



## Maywal Estate

## Kiambu County, Kenya

**Partner since:** 2021

**Traceable to:** Single Estate

**Altitude:** 1,950

**Varietals:** Batian, Kenya SL28,  
Ruiru 11

**Processing:** Cherries are pulped immediately after picking, floated and set to ferment overnight before more washing, floating and density sorting before being placed out to dry on raised beds, starting one layer thick and adding to 6" high piles by the end of drying, ~11-14 days.

**Harvest:** October November December

**Booking:** March April May

**Arrivals:** May June July



Split by the Kiou and Riara rivers, and spanning 340 acres, the Maywal Estate is one of the oldest extant estates near Nairobi. So near, in fact, that it straddles Kiambu and Nairobi City Counties. So old, in fact, that it's designated as from the 'pre-colonial' era, originally founded by a Greek couple named Mammatas and Apostolos, now owned by a local group named Mawara, Maywal Estate has survived the real estate boom around Nairobi by focusing on quality (prices), productivity and efficiency (management). Over the years they've remained focused on coffee, despite the temptations to sell, only adding dairy production to help bring in more monthly revenue against the annual coffee harvest.



Kenya is an enigma. It occupies a top spot in specialty – Kenyan top lots are always amongst the most expensive of any harvest. But yet it's a country where coffee production is dropping year over year. Kenya is a place where traceability is given, but knowing what you want and how to get it are two different things. Rarely do we find partners more capable, and loyalties more difficult to navigate than we do in Kenya. For all the aforementioned reasons, competition in Kenya is fierce, making prized coffees feel like even more of a success.

However, no matter how formally the industry is structured, coffee still remains a system of people. And in a country where farmers own their own cherry production, there is additional power to connecting with coffee's most important stakeholder. Farmers can, for example, point you to the best collections from every harvest, or delay sending their lots to auction to give you another week to sample. At request they can change the way they separate lots, bringing new products to market in a year that would take other countries nearly a decade to do.

But experimentation is not the name of the game. With washed coffees working so well, you won't find many a manager willing to mess around with different fermentations, flotation, drying times or with certifications like organic.

The experiment instead is that of business model. How do cooperatives normalize earnings to keep their members engaged in coffee? How do we take away red tape to encourage more farmers to plant more coffee, as opposed to corn or dairy? How can small estates split off and succeed under

their own pulping license? Is it better to sell through auction or directly to an international buyer – can you afford to cut out your marketing agent? Once you speak to these problems you are speaking the language of coffee in Kenya – this is a country that already knows how to coffee.