

Introducing the ACT Coffee Professional's Group (ACPG) - August 2009

Vision -To enhance Canberra's reputation as a coffee drinking destination.

Mission - Discuss, develop and implement strategies with like-minded people and host events to educate the public about great quality coffee.

Values - Members will be expected to encourage and participate in inclusive discussions and to provide members with information relating to ACPG activities. Furthermore, they will be expected to approach all aspects of their involvement ethically and with regard to the highest standards of excellence and professionalism.

The Goal

To provide the framework necessary for passionate coffee professionals to realise the benefits of working as a unified community within the ACT coffee industry. Similar to the Victorian Roasters Guild and other Australian specialty coffee industry groups, the ACPG will be dedicated to the growth of the coffee industry, paying particular attention however, to that of the ACT and surrounding areas. The ACPG will primarily address issues of coffee education and knowledge, continual skills development and collaboration between members, community awareness and growth of public interest in specialty coffee, and discussion of topical industry issues. Emphasis will be placed on "specialty coffee" or "gourmet coffee" in the interests of encouraging quality in the ACT's coffee culture rather than in its scale and commercial concern. The ACPG will work towards the larger goal of a healthier, more fertile coffee industry in the ACT, encouraging independent operators to populate the Canberra business landscape with higher quality coffee and to ultimately enhance Canberra's reputation as a coffee drinking destination.

Please also note that whilst acknowledging members will naturally have pre-formed ideas and agendas relating, in some circumstances to their place of employment and in others to their personal opinions etc, it will be required that the actions and statements made by members during ACPG events, meetings and other occasions reflect the good natured and genuinely constructive intentions of ACPG.

Who Can be a Member?

In contrast with the Victorian Roasters Guild and AASCA etc, the ACPG will not require members or associates to be employed in a specific **role** in the coffee industry or to pay large sums of money, e.g to be a member of the VRG one must be a commercial roaster, and AASCA membership fees* are \$100.00 and up - rather applicants will be eligible according to the following;

1. Applicants must be employed in the coffee industry in the ACT or surrounding areas. This employment may constitute the following roles; barista, roaster, retailer, wholesaler, educator, grower or equipment supplier. (of course, other roles may be considered, provided they are substantially involved in ACT coffee)
2. Applicants must display the desire to not only grow, but promote, educate and collaborate with, and for the industry as a whole. (Essentially to agree with and subscribe to "The Goal" section above.)

*AASCA membership fees are 100% tax deductible and do come with certain associated benefits. The ACPG could apply to become an AASCA affiliated organisation, if it were decided the benefits were applicable and justified the cost.

Events

The ACPG will endeavor to have a presence at several community events each year, such as school/church fetes, shows, markets, school/uni open days, music festivals, food and wine shows etc, with the intention of fulfilling the education, community awareness and growth of

public interest aspects of our goal. Activities will include demonstrations of cupping, roasting, espresso technique, brewing methods such as plunger, filter and siphon filter coffee, as well as origin education and question time. As ACPG grows, the possibility of hosting any number of coffee related competitions and events is an exciting one, as participants will have access to a wealth on information about barista comps, cup tasting comps, latte art comps etc through the opportunities to network both with ACT and interstate baristas, as well as other coffee types from around Australia. They will also provide a fantastic opportunity for the promotion of the ACT's vibrant and thriving coffee culture.

Meetings

Monthly meetings will consist of a variety of activities, ranging from cuppings of interesting coffee, to round table discussions about any number of coffee related topics, to anything of relevance. Ideally these meetings will be contributed to by all attending members, whether it's in the form of organising coffee to taste, speaking about the fairtrade certification and what it means to their customers, or simply explaining how they like to prepare a plunger of coffee, the dialogue is what will give the meetings value. The aim is to make these meetings as friendly and educational as possible. They will also serve as the organisational arena in which members can decide on ACPG related issues, such as future events, trips, roasting for the ACPG tastings etc. The venue will either be decided on a rotating basis (workplace or home of a member) or at a community centre and paid for by membership fees and ACPG funds.

Other Occasions

There are countless opportunities for coffee inspired adventures, here are some possibilities;

- Road trip to Melbourne to drink coffee, go to Vic Roasters Guild cupping, barista comp, visit Melbourne roasters (the sky is the limit)
- Road trip to Sydney (as above)
- Origin trips (to coffee plantations)
- Essentially any excuse to go and chat to coffee people and promote ACT coffee in the process.

Organisational Particulars

The ACPG will be a not-for-profit organisation, with all members volunteering time and resources to its running and functionality. Any and all funds gathered by the ACPG will be used in the acquisition of equipment, commodities and facilities to realise ACPG's goals - these acquisitions will follow a strictly quoted and documented process. No hierarchy or executive decision makers will exist, rather a democratic approach will be utilised, with each member carrying a vote. Administrative roles will, however exist. Funds will be raised by application for grant money, and possible fund raising events, the allocation of such money will be subject to members suggestion and a subsequent vote.

Getting Started

The first meeting will serve an administrative purpose, primarily aimed at establishing the exact operating particulars for ACPG. It will be free to attend, and will be structured similarly to an information night, where anyone can pose question or concerns before committing to membership. The date has yet to be decided.

Please forward this to anyone you think may be interested in being involved, and of course please be in touch ASAP with your details, your role in the ACT coffee industry and preferred date for the first meeting so a venue and particulars can be organised.

Regards,

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