

# Civet Facts



## So, What is a Civet?

Civets are cat-sized, but they are not cats! Civets are from the Family Viverridae and are mostly nocturnal mammals that can be found throughout Asia and Africa. Civets occupy all types of habitats including; primary and secondary forests as well as, agricultural land and also in human dwellings. They are arboreal and terrestrial in their behaviour. This allows the civets to take advantage of ground-dwelling prey in the form of; reptiles, frogs and small mammals like rats and mice as well as, ripe fruits that are produced in tall growing trees such as; kasemak and mango. Where Coffee beans are grown in agricultural areas, the civets have been known to consume the ripe, bright red berries - digesting the fleshy part of the fruit and excreting the intact bean.

## Civet Coffee?

That's right! Civets are used to produce a high-end coffee known as 'Kopi Luwak'. Originally harvested from the wild when located, the coffee beans that had been consumed by the animal and 'treated' by acids and enzymes as they passed through the digestive system of the civet, were then used for local consumption by villagers that could not afford to buy coffee. Now a multi-million dollar industry spanning the globe, one cup of civet coffee can sell for £50 in Europe. Many companies that are producing civet coffee claim their product is sourced from free-ranging wild civets; however this is not the case with the amount of civet coffee produced by such companies far exceeding the actual rare wild discoveries.

Civets that produce the Luwak type of coffee are stolen from the wild or purchased from illegal pet markets. They are then placed into metal cages where they are force-fed coffee berries exclusively in order to guarantee the purity of the product, which results in the rapid death of the animal due to malnutrition. The conditions are terrible for the once wild animal as no water, shelter or foods other than the beans are provided with the cages containing no enrichment. The stresses of being imprisoned soon leads to the animal self-harming and mental anguish causes pacing back and forth.



## A short and torturous life

Civets like a wide-range of other wildlife taken from their natural environment, live their short lives in great hardship. It is not only adult civets that are removed, but also newly born individuals are taken for the insidious wildlife trade. Traders know very little in regards to caring for such wildlife and many civets do not survive their initial imprisonment. Those that do survive, live their lives constantly caged; enduring extreme physical and mental torture.



[www.nocturama.org](http://www.nocturama.org)



### Animal Market Facts

- Civets are often caught from the wild with many newly born animals taken from nest.
- Civets are kept in small cages with no food, water or enrichment and are often placed in the open; exposed to direct sun, loud noise from busy streets and are roughly handled.
- Civets are also exposed to a wide range of disease that is transmitted by other market animals, as well as the animals that once occupied the cage the newly arrived civet now finds itself in.
- Due to the stresses associated with the civet's imprisonment, many individuals injure themselves resulting in severe infection and disease.
- Civets are becoming increasingly popular as exotic pets throughout Asia and Europe accelerating the species decline.

### Civet Coffee Farm Facts

- Civet coffee originated as a 'peasant' drink when locals could not afford coffee.
- Civet coffee is now a multi-million dollar industry with one cup of the product selling for £50 and upwards in Europe.
- Civets are often caught from the wild with many newly born animals taken from nest.
- Civets are kept in small cages that are often cramped; containing no enrichment.
- Captive Civets are fed coffee berries exclusively to ensure the purity of the product which results in the animal's death due to malnutrition.
- Traders claim that only 500kg of Kopi Luwak is produced annually. This is not the truth, as far more is produced by the factory farming process.
- Labelling and claims of 'wild' harvested coffee is largely misleading with the bulk of the product coming from captive farms.



# THINK BEFORE YOU DRINK!