



Casa Ruiz, S.A.

The Formation of an Industry

La Berlina, Maunier, Panamaría, CAFÉ RUIZ®

CASA RUIZ, S.A., was created as an *anonimous society* (a corporation) in 1979. This sole-family-owned business was founded by the Ruiz-Arauz couple. Their children became part of the Board of Directors and in the present, all of them are shareholders. The corporation came about from the natural growth of a personal trade activity conducted by Mr. Plinio Antonio Ruiz González with the support of his wife Mrs. Elisa Aurora Araúz de Ruiz. The trade activity began in 1969.

Brief Recount

Plinio A. Ruiz G. was born in 1922. He became the second generation of coffee growers from Boquete. His mother grew up in a coffee farm during the last decade of the XIX century. Mr. Ruiz also enjoyed his childhood life among the coffee and orange trees. The family built a basic and artisanal coffee processing plant (*beneficio*) made out of wood from the locality. The *beneficio* source of power was a water-wheel system built and its



capacity was of four hundred pounds of green coffee per day. The coffee business during that period of time, including the big depression, did not show a bright future for a family of ten children. Coffee growing and processing became a secondary source of income opening the opportunity for another very important economic activity: the fresh flower business.

Mr. Ruiz finished primary school and some years later was able to go to Guatemala where he attended a Biblical Seminar School. He finished one complete year of studies but had to return home due to financial constraints.

Back in the farm, he was in charged of most of the daily activities along side with his mother, the head of the flower business. He also contribute with the religious activities in town. After some years, Mr. Ruiz started the vegetables and fruit trade business traveling most of the country. With an experience of twenty years in the trade business, coffee became part of the trade activity and in a very short time was the total focus of Mr. Ruiz' economic activity. Being Boquete a well-known coffee growing region, it was not surprise Mr. Ruiz would trade coffee locally for national roasters.

Mrs. Elisa Araúz de Ruiz, is the oldest child of a family of eight. She was born in the Dolega District, just south bordering with Boquete, in 1935. She came in her early years to Boquete in order to attend school. Staying over relatives, she was able to finish her primary school. The whole Araúz family moved to Boquete. Mrs. Ruiz attended the Feliz Olivares Contreras High school and went on into a vocational school. She received training on teaching and was awarded with the degree of Primary School Teacher.



Mr. and Mrs. Ruiz were married in 1957. She became a mother of four, taking care of the children and also in charge of the former Ruiz flower and coffee farm. The farm had been



bought from Mrs. Ruiz González by Mr. Plinio Ruiz. Some years later, she was able to go back to teaching and started being a bookkeeper for Mr. Ruiz home-based trade activity.

By the end of the 60s, there were excellent opportunities not only for the vegetable and other products business but also in the coffee activity. This period allowed a very stable and improving economic outlook for the family.



The tragic Boquete big flood that took place in 1970, changed the scenery in a drastic manner. The Ruiz family had to move out from the farm. The road system had been destroyed by the flood and it was impossible to continue with the business in those conditions. Added to this, was the uncertainty of Boquete's economic recovery. After two years of hard work, the coffee business became the main activity of Mr. Ruiz. Working together with a roasting company, the export coffee business became a reality. In the early 70s, the international coffee business presented

very attractive opportunities for the local coffee growers and processors.

A renewed enthusiasm for the international coffee business, brought the expansion of Mr. Ruiz trade activity. CASA RUIZ, S.A. was founded becoming a processor, exporter and a trade organization. Today, this company continues the export activity being dedicated to the specialty coffee market. Among the internationally recognized products, CASA RUIZ, S.A. offers, La Berlina Organic, La Berlina Estate, Maunier, Panamaría, Ruiz Organic and others.



Since 1980, CASA RUIZ, S.A. started a program to increase its growing coffee area.

In 1983, the roasting and packaging section was added.

CAFÉ RUIZ® is the brand name representing high quality coffees for the consumer market in Panama.

Under this brand name a wide line of coffees are offered to the locals and other markets through direct marketing.



Today, in spite of the low-price crisis, the commitment is to preserve as much high-quality coffee area as possible. The next generation of the family is already working together with a group of local professionals and technicians, based on the business principles established by Mr. Plinio Ruiz and Mrs. Elisa de Ruiz.

