

A Thousand Hills of Goodness

By Jonathan Copsey / STAFF

Drink coffee and do good. What better mantra can there be? So simple and tasty, it warms the heart and the soul.

That's precisely what Land of a Thousand Hills Coffee, who officially opened their doors last weekend, aims to do by selling you one of their coffees. Having just opened in Roswell on South Atlanta Street, they offer a very unique flavor to Roswell and North Fulton.

Pastor Jonathan Golden, of the St. Peter's Place church in east Roswell and owner of the coffee shop, one day decided to do something good. Any not just everyday good, but really good.

So he went to Rwanda, the Land of a Thousand Hills. During the 1990s, the small African nation was the location of the worst genocide in human history during a bitter civil war that pitted tribe against tribe. When the civil war ended, the country was devastated and in dire need of rebuilding. Thankfully, one of the country's biggest exports happens to be high quality coffee.

"If people and houses of worship started to brew and drink coffee that made a difference, we could drink coffee and do good," said Golden. "We can bring this world a lit-

tle closer to how God intended it to be with a simple cup of coffee by knowing your paying somebody a fair wage for a day's labor and using some of the profits from that to help others."

Golden explained how European traders were the only buyers for years and would pay only 40 cents per pound of coffee grown even though it costs the farmer 60 cents to grow. It was a harsh living. Thanks to the growth of Fair Trade commerce, farmers now have a fixed minimum price of \$1.26. Land of a Thousand Hills Coffee currently pays \$1.86.

"The coffee from Rwanda is fantastic," said Relationship Director Robert Crow. "The growers of Rwanda are getting a



Photos By Jonathan Copsey
[from left] Former Mayor Pug Mabry helps Land of 1000 Hills Coffee founder Jonathan Golden cut the ribbon at the grand opening while Mayor Jere Wood counts down.

proper living wage and the two ethnic groups that were at war are now working together growing coffee. [We're] blessing people with work, rather than it being a handout."

Not only is Golden's business paying a fair wage, but a dollar per bag sold goes back to Rwanda in the form of micro loans. Golden's example was a young woman, who cares for her younger siblings, who received a loan of \$56 and buys \$3 of tomatoes and sells them for \$4. Most of those helped by the loans are genocide widows, left penniless by the wars.

By roasting their own coffee on site in a giant oven, Land of a Thousand Hills Coffee is able to brew fresh coffee to perfection, instead of relying of coffee that is stored and shipped across the world. As Golden explained, fresh coffee

is sweet, not bitter, so you know immediately whether you're getting your money's worth. They even offer their own decaffeinated coffee, which is sent to a Vancouver



Mayor Jere Wood personally inspects the brewing process of Roswell's newest coffee brewer.

company to naturally remove the caffeine. Commercial decaffeination uses a petroleum-based chemical.

On hand for the grand opening were Roswell mayor Jere Wood and former mayor Pug Mabry, both veterans of ribbon cutting, who were given the grand tour, even watching as the coffee was roasted.

"It's very good," remarked Wood. "It's a great story."

Land of a Thousand Hills Coffee is located at 352 South Atlanta Street in Roswell, just past the Clocktower Place, situated, conveniently, on a hill. Visit their website at www.drinkcoffeedogoodroswell.com.

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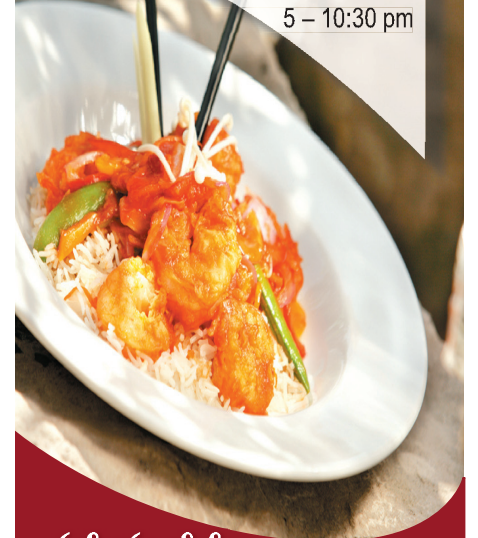
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