

The visionary – Interview with Dr Antonio Martins



Dr Antonio Martins – co-founder of Green Coco Europe GmbH, who gave his name to the Dr Antonio Martins product range, was born in Brazil and grew up in London. Out of love for his wife, Hannelore, he moved to Austria and completed his specialist medical training there. He was Head of Paediatrics at Medeor Downtown Medical Centre in Dubai for five years and in summer 2017 he returned to

Austria. A passionate paediatrician, he is the father of three sons who study medicine and enjoys relaxing in his spare time to the music of Shostakovich.

What sparked your desire to bring the national drink of Brazil to Europe?

In my role as a paediatrician, concerned mothers were always asking me for alternatives to sweet carbonated drinks, fruit juices, and sugary soft drinks. The national drink of my home country, the juice from the young coconut, is a real mineral bomb with its high potassium, calcium, and magnesium content. The natural sugar content is very low, so it is low in calories and also hypoallergenic. Coconut juice is an exciting, exotic, and very healthy alternative to pure water.

Is it really so bad for a child to drink a soft drink now and again?

In my practice I diagnosed a new case of diabetes once a week. Usually they're very small children. With healthy food and avoiding the regular consumption of sugary drinks, in many cases this diagnosis would not have been necessary. Often the little patients ask me: But what should I eat now? My honest answer is: Everything you were previously avoiding. Lots of fruit, vegetables, and salad.

Are these not individual cases, often even the result of genetics?

Unfortunately not. There needs to be a change of thinking in our society. The number of cases of diabetes, coronary heart disease, and obesity is increasing rapidly – even in childhood. Not only in America, but in Europe too. It is a problem that is a serious long-term danger to society. The politicians must act now out of responsibility for future generations. Or do you think that in times of dramatic demographic change, the increasing levels of illness – demonstrated by these diagnoses – will be affordable in the long-term?

Do you see any progress? What stage are we at now?

A lot has happened – since the 60s and 70s. For example, back then breastfeeding was demonised and industrially manufactured milk was preferred. Breastfeeding was frowned

upon, even though this natural type of nourishment gives the infant everything it needs in the first months of its life. Cola and the like were fashionable and often a staple drink in the family refrigerator – sugar was not demonised, but fat. Currently things are happening: Well-known supermarket chains are considering dramatically reducing the sugar content in their own-brand products. Consumer awareness is steadily changing – the topic of sugar is increasingly becoming a focus. Fruit juices also contain sugar, natural sugar. In 5 years we won't just be talking about cola, but also about whether four oranges are enough for a freshly-squeezed Sunday breakfast juice, rather than ten.

But you also have fruit juice blends in the Dr Antonio Martins range?

When using fruit juice we make sure there is a sensible balance and do not add any sugar to our products. This is why our low-calorie drinks are so popular, particularly among sportspeople and nutrition-conscious consumers. The natural flavours of the fruits are used in our blends. When we use fruit juice – such as in our blends with banana, apricots, and pineapple/acerola – we add the juice and the pulp in reasonable amounts.

Dr Martins, you call coconut juice a concept – what exactly do you mean by that?

Correct. Coconut juice is more than a product. Coconut juice is a concept. It enables us to create numerous jobs in poorer parts of the world. Our idea to import coconut juice from Sri Lanka has alone created approx. 8,000 new jobs there. In times like these – characterised by immense poverty immigration – companies must create local job prospects. Our journey does not end in Sri Lanka or the Philippines, I see huge potential to help people in this way in Africa too. My vision: an EU-funded coconut juice project in Africa – I have already made contact with Brussels ...

And what about jobs in Europe?

Green Coco Europe GmbH does not just create jobs in the 'coconut countries', but also in Europe. We transport the raw materials to Europe and organise the bottling of the product here. One positive side effect is that this enables Dr Antonio Martins to guarantee a consistent taste. Because the juice of the coconut varies, depending on rainfall and weather conditions locally. Our competitors who bottle locally cannot provide this taste guarantee.

Are there any new products coming soon from Dr Antonio Martins?

In February 2018 two innovations will be coming onto the market. The first new product: The organic juice of the king coconut. The yellowy-orange coconut grows in Sri Lanka, contains hardly any fruit flesh, but is filled right to the brim with coconut juice. This rarity is particularly rich in minerals and nutrients – and with its slightly sweet, mellow juice, it is rightly named the king of the coconuts.

Another first: Our first carbonated blend. Coconut juice from young coconuts is enhanced with a hint of the natural juice flavour of the passion fruit. Not uninteresting for women? The practical, light PET format, completely recyclable of course, fits in any handbag.

So bring on the summer ... Dr Antonio Martins has taken care of innovative, organic refreshment.

Do you have any questions or need pictures? Are you interested in a personal interview with doctor and visionary Dr Antonio Martins?

Then contact:

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