

# ALMOST FAMOUS

[GREEN BEANS COFFEE CO.>>](#)

## THAT'S AN ORDER

OVERSEAS COFFEE COMPANY BRINGS GIs THEIR DAILY CUP OF JOE.

**VITAL STATS>>** Jon (l.) and Jason Araghi, 37 and 43, respectively, of Green Beans Coffee Co. Inc. in Larkspur, California

**COMPANY>>** Gourmet coffee and tea company that supports U.S. troops

**2007 PROJECTED SALES>>** \$21 million

**FRONT LINE>>** In 1996, when brothers Jason and Jon Araghi were asked by a member of the Saudi royal family to open a coffeehouse in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, they were right on target with their American-style coffee concept. And when requests came in for locations at remote military bases, the pair was more than happy to mobilize, bringing U.S. troops "a touch of home." But when 9/11 occurred, it tested their ultimate commitment. "I never thought I'd need military escorts just to check on my stores," says Jason. "Every business has an emotional side to it, but this has been so intense for us because of the risks and the value." They held strong and currently have 53 locations in the Middle East and Africa.

**BREAKING GROUND>>** In January, the brothers forged into new territory: the United States. Opening their first two locations, both in California, marked the beginning of their efforts to bring their concept full circle. By year-end, they plan to have 10 more shops as well as franchise opportunities for retired vets, with incentives like discounted fees and a full support package. "We were there for them out there," says Jason, "and we're here for them when they come back."

**GRAND SCHEME>>** Counting on their military connections to help establish a solid footing domestically, the Araghis are hoping earth-friendly efforts, such as using organic products, compostable cups and recycled tiles, will get U.S. customers to fall in line. —SARA WILSON



PHOTO © JUSTIN ELLMAN