



Lagarto

Corinto & Toribío, Cauca, Colombia

Partner since: 2017

Traceable to: 35 smallholders

Altitude: 1750

Varietals: Castillo, Colombia

Processing: 12-24 hour dry fermentation, moderate washing, multilevel mesh tray solar drying

Harvest: November December January April May June

Booking: February May June July

Arrivals: January February March June July August



Lagarto is a group of Nasa indigenous smallholders practicing low-impact agroforestry in the northern Cauca municipalities of Corinto and Toribío. It is an area of contested control between the indigenous authority and several insurgent and/or criminal groups involved in illegal trade or mining. This indigenous community has opted for a third way, using specialty premiums from small-scale coffee production to compliment subsistence crops and fund their self-sufficiency.



Colombia and coffee are nearly synonymous. For decades, US specialty has looked to Colombia to source the entire spectrum of coffees, from all-day approachable blenders to unique and experimental competition lots. This range speaks to the diversity to be found within Colombia—diversity in climate, coffee, and culture. Colombia harvests coffee nearly year-round from the northern mountain ranges in the Sierra Nevada to the Rezuardos in the South. Some farmers negotiate directly with roasters on cup scores and track international prices. Others come from remote communities and sell to the Colombian Coffee Growers Federation (FNC) – a setter of standards and buyer of last resort for communities that have access to no other customer.

It can be most fulfilling to comb through collections and drill down past the bodega level. All that is possible within a single collection can often be scaled up if you just ask, that is if you find the right partners who care to listen. Earning trust, calibrating on coffee, and getting into a good cadence for communication are more important here than in other parts of the world.

In Colombia, quality can be found from estates at the container-load or from smallholders 1-2 bags at a time. The key is finding the right partners who can help you to cut through the noise and get to the best coffees every harvest.