

VIVERE
Sea Island

Emilcotoni



VIVERE Sea Island

By all accounts, Sea Island was the finest quality of cotton ever grown – anywhere or at any time.

Richard Dwight Porcher,
Sea Island Cotton

Giving just one quick look to the atlas is not enough to find it: the most precious cotton in the world hides itself in an incredibly small portion of land between the Caribbean islands of Barbados and Jamaica.

Its preciousness is measurable in a series of natural characteristics that are not second to none. Its fibres are the longest ones among all the varieties existing, extremely fine, resistant and brilliant.

These few pieces of information could be enough to indicate it as the best cotton fibre in the world, but Sea Island is much more than that. Behind its back there is a centuries-old history that confirms its uniqueness and empowers its magic.

Shiny like silk, precious like cashmere, 100% Sea Island Cotton.



A matter of quality

A unique habitat in the whole world



Barbados is an island country in the Lesser Antilles of the West Indies. Overall it covers an area of 430 km².

Quality is a complex idea, a mixture of tangible elements and nonmaterial factors. The West Indian Sea Island cotton holds within itself both of these; maybe this is the reason why it is universally acknowledged to be the finest cotton in the world.

Roughly 110 million cotton bales are produced every year, of which 2 million are extra long staple cottons. Among these, only 130 are of Sea Island cotton. An extremely limited production, packed in a small handkerchief of land between the Caribbean islands of Barbados and Jamaica. Imagine beautiful green cotton fields on a background of vividly blue skies and sea.

To fully develop its potential, cotton needs a temperate climate, never reaching very low temperatures. This helps to explain why the production of the Sea Island cotton is so limited. The hot and humid climate of Barbados and Jamaica, together with the minimal thermal excursion between day and night, allows the fibres to reach a length that no other cotton can match.

It is difficult to believe that the heavenly scenery in which it grows does not instill in the cotton something of itself. There is a little bit of the sea, the land and the skies of the Caribbean in the Sea Island fibres that reach us.



Gossypium barbadense L.

Fibre traits



Gossypium Barbadense flower.

The West Indian Sea Island cotton comes from a species called the *Gossypium Barbadense*, the same one from which all the other extra-long fibre cottons cultivated all around the world come from.

However, it is not only its species that determines the quality of cotton; the seed, the soil, the farming procedures and climate conditions also have a role to play. Thanks to the happy union of these elements on Barbados, the Sea Island cotton is excellent by any possible standard: length of the fibres, maturity, fineness and strength.

Its fibres manage to reach a length of 40 millimeters and are extremely shiny, fine and resilient. Moreover, this kind of cotton has a very high percentage of evenness (circa 85%) and has an extremely limited number of neps.

Very long fibres such as the Sea Island ones, allow us to obtain a yarn which is incredibly fine and, at the same time, maintains a soft hand feel, gentle to the touch. Richard Dwight Porcher, a biologist and author of the volume *Sea Island Cotton*, has no doubts in declaring that «by all accounts, it was the finest quality of cotton ever grown – anywhere or at any time».



A centuries-long journey

The origin story

The history of Sea Island cotton evokes a far-away world; a world of grand plantations, incredibly wealthy landowners, ships going from one end of the Atlantic to the other, European aristocrats, embroidered handkerchiefs, muslin garments and lavish dresses. However, if one looks closely, its history starts a long time before: it carries on its shoulders hundreds of years of the *genus Gossypium* evolution.

Coming from Perù and Ecuador, the *Gossypium Barbadense* seed moved north until it reached the islands of the Caribbean Sea, where it found ideal conditions for its development. «A sea of cream blossoms»: this is how Richard Porcher described the Sea Island plantations in the Caribbean Islands.



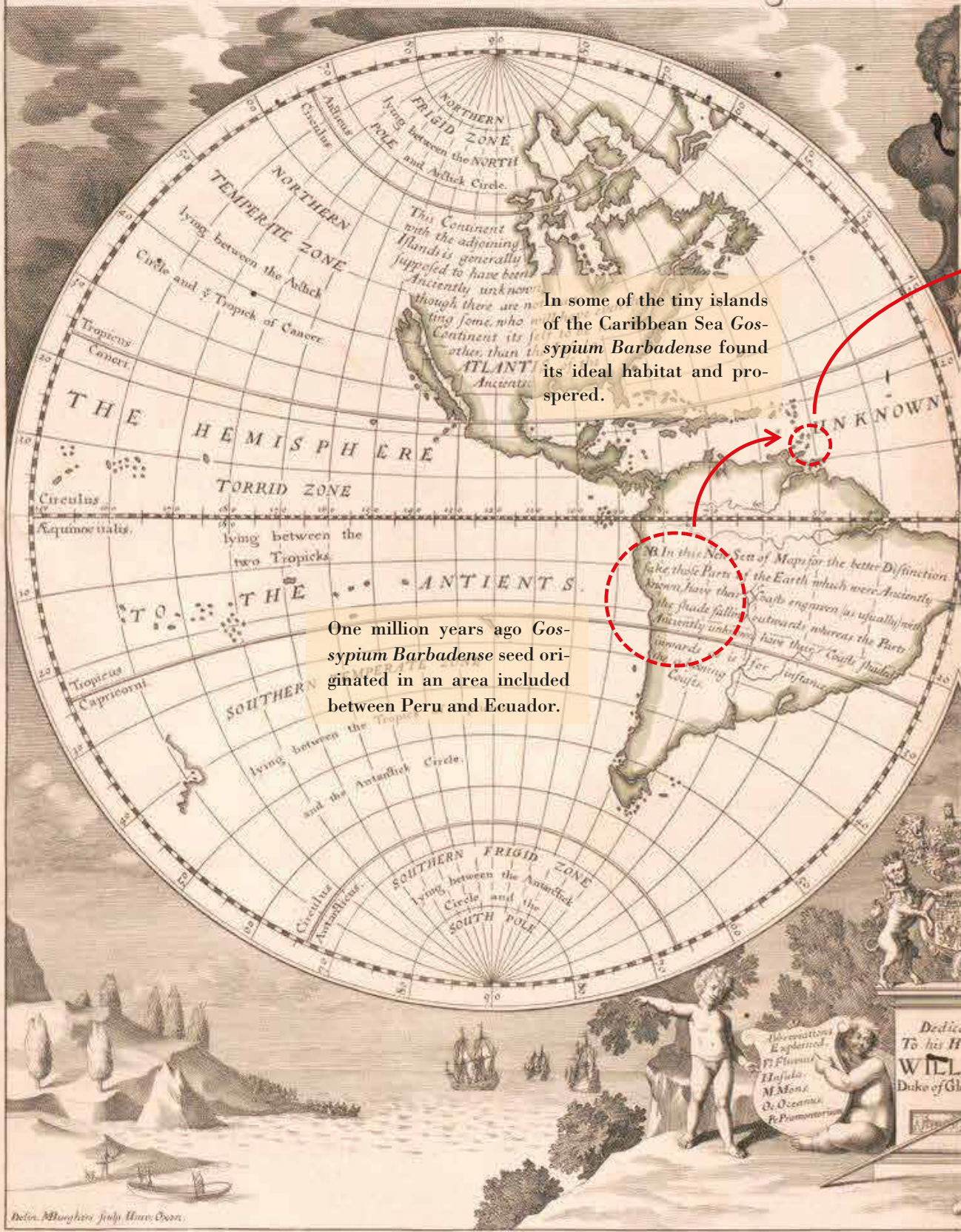
An ancient map of Barbados showing the names of plantation owners..

It was 1492 when an Italian explorer arrived in this sea of beautiful buds and, for the first time, took notice and marveled at the quality of cotton which grew there. He decided to bring some back to Europe with him. And so with Christopher Columbus the first of a long series of transatlantic trips to reach the Sea Island cotton was made.

Nevertheless, many more years had to pass before the Sea Island cotton would be farmed on an industrial scale. The first to do so in the West Indies was the Island of Barbados. At the beginning of the XVIII century every English gentleman of solid reputation would be a member of a gentlemen's club, enjoy the occasional fox hunt and wear sophisticated Sea Island cotton garments.

A NEW MAP of the TERRA

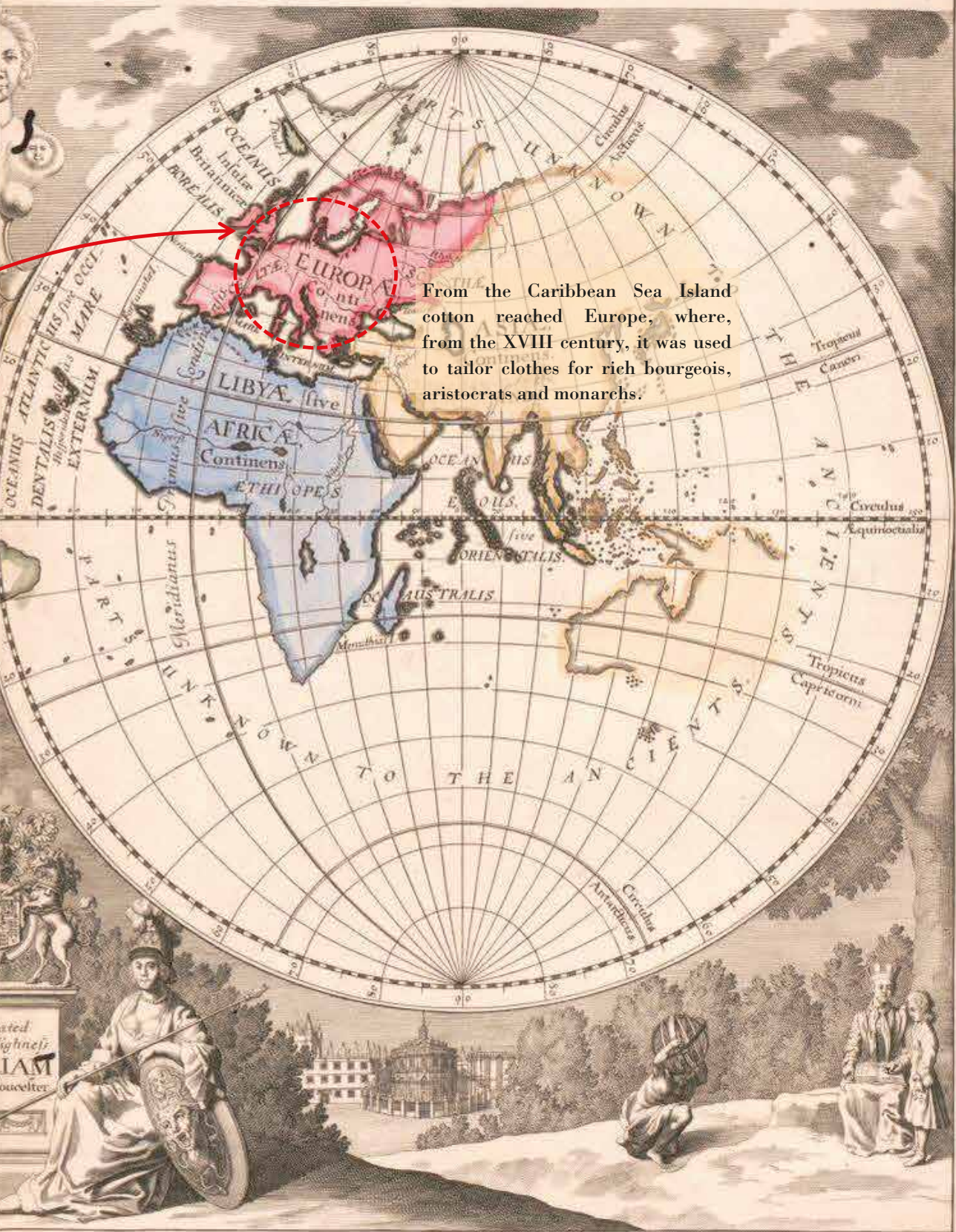
to the Ancient Discoveries and most general D



In some of the tiny islands of the Caribbean Sea *Gossypium Barbadosense* found its ideal habitat and prospered.

One million years ago *Gossypium Barbadosense* seed originated in an area included between Peru and Ecuador.

RAQUEOUS GLOBE according divisions of it into CONTINENTS and OCEANS.



From the Caribbean Sea Island cotton reached Europe, where, from the XVIII century, it was used to tailor clothes for rich bourgeois, aristocrats and monarchs.



Famous ambassadors

Once it had entered history, the Sea Island cotton continued to make its appearance through the centuries on exceptional characters, every time setting a record which was never really challenged.

In the Thirties one of its most prestigious ambassadors was the ever so elegant Prince of Wales, the future King Edward VIII. When interviewed by the *Times* on his fashion choices, he confessed to loving the Sea Island cotton better than any other kind.



The man in the Hathaway shirt, one of the most famous advertising campaigns of David Ogilvy's.

In 1951 the Sea Island cotton became the center of one of the most famous advertising campaigns of all time. Its creator was the visionary artist David Ogilvy, who came up with a seemingly simple idea: to place a blindfold on one eye of the distinguished male model sporting the shirts which were being advertised. Why the blindfold? What mysterious past did it conceal? The public grew increasingly fascinated by the ads and therefore made them incredibly successful.

In the caption placed underneath the picture of the blindfolded man one could read all about how the Sea Island cotton was adored by the English boulevardies. With their laid-back charm and witty spirit, the boulevardies were dandies with a poorly concealed passion for society events and the company of the ladies. An example? There is a literary figure which immediately comes to mind and suits this description perfectly, but it might be best to let its own author introduce him: «In a battered black and white dogtooth suit, dark blue Sea Island cotton shirt and black silk knitted tie, he was walking softly, but not surreptitiously, along the corridor to the head of the stairs, the square leather case in his left hand» The author is Ian Fleming, the character in question is – needless to say – James Bond, and his cotton is the Sea Island.

THE WEST INDIAN SEA ISLAND COTTON ASSOCIATION (Inc.)

Certificate for the use of the West Indian Sea Island Cotton Association Certification Trade Mark



This is to certify that EMILCOTONI S.p.a
of VIALE DELL'INDUSTRIA 12, 29122 PIAZZA ITALI
is authorised up to and inclusive of the 31st day of December of this year
to use the West Indian Sea Island Cotton Association's Registered Trade
Mark numbered as under, of which an exact copy appears upon this
Certificate, upon :-

*Cotton yarn No. 772,362.

*Cotton piece goods No. 772,363.

*Articles of clothing made wholly or principally of cotton No. 772,364.
* (Strike out any Class not covered)

and in accordance with the Regulations for the time being in force.

this 1st date of JANUARY 2015

Signature for and on behalf of the West Indian Sea Island Cotton Association (Inc.).

P. Martin

The Emilcotoni experience

In search of the best fibres in the world

Having always been experts in the production of cotton yarns for flat knitwear, in 2000 Emilcotoni made an extremely innovative and brave choice: to select for its own yarns the best raw material in the world. Thus a very long and accurate research began, and it could not end anywhere else other than in the plantations of Caribbean cotton, extremely rare but precious like no other.



The long journey of Sea Island cotton.

It seems that it is this tiny plant's destiny to be continuously shipped from one end of the Atlantic Ocean to the other. In fact, prior to that, its journey was an all-American one: from the south of the continent, where it first appeared, to Central America, where it prospered. And now, thanks to

Emilcotoni, it makes its way to the rest of the world, in the many countries which our company can reach.

Ever since first being interested in it, Emilcotoni has always made sure to have its share in the limited production of Sea Island cotton. Because of its scarce availability it is not easy to purchase it. To the end of alleviating this difficulty, for the past few years Emilcotoni has wanted to protect itself and, most importantly, its clients, by acquiring the WISICA certificate, the only tool one has to be able to guarantee its fibres authenticity and traceability along the whole of the supply chain.

SEA ISLAND
COTTON

TM
west indian
sea island cotton



Emilcotoni yarns made of Sea Island cotton

The true innovation in Emilcotoni's choice to use the Sea Island cotton for its yarns lays in the fact that no one had ever thought of using such fine fibres for flat knitwear. We have already mentioned how, in the Fifties, David Ogilvy advertised shirts made of Sea Island cotton, not cardigans or sweaters. It could thus seem a very bold choice, but the test of time has proven that our original intuition was valid.



Emilcotoni precious yarns come from the union between Sea Island cotton and the most noble fibres in the world, such as silk and vicuña.

It is not easy to work with long fibres such as the Sea Island ones, but for thirty years Emilcotoni has dedicated itself exclusively to the production of yarns intended for flat knitwear and this has allowed us to gain, with time, a certain know-how, very precise and thoroughly put to the test.

Our objective has always been only one: to be able to derive, from incredibly fine cotton fibres, cotton yarns which are just as precious. With this goal in mind, during the years we have produced, as well as the traditional Sea Island cotton yarn, worked on low-twisting ring spinning wheels, also a crêpe version, which appears fresh, clean and elegant. We have also been able to produce various articles of clothing by joining the Sea Island cotton with materials such as baby cashmere, vicuña and silk, all of which made with some of the best fibres available on the market.

This is how the Sea Island cotton yarns are born: exceptional fibres, unique and precious, combined with thirty years of experience, research and passion.

There is a little bit of the sea, the land and the skies of the Caribbean in the Sea Island fibres that reach us.

*Federica Villa,
Vivere Sea Island*

There are many ways to learn about something. Our way of learning passes through dedication, familiarity, closeness, assiduity ... In only one word: experience.

We have been working the best cotton fibres in the world for thirty years. We have found, collected, improved and perfected them.

For this reason, we know Sea Island so well: because we live this cotton, day by day, in keeping on researching about it and developing it. From here comes Vivere Sea Island project, in which we strongly believe.

For further information in this regard and to learn more about Sea Island Cotton wonderful fibre, please contact us.

Emilcotoni

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