

# coffee

## introduction

The global coffee trade is worth over £750 billion a year worldwide, making it more valuable than natural gas, gold or sugar. Indeed, coffee is now the second most in demand commodity on planet earth, second only to crude oil. Coffee is so much a part of our day-to-day lives that it's hard to imagine a world without it. But coffee as we know it today is actually a very recent innovation, and one which has its roots in the Islamic world. The earliest historical account we have of coffee-drinking as we would recognise it today appears in the writings of a man called Ahmed al-Ghaffar who witnessed coffee-drinking in Yemen around 700 years ago. Although it is clear that the roasting and brewing of coffee beans originated in Arabia, the practise quickly spread across the Middle East and eventually found its way to Europe, with the first European coffee house opened in Rome in 1645. So next time you're enjoying a latte or an espresso, remember to thank the innovative coffee-drinkers of Yemen!

## questions to think about

- Who do you know that drinks coffee? Why do they like it?
- Think about the production and supply chain from crop to cup. Who is involved?
- Where is coffee grown?
- What and when do people drink coffee?
- How does coffee bring people together?
- What is the Fairtrade campaign trying to achieve?



## where to find out more

Learn about the history of coffee:

<http://www.ncausa.org/about-coffee/history-of-coffee>

Learn more about Fairtrade and the people who produce coffee:

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/en/farmers-and-workers/coffee>

Learn more about coffee:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-43742686>