



Olam
Specialty
Coffee

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GUATEMALA: SELECCIÓN CHOCHAJAU

Process: GrainPro/ECOTACT

Balanced, elegant, fresh sweetness.



THE CUP

Body



Acidity



SCA Score



Flavour: Chocolate, toffee, brown sugar & cherry



S E L E C C I Ó N C H O C H A J A U

Wetmill: "El Faro" located in San Juan La Laguna.

Farmers: Atitlán

Region: Atitlán

Processing: Washed

Altitude: 1,300-1,900masl

Screen Size: 15+

Varietal: Caturra, CR-95, Typica and Bourbon

Harvest: Oct-Apr

Certification: Organic



About Chochajau

Chochajau is a compound word formed by two references in the Quiche language which is commonly spoken in this region of San Juan La Laguna, Atitlan. The name is a reference to the location that is dominated by steep mountains and cold blue water. The name comes from 3 different elements, Cloud in English as the mist and clouds usually move in the afternoon. Chó = Señor or Sir. And Já = Water or Cloud. Depending on how you build this the name could translate to Cerro del Agua or Mountain of Water. The tiny town that sits in the center of where this coffee comes from is called Pasajquim or Road of Palms.

There are three main languages spoken in this region: Tzutujil is the official language of the low lands, in the high mountains that tower over the lake Quiché is spoken. And both communities speak Spanish. Hence depending on the altitude an entirely different language can be spoken by the growers. Speaking of elevation the range here is quite large the base is 1300 meters at the lowest and at the top of Sipalá 1900 meters.

As the story goes, coffee can be traced back to the 1920's and the families Puac, Tuy, Ajche, Mantanic and Xum. These families lived in Lake Atitlan but would travel Santo Tomas La Union to pick coffee for about 6 months of the year. The travel was both dangerous and taxing. Hence these families brought seeds back and started to plant their own coffee and become farmers themselves.

Who actually grow Chochajau now? There are 62 farming families that work in the production of this coffee all strictly following organic standards. As are many small producers the farms are diversified. With coffee there are usually some chickens, tubers and even some pigs. Another cash crop that is sold is avocado. Some of the best avocados from Guatemala come from the cool misty environment where this coffee grows.

The Chochajau group was initially formed as a GAT (Group of Friends and Work or Grupo de Amistad y Trabajo, in Spanish) in 2000. They have been certified organic since 2002. For the last many years they have been working with Olam Specialty Coffee.



The Art of Production

Any time a farmer decides to produce coffee organically there are several conditions that need to be in place in the environment, genetic varieties, and the process to make sure the quality and volume can be the same year on year.

One of the driving factors behind this Chochajau is the special fertilizer mix that is use. A mix of cherry pulp, ash and dry leaves is composted and becomes a nutrient rich fertilizer so that coffee can continue to produce year on year. The other element is that the farmer can control is the process. In this chase the process is as follows: the pickers generally stop about 4 – 5pm. The coffee is trucked in small trucks down the hill to the El Faro wet mill. Here the coffees get a second picking to remove any green cherries that might hurt the cup.

The coffee is de-pulped immediately when it arrives to the mill and it is wet fermented for about 16 to 17 hours. Then in a small washing channel the coffee is washed and the floaters are removed. The coffee is then taken to a patio for sun drying. The dry time varies depending on the sun but it usually takes about a week.

The Region

The first coffee planted around Lake Atitlan in the early 1920's was called "Arabe Typica". In the 1960s Bourbon was planted in the region. Then in the 1980 when the most popular variety in Guatemala, Caturra, started being planted. More recently starting in 1995 more productive and disease resistant varieties are being planted. The initial results of Costa Rica – 95 have been positive in terms of cup, productivity and disease resistance, which is critical for organic production.

As mentioned above the region is known for limited sun light and near constant rain fall. These deep rich soils and near perfect conditions enable the organic production of coffee here on the slopes of two major volcanos: Volcan Santo Tomas and Volcan San Pedro flank the growing area for this coffee.

If you come visit us please bring you camera and a rain coat. You will need both.