



Magdalena Network Northern Huila, Colombia

Partner since: 2022

Traceable to: 13 Smallholders

Altitude: 1500 - 1800

Varietals:

Processing: Cherries are pulped and then fermented in water-filled tanks for 12-18 hours of prior to washing, floating, and drying for 12-15 days. High temperatures during the day call for reduced fermentation and drying times compared to other areas.

Harvest: November December January April May June

Booking: February May June July

Arrivals: January February March June July August



Community Context

This lot comes from a network of producers from the Northern Huila municipalities of Palermo, Nieva, Iquira, and Aipe. The Magdalena River passes through these municipalities and lends its name to this association of independent growers. Here in the Norte region of Huila, we find coffee grown on small farms (less than 5 hectares each), at altitudes of 1500 – 1800masl. Trees grow under extreme conditions as the Tatacoa Desert to the north brings temperatures up to 38° C during the day and can drop to half that at night.



Country Context

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.