

COFFEE TODAY

THE HISTORY OF COFFEE - 16th CENTURY AD



The Sufi Monasteries
of Yemen

“Using coffee to stay alert for evening prayers in 1550 AD”

If Kaldi, the goat herder, didn't discover coffee, who did?

If Kaldi the goat herder is not the origin source of coffee in the 9th century, who, or what, is?

From a speculative point of view, we could make assumptions going back from known records. The first documented evidence of drinking coffee comes from the Sufi Monasteries of Yemen in 1550, but we know coffee has its botanical origins in East Africa possibly Madagascar, Kenya, Sudan or Ethiopia.

For coffee to travel to Yemen, at that time, would have taken quite some years. Most likely the cherries would have been found by early African tribes people and they would have endured a similar experience to Kaldi and his goats, they would likely have adopted coffee as a drink for tribal ceremonies and, as tribe members married into other tribes, the act of brewing coffee would have slowly spread, generation by generation. After some time tribe members would have

travelled, and taken coffee with them, until eventually coffee would have worked it's way to Yemen and the Sufi Monasteries. Realistically this would have taken a few hundred years, we do know that coffee was widely consumed during the Ottoman Empire which pre-dates the Sufi recordings but there is no known documentation (more about the Ottoman Empire later), so the 9th Century is probably a fair estimate as to the date coffee was founded as a drink (just not young Kaldi the goat herder).

What we can state, from known records, is that the priests of the Sufi Monasteries were consuming coffee in the mid 16th century. They used it as a means of staying alert for evening prayers and it was highly prized and protected.

The coffee was grown in the mountainous grounds of the monastery and was strictly limited to the inhabitants (an important factor to remember when we discover how coffee spread throughout the world).