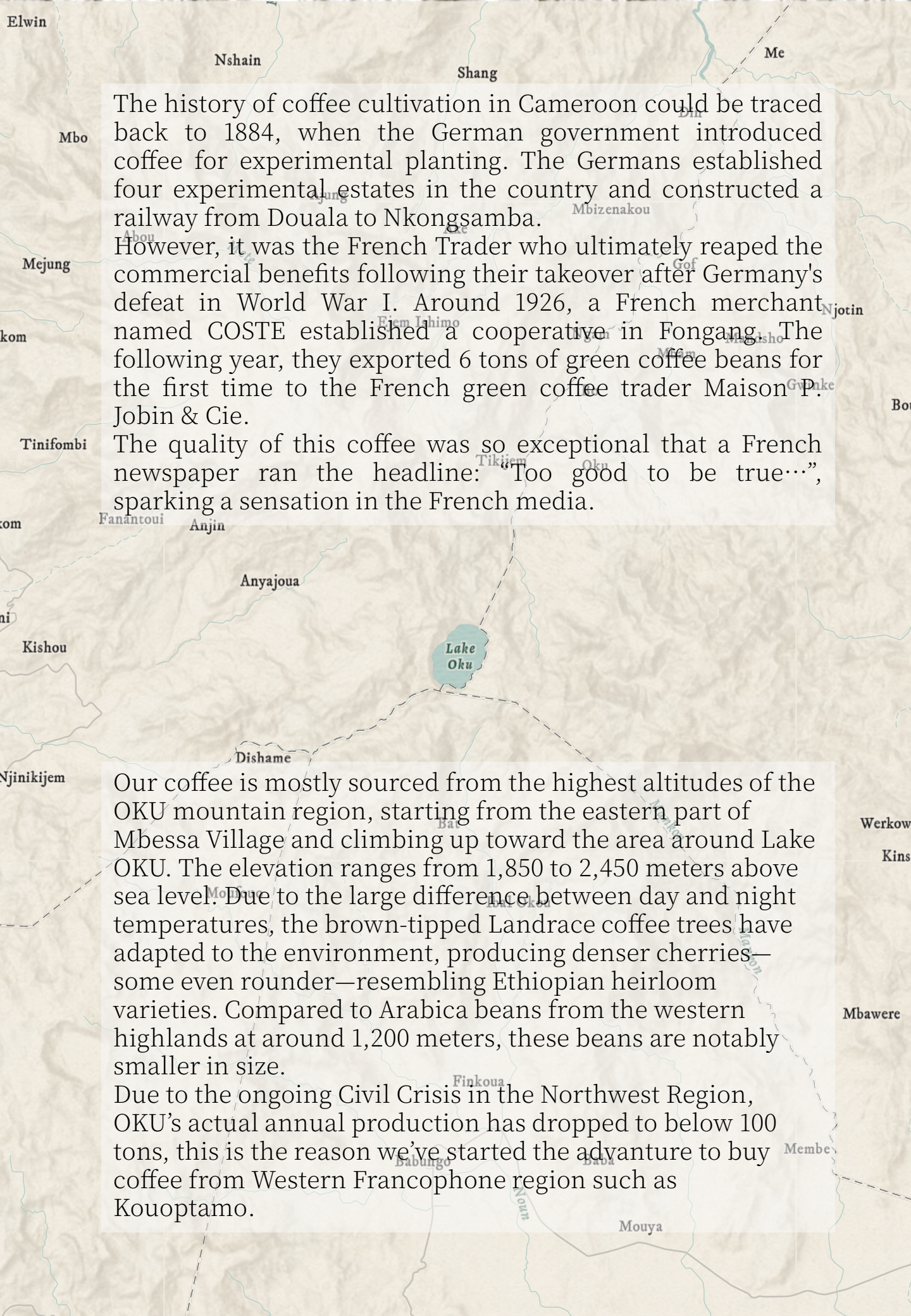
✓ **Economy:**

Cameroon is a member of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC). Its main exports include timber, cocoa, coffee, and cotton. However, due to the flowering and fruiting characteristics of Arabica coffee, combined with the effects of the global financial crisis and internal conflict, the actual coffee export volume has fallen below 2,000 tons.

✓ **Colonial History:**

Cameroon was originally a land of many indigenous tribes, with over 250 tribal languages and a population comprising various ethnic groups from North and Central Africa. In 1868, the German government entered Cameroon and initiated a series of colonial policies. German traders introduced bananas, rubber, palm oil, cocoa, and coffee to the region. After Germany's defeat in World War I in 1919, Cameroon was divided into British and French territories. In 1960, French Cameroon gained independence from France. The following year, the British returned the Northwest region of British Cameroon, and the modern Republic of Cameroon was officially formed. October 1, 1961, the date of reunification, is now celebrated as the national day.





The history of coffee cultivation in Cameroon could be traced back to 1884, when the German government introduced coffee for experimental planting. The Germans established four experimental estates in the country and constructed a railway from Douala to Nkongsamba.

However, it was the French Trader who ultimately reaped the commercial benefits following their takeover after Germany's defeat in World War I. Around 1926, a French merchant named COSTE established a cooperative in Fongang. The following year, they exported 6 tons of green coffee beans for the first time to the French green coffee trader Maison P. Jobin & Cie.

The quality of this coffee was so exceptional that a French newspaper ran the headline: "Too good to be true...", sparking a sensation in the French media.

Our coffee is mostly sourced from the highest altitudes of the OKU mountain region, starting from the eastern part of Mbessa Village and climbing up toward the area around Lake Oku. The elevation ranges from 1,850 to 2,450 meters above sea level. Due to the large difference between day and night temperatures, the brown-tipped Landrace coffee trees have adapted to the environment, producing denser cherries—some even rounder—resembling Ethiopian heirloom varieties. Compared to Arabica beans from the western highlands at around 1,200 meters, these beans are notably smaller in size.

Due to the ongoing Civil Crisis in the Northwest Region, OKU's actual annual production has dropped to below 100 tons, this is the reason we've started the adventure to buy coffee from Western Francophone region such as Kouoptamo.





The main Arabic coffee-growing region in Cameroon is the Northwest Province, a place where diverse cultures intertwine, including the highland chieftain traditions, the Tikar language heritage of the Central African Bamun people, the nomadic culture of Nigeria's Mbororo tribe, and the colonial-era influences of Pidgin and English. Among the most fascinating elements is the mysterious and captivating Juju Dance, performed by masked spiritual figures. At weddings, funerals, and all kinds of celebrations, their appearance never fails to ignite waves of excitement throughout the gathering.





December to February, it's coffee harvesting season here. Although the region is home to Islam, Catholicism, Christianity, and traditional local beliefs, people always work together in the coffee farms and share the festive spirit of a tropical Christmas.





Cameroon coffee production still follows the old European system that has been in place for over a century. Arabica coffee is processed using the conventional washed method, with each farmer managing the process based on their own practices.

Before the 2024 harvest season, we wrote an SOP manual covering everything from harvesting, fermentation time to drying. We conducted training sessions for 19 local cooperative leaders, planting the first seed of knowledge. At the same time, we personally control the moisture content of all the coffee we purchased during the drying process.



Cameroon Arabica Coffee Variety

At National Coffee Board Laboratory, all Cameroon arabica coffee is classified as "Java." When we receive green coffee beans from Cameroon, we find that over 50% are long bean. According to the database on World Coffee Research website, Cameroon's Java variety dates back to the mid-20th century. It is said that the seeds were originally obtained from Java by the renowned breeder Porteres through the Vilmorin company. French agronomist Pierre Bouharmont later identified the variety's resistance to coffee leaf rust and helped promote it in Cameroon between the 1980s and 1990s. However, the accuracy of this information remains uncertain. Through field investigations and cross-referencing historical documents, we were able to trace the origins of coffee cultivation in Cameroon back to 1884, when the German colonial government introduced Arabica to the western highlands. I personally spent six months visiting a Trappist monastery coffee estate in the highlands. According to the monks, the estate dates back to between 1890 and 1910, originally serving as a German military post and experimental coffee farm. After the French took over, the estate continued operating and was handed over to the monastery around 1987. The entire farm grows long-bean Arabica coffee, with many trees now over 30 cm in trunk diameter and more than 3 meters tall. Recent genetic studies suggest that the Java variety originates from the Ethiopian Landrace gene pool. Its closest relative is the Geisha variety, which also produces elongated beans. These long-node coffee trees are known for their strong vitality, high resistance to leaf rust, insect symbiosis, and excellent cup quality. However, their main drawback is low yield due to sparse fruit production. This further confirms that in Cameroon, with over 140 years of coffee cultivation history, the coffee trees have naturally evolved in a wild, unmanaged environment—yet the region has never experienced a major coffee epidemic.



A group of people, including men and women, are gathered in a coffee plantation. They are looking at coffee branches with red and green cherries. The background is filled with lush green coffee trees. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text about the coffee's origin and farming details.

Our Coffee

Sourced from Mbessa Village in the OKU region, Boyo Area, North West Cameroon — the country's highest-altitude coffee region. We have gone to great lengths, bypassing government and cooperative alliances, to purchase coffee directly from the farmers at twice the local price.

- ✓ Position: N 6°16'12", E 10°27'36"
- ✓ Altitude: 1850–2450 m a.s.l
- ✓ Soil: Laterite
- ✓ Climate: Rainy season from April to November; dry season from December to March
- ✓ Temperature: Daytime 22–28°C / Nighttime 8–12°C
- ✓ Varieties: Java, Long Berry
- ✓ Intercrops: Soybeans, yams, taro, chili peppers, African nightshade, etc.
- ✓ Shade trees: Banana, plantain, avocado, small guava, African prune
- ✓ Farming method: As family food crops are intercropped year-round for personal consumption, the coffee is grown with no pesticides or chemical fertilizers, relying solely weeding before harvest.

When nature smiles,



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