

**Foodorama**

**Letter # 24: Insect Protein Bars**

**By Foodorama, June 13, 2019**



Hi everyone, we are in Colombia for 3 weeks now. It is a country that enchanted us as soon as we arrived. Incredible landscapes of mountains covered with forests, people smiling, curious and kind, a temperature finally cooler than in Central America ... we take full advantage of this country!



Arrived in Medellin, we are hosted by Isabelle, the psychologist of the French school where we give a lecture with classes for children 9-10 years old, on our journey and sustainable food: it's an opportunity to show them how through our food we can reduce our carbon impact.



We take advantage of her cooking skills and a really comfortable room to get back in shape. Her daughter accompanies and serves us as a guide during our visit to "Arvi Park". To get there you have to take a cable car that overlooks the entire city.



Isabelle makes us meet two French people living in Medellin, Marie and Antoine. They have a crazy project that speaks to us right now! Marie raises thousands of mealworms in her garage and Antoine transforms them into a protein bar for athletes.



Do you know why we are so interested in insects for our documentary on sustainable food? Insects are an incredible source of protein, they contain 75% protein on dry extract, and it's much more than meat or fish (about 30% protein). Proteins are essential for our health and muscle growth. The other big advantage of insect consumption is that insect farming releases much less greenhouse gases (responsible for global warming) than beef or pork.



Now there is only one step to go beyond the small apprehension of eating an insect! So we tasted the protein bars and to be honest we do not smell so much the taste of flour worm but especially peanut butter. They are very good and we would be happy to eat them for a little 4pm peckish.



As we are curious we wanted to know what taste the flour worm had before transformation. We have tasted them alive! Let these worms forgive us (according to several studies insects do not feel pain like us mammals). There is a little more "surprising" in the mouth, a little nutty taste and a texture that surprises ... Question of habit!



We leave Medellin for our next shoot on the coffee near Popayan. On the road we meet a lot of Venezuelans with family or group fleeing their country. The situation in Venezuela is catastrophic. Since the death of President Hugo Chavez in 2013 and the fall in oil revenues, the country has suffered a major political and economic crisis. Inflation is huge and causes food shortages. Do you know what inflation is? Inflation is a loss of the purchasing power of money, which results in a general rise in prices. For example we met a young Venezuelan 19, who gave us a ticket of 100 bolivars. This ticket today is not even worth 1 cent of dollars whereas before the crisis with this ticket he could buy food for a month. And with 500 bolivars he had even bought a motorcycle. Today he has kilos of tickets in his bag that are worthless. He gives them in exchange for some Colombian pesos to buy food.



They are 4 million who have left the country. We meet them on the roadside. Most of them are on the way to Ecuador and Peru where they hope to find work. They hitchhike and ask for water and some food for them and their children. It's a terrible situation. On our side as a foreign bike traveler we are always welcomed as princes among Colombians. We cannot help feeling guilty by feeling that they are the ones who need help the most. Bicycle traveler and migrant we are both on the road. The first journey for pleasure and with a budget, the second peregrinate by necessity and without means. It's a huge difference.



