



SPECIAL REPORTS

Pour another cup from the port 📺

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By Len Cannon / 11 News

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Houston is zeroing in on a product that is probably a part of your daily ritual.



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Carlos de Aldecoa Bueno is a third-generation coffee man.

Coffee is bought and sold more than any other commodity in the world, except oil.

Even on a dreary, rainy day in Houston you will find coffee lovers.

Whether it's for the taste or the caffeine jolt, nearly 80 percent of adults in America are sipping .

If you do the math, all that sipping is good business.

Jim Edmonds, chairman of the Port of Houston, is smiling because the port has snatched a piece of the coffee trade.

Actually that's putting it mildly. In the last three months, Houston has been the number one coffee exchange port in the world.

“It's a volume that's going to be here and going to stay here,” said Carlos de Aldecoa Bueno.

Confident words from Aldecoa Bueno, a third generation coffee man.

The boom is evident just by looking at the coffee bags stored in his warehouse.

“We’ve been seeing growth of about 5,000 tons a month coming into Houston,” Aldecoa Bueno said.

That is 5,000 tons of coffee, from Mexico, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Columbia.

“We are talking about several hundred percent increase, so it’s a significant increase,” he said.

But why Houston and why now?

First, in 2003 the city was approved as a coffee port by the New York Board of Trade.

That designation put us on the world coffee map along with New Orleans, Miami, New York in the U.S. and Germany, Spain and Belgium in Europe.

It means every container of coffee must meet standards of appearance and taste set by the board of trade.

Second is location. The port is close to major coffee exporters in Central and South America.

Third, our port is already a major distribution center for other goods.

Each bag here weighs 150 pounds. It is raw, green coffee.

It’s ready to be bought by roasters and traders. It can be stored in this warehouse for a few months or a few years, and Aldecoa Bueno says the value of the coffee stored here is about \$15 to \$20 million.

With so much java coming, more jobs are likely to follow.

You could compare the port’s rise in coffee to a world cup soccer team. In just a few short years, we have gone from being the new kid on the block to being the biggest.

So the next time you take a sip, odds are your coffee was shipped to, stored and roasted in Houston.

A recent study says drinking at least six cups of coffee a day can keep Type 2 diabetes at bay.

Doctors say it’s not the caffeine that does it, it’s the antioxidants.

It can also protect you against Parkinson’s disease, gall stones and even reduces risk of heart attack in some people.

That study can be found in the Archives of Internal Medicine.