



Defected beans, hand selected during the washed coffee drying phase.

THE WORLD OF GREEN COFFEE

THE COFFEE PLANT: BOTANY AND CULTIVATION TIPS

The coffee plant is an evergreen shrub that belongs to the Rubiaceae family and thrives in tropical climates. Its height varies between 4 and 12 meters depending on the species, although the cultivated shrub is usually pruned, for practical reasons, at a maximum height of 2 meters to facilitate the fruits harvesting, called berries, drupes or cherries. In most countries, flowering takes place once a year and lasts only two or three days; the slow ripening of fruits instead is accomplished in about nine months. In a well-managed plantation shadow is particularly important and is given to tall plants or fruit trees such as banana, orange, lemon, papaya and avocado trees: these allow the creation of a better microclimate thanks to the reduced exposure to the sun and optimum humidity, which leads to a lower production but of a higher quality. There are two main species used for commercial purposes: *Coffea Canephora* (also known as *Coffea Robusta*, 22 chromosomes) and *Coffea Arabica* (44 chromosomes), as well as *Coffea Liberica* and *Coffea Excelsa*, which, however, account for less 1% in the world coffee production. Given the importance of coffee as a commodity, for its large-scale commercial use (since the mid-seventeenth century), there were numerous cultivated varieties (cultivars)

