

The LEFT COAST SURFER

Fall 2003

Flora and Flora

Our three acres nestled on the side of an active volcano isn't about coffee only. Besides the thousand plus *Coffea Arabica* "Kona typica" trees, there are papaya, star fruit, Jacobinaba, four species of Avocado, five varieties of Banana, over a dozen kinds of palm, more bamboo than is sound, and literally hundreds of types, kinds, varieties and species of flowers creating a true paradise to live in. When the seemingly endless work of picking, fertilizing, weed-whacking and pruning of the coffee orchard is in hand, there is nothing we like more than to get a chance to "play" in the garden.

The Big Island's official nickname is "The Orchid Isle", with over 10,000 varieties grown. The thirty foot long lava stairway down to our front door is lined with over fifty different orchid plants living in hapu'u logs. Hapu'u is a large tree fern with a fibrous trunk; perfect medium for most orchids and bromeliads. At nurseries in Honolulu, I've seen Hapu'u logs sell for five dollars a foot-luckily, there is a stand of Hapu'u in

the upper jungle section of our farm, so we can just make a yearly visit up there and harvest the ferns that died off. Hapu'u is one of the very few native plants on our plot of Paradise-most of Hawaii's flora come from everywhere else!

The orchids on our walkway are pink, lavender, white, yellow, red, spotted, striped and any mix of the above. One delightful plant scents the air with the fragrance of vanilla, another has neon green blooms. A cute little guy has a five inch long branch with hundreds of flowers, none bigger than a fruit fly. Some of the orchids bloom once a year, some almost continually. The most prolific bloomer of the group is a cheery yellow *Oncidium* named

"Popcorn" - happily Lewis' favorite.

More orchids live in the Hapu that line the path to the processing deck, interspersed with many varieties of Bromeliads, aka "urn plants". Most Brooms have a water collecting vase formed by a tight leaf growth pattern. They often have, along with bright and bizarre flowers, interesting



ORCHID IN THE YARD

Pickn' isn't just bluegrass

HARVEST TIME IS UPON US and all I can say is, "Thank God we don't have mac nuts" (which are also harvested this time of year, but on your hands and knees).

Kona coffee is unique in its aroma and flavor, but also in the method of picking-by hand, and ripe beans only, please. As opposed to other coffee producing areas, who either "strip" the coffee branches, that is, bring all the beans on a branch off in one swipe of the hand or a stripping tool, or more commonly, harvest with machines, the folks of Kona spend the fall in their fields, sweet talking each and every bean out of the tree. The antique variety of coffee tree grown in Kona, called Guatemala, or Kona typical, produces a highly flavorful and mellow coffee. It has fallen from favor in other coffee producing countries partially because of its lack of disease resistance, which isn't an issue in isolated Hawaii, but also because of its rather annoying habit of ripening its beans over an extended (3-4 month) period of time, making bulk harvest difficult. A branch of these trees will hold clusters of hard little green beans, yellow beans, the "almost there" bright red bean (now called cherry) and the

“just right today” purple, the perfect cherry which is the size and color of a cranberry.

Kona farmers select the ripe cherry only, leaving the others on the tree to mature its flavor, and get picked later in the season.

The first piece of necessary picking equipment is a good pair of boots. The picker wears a woven cane basket at waist level, and drops the cherry in as they go from branch to branch. The taller limbs are pulled down and held at picking level with a hooked stick or piece of rebar, attached to a rope which is then stepped on to leave both hands free. I prefer a bungy cord hooked to my waist. Picking coffee isn't unpleasant work, in fact it can be rather peaceful. The birds are singing, there's a fabulous view, and if it starts to get too hot, you can dive into one of the taller trees and pick it until you cool off. The only bad part is when the occasional cockroach falls into the basket then scurries up your front-nasty. Picking your own coffee is cost effective in several ways; you don't have to hire pickers (hard to come by at time of year anyway!) and it saves the price of a gym membership. A full basket of coffee weighs about 25 lbs. Imagine being on a Stairmaster, 7 months pregnant, with your arms over your head. For nine hours. Needless to say, this girl's in great shape now.

Fresh picked cherry must be processed the day it's picked,



JUNGLE QUEEN GINGER WITH A PRINCESS

foliage-leaves with stripes, spots, edges of red or pink. One of the path Broms has entirely purple leaves. The most famous of the Bromeliads is the Pineapple, of which we grow several varieties (but not, I must note, for their looks!). Bromeliad growers seem to be a less serious crowd than the orchid aficionados, and the names of the some of the path plants reflect that-Blushing Bride, Dancing Bulb, Zebra Plant, Queen's Tears and Dole's Beard. The Hawaiian name for Dole's Beard, which is often used in lei making, is Hinahina, and the mainland name is Spanish Moss-that's right, not a moss at all.

Several years ago, we decided to supplement the existing Heliconia and ginger patch with more varieties, and those plants are just starting to mature and flower this year. I have forgotten what kind of Heliconia (think Bird of Paradise and Bananas) I planted where, so am delighting in the first blooms of the yellow and red Giant Lobster Claw along the parking area, the graceful orange Parrot's Beak next to the tool shed and the "Fuzzy Sexy Pink" Hanging Claw in the front yard. The

gingers along the deck path include a pink "Jungle Queen" flower, traditional deep red blooms, fragrant white flowers and the delicate "Shell Ginger", with a cascading row of pink and yellow porcelain like flowers that tremble in the wind. Next to the side door is a stand of Kahili Ginger, with large bracts of yellow flowers that resemble the long poled feathered standards of Hawaiian Royalty. The Kahili Gingers came to Hawaii 150 years ago from Katmandu by way of Kew Gardens, England. The strangest Ginger in the garden is the

deep orange beehive ginger, it's foot long waxy flower head is shaped like an old fashioned beehive, with an occasional chocolate colored orchid shaped flower peeking out. The flowers last several months and its botanical name *spectabile* is most appropriate.

The intricate flower of the Passion Fruit, Lilikoi in Hawaiian, was named by the first Christian missionaries landing in South America in the sixteenth century, who called it the passion flower because they thought that it symbolized the death of Christ. The five sepals and five petals of the flower represent the



LILIKOI FLOWER OVERWROUGHT WITH SYMBOLISM

disciples without Peter and Judas. The double row of filaments signifies the halo around Christ's head and to others the crown of thorns. The five stamens and the three spreading styles with their flattened heads symbolize the wounds and the nails respectively. The flower is rather unusual looking, but I think the missionaries may have been reaching a bit.

In the front garden is a large Gardenia, just under the bedroom window. Coffee and Gardenia are in the same family of plants; it's nice to know that my two favorite plants are related.

A few words about weeds. I was watching an interview of a renowned British Gardener and she was asked her opinion about the chore of weeding. She looked a bit surprised at the query, and answered, "But, gardening IS weeding!". She went

on to define a weed as simply any plant that was growing somewhere you didn't want it to be. Well, our tropical plot has some weeds that would be welcomed in many other gardens. The coffee orchard is blanketed much of the year with Impatiens and Begonias. The little wild Begonias stay low and relatively small, but the Impatiens get waist high and as big as a medicine ball. They are lovely, but block the view of you feet on our rocky steep land and compete with the coffee tree's water and fertilizer. I feel very strange to be machete-ing back a specimen plant that would sell in a five gallon pot for \$20.00 in a mainland nursery, but here,

it's a weed. Another plant not welcome in the coffee land is the huge and very prolific African Tulip. This stately tree grows quickly to fifty feet, and its neon orange, tulip like flowers developed into zillions of winged seeds that will take over an orchard in a few short years. It flowers nearly year round, and we pull up baby tulip trees nearly year round also. But the most feared, despised and dreaded flowering weed

here is the lowly Morning Glory.

That cute little blue flowering vine you see climbing string along the front porch on the mainland is a tough, big, wild predator that will cover and squeeze the life out of a coffee tree in a matter of days. It is the Kudzu of Hawaii.

Evil, sneaky, difficult to kill, it spews a milky

white juice that irritates the skin if you try to pull it down off of a tree. The sweet faced Morning Glory is never a welcome flower at Left Coast Farm.

Frilly double pink hibiscus blooms, and the more tradition single with its red eye, fragrant Plumeria, elegant white flowering Spathephyllum, tasty nasturtiums, heart shaped anthuriums of red, salmon and orange, variegated cannas, huge but delicate spider lily flowers, peach faced amaryllis, genuine

Indian paintbrushes, a wedding reminiscing Stephanotis, and one insect tortured but prettily blooming pink and white rose grace our coffee farm and let us enjoy visual beauty along with our morning cup of home grown Kona coffee.



BEEHIVE GINGER

or else it can go sour on you, cranky bean that it is. In the evening I pulp the days pickins' in my antique cast iron pulper, which knocks off skin and some of the meat surrounding the bean. The coffee is then left to ferment in special tanks called "55s" (okay, I'll 'fess up-they're 55 gallon plastic garbage cans...but they're used for beans only!) for 24 hours. The fermentation process is halted

and the rest of the pulp washed off with copious amounts of water and vigorous agitation, the clean product is tossed onto wire screens for the first few days of drying, then moved out onto the drying deck, and there it remains for several weeks of tropical Pacific sun. Each bean is lovingly turned several times a day by means of a rake.

Once the moisture content of the beans is at 10%, the light brown bean, now called "parchment" is picked up yet again, and stored in a climate controlled room. When needed, the parchment is sent to a dry miller for cleaning, sorting and polishing, then the resulting "Green" coffee is ready to roast.

And that coffee picking in a nutshell.

(Left Coast Spa has immediate openings for coffee pickers. Instant weight loss guaranteed. Mai Tais on the Lanai an integral part of the program. Help, the coffee's all purple, and there's 80 really ripe bananas hanging on my porch. I can't eat them all myself!)

Gold-Rush and Allegria's Rising Stars

Both Allegria Cavaliers and Gold-Rush West had a good year at the shows, even with trying to keep it down to one week-end a month or so. The first show of the year was celebrated with *Allegria Quinella* (Rickel/Johnson) winning the first step toward her Championship—a five point major! Daughter of Viva and Beau from the "You Bet" litter, this beautiful Tri is a delight to show and a testament to the Rickels' excellent care and training. The same week-end, *Gold-Rush Salutations* won her Specialty class in her first ever show. Sally shares bed space with Quinella at the Rickels also. More first time successes included *Allegria Bellini* (Kanan/Johnson) going major reserve at her first show in April and *Gold-Rush Bessa Me Mucho* (Markus/Johnson) winning the GRCGLA Match at the tender age of 11 weeks. The Cavalier National Specialty was held near Princeton in early May, and Ann opened her house to visitors from, well, all over! Jeanie Montford and Karen Paul traveled from Australia, Mary McHenry from Santa Clara, California, DeAnn Erickson from San Diego, and Janet Bunce from Long Island. All enjoyed the late spring blooms of "Ursula's Garden", the two acre landscape extravaganza next to the Mercer Road house. DeAnn's *Allegria A Penny Earned* placed in Open at the National, and went on to a major reserve at the famous Buck's County show the next day.

The next set of shows attended were an even longer hike than New Jersey-Sydney, Australia! A wonderful week-end was spent at the home of Jeanie Montford of Elvenhome Cavaliers. The show grounds were close to Jeanie's and a train station, so we even got Lewis to attend part of a day, with the promise of a lamb feast for his patience. Jeanie did well both days with her Elvenhome entries, and both Lewis and I fell hard for a puppy called Mickey—no we didn't smuggle him home, but it wasn't for lack of trying!

This fall has seen a new rising star in Colin, *Trefoil Calamanco* (Johnson/Abraham). Not yet a year old, this natural show boy won his class at the Northern California Cavalier Specialty, has won several reserves and garnered his first points last week-end with Mary McHenry steering—she wanted a nice puppy to show, and boy did she get one!

Speaking of stars, we had a bone-a-fide celebrity in our midst. *Jett's Gold-Rush Chimes Square*, Madison (Ellison/Johnson) has made the oh-so-difficult crossover from child star to adult success. She graced the pages of a calendar as a 10 week old pup, was the test dog for "pet glamour shots" for the Shopping Mall Photography chain, tucked in another calendar, then a set of greeting cards, and now at age two will be featured in the Land's End Spring Kids Catalog, out in January. In between her modeling duties she has achieved several Specialty class wins and reserves. A new breed of Super Model, she embodies the healthier, robust version of the blond bombshell—her nickname is "Fatty Maddy".

The end of the show year will see us at Long Beach's Egnog and Dog Hair circuit, with Sally, Quinella, Colin and Madison strutting their stuff.

**HEY DUDES
These are AWESOME!**

at www.LeftCoastFarm.com

Again this Holiday

Gourmet handmade candy featuring Guittard chocolate and Left Coast Farm Kona Peaberry Coffee

"Boogie Beans"

100% Kona Peaberry Drenched in Dark Chocolate

"Waikiki Whitecaps"

Hawaiian Macadamia Nuts Drenched in White Chocolate

"Da Bomb" Macs

Hawaiian Macadamia Nuts Drenched in Dark or Milk Chocolate

THE PERFECT HOLIDAY GIFT!

LEFT COAST FARM

Estate Grown

100% KONA COFFEE

Wake up those friends, rels and work mates with an 'ono (that's Hawaiian for delicious), rich and bodacious pot of Kona Coffee. Already wrapped in Aloha print fabric bags in festive holiday colors with a jammin' Santa gift tag, this is the coolest present and the finest brew puka shells can buy.

****Please order by December 19th if you want Santa to get the credit! ****

MEDIUM ROAST, equivalent to a Full City roast, produces a coffee with Kona's characteristic smooth, fruit-and-wine acidity with a bright finish. It is a bit higher in caffeine and is an excellent morning coffee

DARK ROAST, equivalent to a Vienna Roast, deepens Kona coffee's' intrinsic sweetness and produces a brew with an intense, rich aroma. It is a wonderful evening and dessert coffee.

Don't Forget the AWESOME CANDY

Left Coast Farm Peaberry and Hawaiian Macadamia Nuts all drenched in Gourmet Chocolates
Hummm....might go good with some coffee....

100% Kona Coffee \$21.00/pound, \$11.50 one half pound

All roasted coffee comes in Aloha print fabric bag

Dark Roast

#	\$
___ 16 oz/one pound whole bean	_____
___ 16 oz/one pound ground	_____
___ 8 oz/one half pound whole bean	_____
___ 8 oz/one half pound ground	_____

Medium Roast

___ 16 oz/one pound whole bean	_____
___ 16 oz/one pound ground	_____
___ 8 oz/one half pound whole bean	_____
___ 8 oz/one half pound ground	_____

Candy \$9.50 one half pound

___ 8 oz/Coffee in Dark Chocolate	_____
___ 8 oz/Mac Nuts in Dark Chocolate	_____
___ 8 oz/Mac Nuts in Milk Chocolate	_____
___ 8 oz/Mac Nuts in White Chocolate	_____

Send To:
Address:

Gift From?:

Message:



shipping _____ shipping please add \$3.95 for one lb. OR \$2.50/lb. after 1st lb.

Total= _____

Visa/Master Card #

Exp. Date

Checks gladly accepted

GET IT FROM...

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"a cup a day keeps you jammin"