



Intregadora de Colimense – Yerbabuena

Colima, Volcan de Fuego, Mexico

Partner since: 2015

Traceable to: 10 Families

Altitude: 1600 MASL

Varietals: Bourbon

Processing: Fermented for 36 hours, washed, dried for 8 days on raised beds

Harvest: December January February

Booking: March April May June

Arrivals: May June July



In the West of Mexico Mt. Colima, or the Volcan de Fuego, shoots out above the Sierra Madre Occidental Range. The volcano is still active, and within its eruption zone live 856 coffee farmers whose small associations or ejidos work together to export coffee under a single cooperative Integradora. This Integradora is made up of member organizations from communities around Colima. However, if names such as Yerbabuena, Naranjal, Remudadero, and Arrayenal don't ring a bell then just wait, because they are earning a name for themselves.

We are proud to be the first and only international buyer of coffee from Colima. Farmers sell to local roasters, or to coyotes who then sell into Mexico City. The coffee, the capacity and the will are all there to make this a premium destination for specialty coffee buyers, but the going has not been easy. In the years since working with them to form an exporting organization, the new integradora has been faced with every problem imaginable. While we can't help with the volcano, or the roya, we do what we can to ensure year over year monetary stability and pre-crop financing. Plus, micro-lots. Each year we select top performing lots to receive top dollar, encouraging the entire community to play along with specialty.



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.