



San Mateo Yoloxochitlan

Mazatec, Oaxaca, La Canada, Mexico

Partner since: 2021

Traceable to: 35 Individual
Households

Altitude: 1400 - 1650 MASL

Varietals: Typica, Bourbon,
Catuai

Processing: Fully washed with
12-24 hour delayed pulping,
followed by 24-36 hours of wet
fermentation (in wood or stone
tanks) before washing and
drying on patios or rooftops for
an average of 18 days, after
which it is stored in a farmers'
house until delivery to Oaxaca
City.

Harvest: December January February

Booking: March April May June

Arrivals: May June July

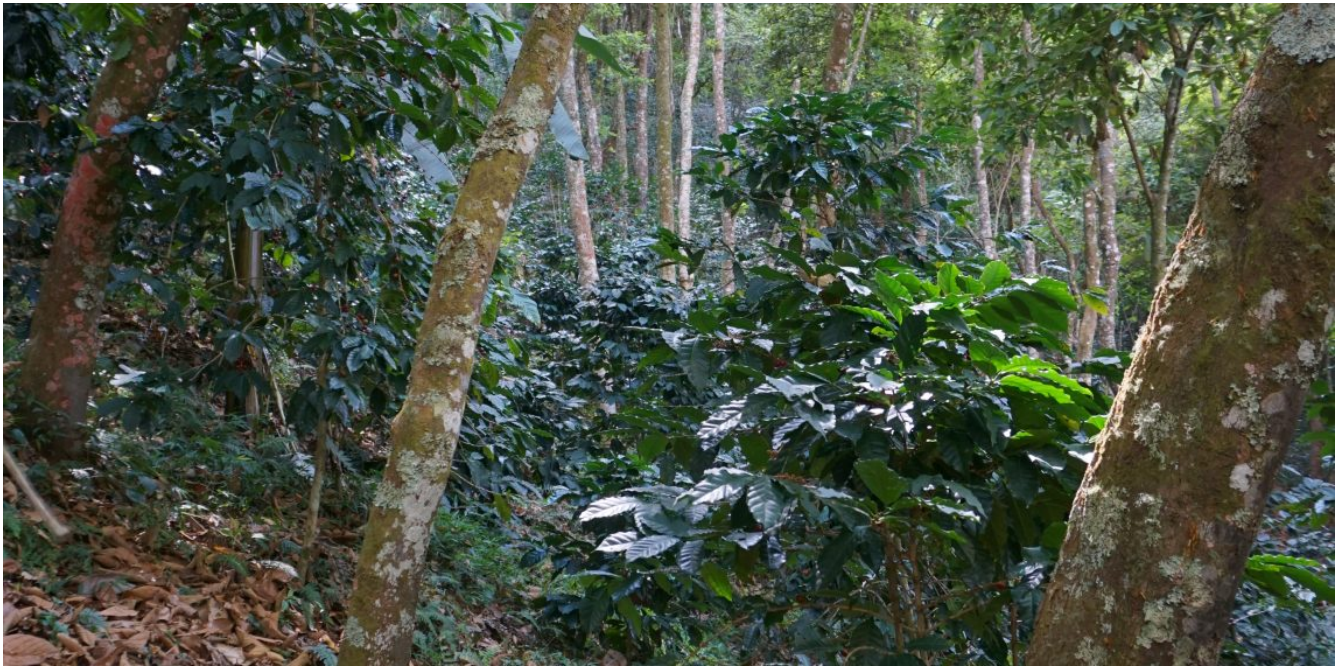


Community Context

The San Mateo Yoloxochitlán working group is an attempt to gather the most committed growers in the Cañada region. They've been active, informally, for a few years (2019-2020), and formalized a partnership with Terra Coffea Mexico (TCM) in 2022. In this partnership TCM provides direct support on post-harvest processing, direct feedback on lots, and direct access to international buyers. It's a challenge to balance commercialization with equity, especially in cultures that value equality. So far, however, premiums have been reinvested back into the group, providing members with more autonomy and options every year.

Yoloxochitlan is an area high up in Oaxaca's La Cañada region. The name translates comes from the Zapoteca phrase 'flower of the heart', homage to how unlike this area is to any other in Mexico. La Cañada is unique in almost every regard – culture, language, geography, cuisine, and coffee. In part because of how difficult the mountains here are to navigate this has been a place that attracts and preserves ways of living that elsewhere have been lost to time. Today the people who live here are mostly Mazatec, a people who pre-date the Aztec empire and who have earned a nation-wide reputation for their role in social movements (the War of Independence and the Revolution of 1910). Internationally their reputation was built on the back of spiritual leaders such as Maria Sabina who received visits from the likes of Jim Morrison and the Beatles.

Terra Coffeas Mexico is a new (2022) collaboration to bring 80 years of operational expertise from the mill to export – in the form of long-time family-business Galguera Gomez – together with fresh perspectives from a young, CQI-calibrated team of on-the-ground mobilizers – led by the passionate Frida Mendoza. Their team includes engineers, agronomists, biologists, chemists, cuppers, artists and, of course, coffee lovers, all together for the common goal of agroecológico – the intentional purposing of international standards for quality, productivity and traceability, towards the advancement of local cultural practices, environmental resources, and economic outcomes.



Country Context

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.