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PLANET HOLLYWOOD INTERNATIONAL revitalizes its brand with new menu items and celebrity appearances. **page 67**



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Shining Diamond

Red Diamond uses state-of-the-art equipment, backed with experienced staff and suppliers, to make world-class coffee and tea products. **By Jim Harris**

company profile

Red Diamond

www.reddiamond.com

Headquarters: Moody, Ala.

Employees: 200

Specialty: Coffee and tea

Bill Bowron, CEO: "We want our product to be the best-tasting product available."

A commitment to quality, innovation and customer service has driven Red Diamond for more than 111 years. "We want our product to be the best-tasting product available on the market in each of the channels we serve," says Bill Bowron, CEO of the Moody, Ala.-headquartered company. "We back up that commitment with our desire to provide great customer service."

The company produces a variety of coffees and teas. Red Diamond's products include iced tea, hot tea and green tea bags; ground, whole bean and single-serve coffee; and ready-to-drink sweet teas.

"We import, blend, roast, package and distribute products ranging from canned to bagged to single-serve coffee, and we import teas from around the world, which we consolidate and blend here in Moody," Bowron says.

Red Diamond's products are available through a variety of channels including the retail, wholesale and foodservice markets.

"Whether it's mass-market, grocery stores, restaurants, offices, healthcare facilities or schools, we



>> Fresh-Brewed Peach Basil Iced Tea – today's tea boom is led by Millennial seeking healthy, flavorful beverage options.

can reach just about every channel in the United States," he adds.

The company's retail products include a ready-to-drink gallon-size sweet tea that is the top seller of its kind in the United States. Its newest

products include Tropical Temptations, a flavored iced tea line; and a cold-brewed coffee line. Red Diamond also recently introduced Fruzen™, a flavored frozen tea product available to foodservice providers



PHOTO BY TREVOR RUSZKOWSKI

>> Red Diamond's state-of-the-art production facility and corporate headquarters.



>> Fruzen™ Real Frozen Tea. Available in Citrus Green Tea and Peach Black Tea.

and restaurants. “We want to develop consumer products that are readily needed and appreciated and get those to our customers at the least possible cost and the highest rate of speed possible,” Bowron says.

Industry Innovators

Since its founding in 1906, Red Diamond has been at the forefront of several product innovations. Bowron represents the fourth generation of family ownership at the company.

In the 1950s, the company and nine of its peers formed Tenco, which at the time was the largest instant coffee supplier in the United States before it was sold in the early 1970s. Red Diamond was also the first company in the United States to develop decaffeinated, gallon-sized and sealed square-shaped tea bags, and was the first company in the southern United States to market quart-sized tea bags, Bowron notes.

In the 1970s, the company added Italian manufacturer Coglio's brick pack packaging system. “That transformed the industry from selling coffee in paper bags and steel cans to selling it in environmentally protective bags, which led to products having longer shelf lives,” Bowron says.

More recently, Red Diamond became the first company to use valves in fractional packs that are supplied to restaurants. “Normally, when coffee beans are roasted, they are placed in a bin, which allows the gas to dissipate from them, and allows oxygen to attack the quality of the coffee by drying it out,” Bowron says, noting the valve pushes oxygen out of the bag. “We came up with the idea of grinding the coffee and immediately packing it, which allows us to give our customers the freshest packed coffee available.”

The equipment and production techniques used in Red Diamond's production plant in Moody reflect the company's corporate focus on innovation. The company built and has operated from the 80-acre site since 2008. “Our plant is state-of-the-art; I don't believe there is a finer one anywhere in the world,” Bowron adds.

The facility includes packaging equipment manufactured by Fresco, as well as roasting equipment provided by Italian manufacturer Scolari. The roasting equipment includes computer-controlled convection roasters that control



PHOTO BY TREVOR RUSZKOWSKI

>> Bill Bowron, President and CEO of Red Diamond® Coffee & Tea

every step of tea and coffee production. “This system allows us to produce multiple blends in multiple formats and lets us know, for every 2 million pounds of product, what our weights are at all times within a quarter of a pound,” Bowron says.

The company’s production facility was designed with sustainability in mind. The site includes a 7-acre lake that is used to collect rainwater to irrigate the campus. In addition, all production buildings are triple-insulated to conserve energy, and many of the lights in Red Diamond’s warehouse are motion-activated LEDs. The company’s canned coffee is packaged in recycled cardboard containers with reinforced bottoms. “We want to do as little harm to the environment with regard to our carbon footprint as possible, and we want to be as loyal to the farmers who provide us with raw product as possible,” Bowron says.

The company provides coffee that is

Fair Trade certified. Red Diamond also supports a number of community and industry organizations including Grounds for Health, a nonprofit dedicated to pre-

“Our quality starts with our raw product. We have relationships with many tea fields around the world.”

venting cervical cancer in developing nations; student scholarship funds; and arts and athletic organizations.

Long-term Relationships

Red Diamond has worked with many of the same growers and other suppliers for several years. “Our quality starts with our raw product,” Bowron notes. “We have relationships with many tea fields around the world.”

The company’s coffee importers include Westfeldt Brothers of New Orleans, with which it has had a



>> Red Diamond Coffee, over a century of experience sourcing and roasting only the finest beans in the world.



>> Iced Caramel Coffee – innovations in flavors, formats, textures and more are critical in today's ever evolving beverage culture.

111-year-long business relationship. Red Diamond's tea importer is Henry P. Thomson Co. of New Jersey, a third-generation partnership.

Many of Red Diamond's employees

also have a long history of service. "We care about what we do. We have many people who have been here for 25, 30 or 35 years, who bring with them a love for the industry," he adds.

The company is also building toward its future by regularly hiring new salespeople and other employees. The fifth generation of the Bowron family is also now involved with its operations. "We wouldn't be able to develop new products or meet customers' needs without the people who work here," Bowron says. "We truly have a wonderful collection of employees." **FD**

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