



Guzman Feria

Oaxaca, La Cañada, Sochiapan, Mexico

Partner since: 2020

Traceable to: 40 families

Altitude: 1550 - 1650

Varietals: Typica la Pluma and Azteca (less than 10%)

Processing: Home processed; cherries are pulped, dry fermented 30 hours and washed before drying on raised beds

Harvest: December January February

Booking: March April May June

Arrivals: May June July



The region of La Cañada in Oaxaca remote, with rugged terrain, and dotted with small family farms. These farmers are the proud, independent, rough and tumble types who thrive in this climate, as do the agave and coffee plants they grow. The people here speak Spanish as a second language, if at all, and identify instead as Ixcatecos, Mazatecos, Cuicatecos, Nahuas and Mestizos.

Small yields, well-earned mistrust of outsiders and a bias towards going at it alone have kept farmers in this region from organizing into larger cooperatives or associations. But Jaime Guzmán, Erasmo García, and José Contreras are changing that trend. Each have over 40 years of experience in the area, pushing selective picking, lot separation and competition-level cup quality. Through their reputation and relationships, these three men act as collectors for their community, bringing 1-2 bag lots down into central storage, where it can be classified for competitions (usually less than 1 bag lots), specialty export, or local commercial markets. They are small, and growing slowly, but steadily. In 2020 they used premiums to buy shade nets, raised drying beds and new sacks for storing parchment. That a collection of individuals all signed on to this shows the extent to which this community is serious about investing in it's future.



Mexico is for coffee lovers. Few origins offer such variety, such competency, and such short flights to the farm. While often overlooked by their neighbors to the north, Mexico is the world's 7th largest coffee producer, the largest exporter of organic coffees, and a fast-growing consumers of specialty coffee.

Seventy percent of Mexico's crop comes from larger estates, concentrated around Veracruz, with the remaining thirty percent coming from 2 million smallholders, spread around the country but mostly in the Southern States of Chiapas and Oaxaca.

This is also where we find most of Mexico's indigenous population, communities who moved higher and higher up-mountain, onto smaller and smaller plots of land, first to get away from colonial Spain, and later pushed by larger landowners during decades of highly political land reforms. In this way Mexico's agrarian, coffee and Puebla movements are intertwined.

Though coffee arrived into Mexico two centuries earlier, it did not take off until the late 20th century. In the 1970s a farmer friendly government came to power and encouraged smallholder production. Coffee exports skyrocketed nearly ten-fold over the next two decades. However, in the middle of this growth the government had to default on debt, cut back programs, and end a decade of federal support for smallholders. Price, markets and credit dwindled to drips – and on top of that – we got some Roya too. Oh, and did we mention the condition of the peso?

Into this distressed situation we see the rise of the coyote; middle-men who build truckloads of coffee

up from 1-5 bag household level. Still today, buyers look for points of aggregation that can cut out middle-men but still give them access to volumes.