

Um Yasir & Um Yousef

CANAAN FAIR TRADE MEMBER OF WOMEN COOP FROM 'ANIN VILLAGE



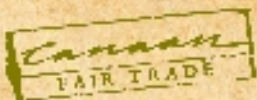
THE POWER OF MOTHERHOOD

Khitam, also called Um Yasir taking after the name of her first son, says, “A woman can rock her child’s cradle with her right hand and change the world with her left one.” According to her, “hope for the world is coming from women who are learning that raising good men and women is the way to a better future. If we raise children and teach them to take care of others then we are in good shape.” Referring to the Palestinian saying, *Kul El Nas Kheir o Barakeh*, which literally translates to *all people are good and they are all a blessing*, Um Yasir emphasizes her power as a mother. “We are the ones who build the new generation right here from our own homes. We do not have to leave the house to make a difference.

Our children learn that all people are good and we feel proud about that. If a child grows up learning how to be caring they would never hurt anyone or anything.”

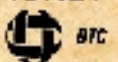
SISTERS-IN-LAW MAFTOUL DUO

Managing a big operation in a house full of guests, children, neighbors, and women colleagues from the local 'Anin coop, Um Yasir joyfully introduces her life long friend to the visiting women of Deir Ballout who came from the southern town to share their Maftoul making techniques. “Um Yousef is my neighbor, my sister-in-law, and my life long friend. We have been a team for over 18 years.” Indeed, these two women make an impressive duo.



FAIR TRADE DELICACIES FROM PALESTINE, THE LAND OF MILK AND HONEY

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Separated only by one door, Um Yasir and Um Yousef practically live together. They share a small home garden next to their house where they plant local varieties of greens such as the popular *Mulukheyeh* (jute) plant that is cooked in a delicious mix of chicken and garlic. To Um Yasir and Um Yousef the idea of the coop is not new. As Um Yousef likes to say, “Women in our village always worked together. The work we are doing now is more organized but we have been working collectively for as long as I can remember. What makes our work with the Palestine Fair Trade Association and Canaan Fair Trade coop special is that we get to meet new people and exchange ideas and skills with them.” Before they joined the coop Um Yousef says she did not know her own country. “My life got better not just economically but also socially. When I visited Deir Ballout for example and the women coop there I got to learn about my own country. I learned how to make new dishes. I am having fun while improving my life financially.”

THE MAGIC OF THE COMMUNAL TERRACE

For Um Yasir, working in making Maftoul with the women and especially with her soul sister, Um Yousef, has also brought much change into her life. “Um Yousef and I became even closer and I found myself taking a leadership role among the women. As the elected representative of our women coop I started to feel like a productive individual in society and not a burden. I participate in something bigger than just my home.”

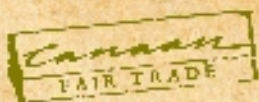
As women from the village gather in their home, the communal terrace in front of their garden transforms the quiet surroundings of 'Anin into a lively celebration of Maftoul rolling, story sharing, and a whole lot of laughter. “Maftoul season comes when we have little to do. It is a perfect enterprise for us because July and August are slow seasons so Maftoul rolling comes in this time and saves the day.”



Women from 'Anin and Deir Ballout Canaan Fair Trade coops gather to learn new Maftoul rolling techniques. (picture above)



Um Yasir and Um Yousef picking Mulukheyeh from their home garden.



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