



Guatemala

Tz'ikin Huehuetenango FW

Tz'ikin is the Mayan nahual (spirit animal) that protects the land. Inspired by Tz'ikin, our blend protects the earth and funds a program promoting sustainable coffee production

Details

COFFEE GRADE:

Huehuetenango SHB EP

FARM/COOP/STATION:

Various

VARIETAL:

Bourbon, Catuai, Caturra, Pache

PROCESSING:

Fully washed

ALTITUDE:

1,500 to 2,000 meters above sea level

OWNER:

Various

SUBREGION/TOWN:

Various

REGION:

Huehuetenango

FARM SIZE:

3 to 4 hectares on average

BAGS:

60kg

HARVEST MONTHS:**Offers** November - April

About This Coffee

In Mayan culture, the Tz'ikin is a nahual (spirit animal) and the keeper of Mayan lands. Inspired by the nahual, we contribute a portion of our profits from every bag sold. This premium goes to support agronomy outreach. Agronomy projects will help coffee producers adapt to a changing climate. Through agronomy outreach, our Tz'ikin blend helps protect the earth by promoting sustainable coffee production. This project is developed and implemented with a local foundation.

Previously sold as Mam, the quality of our Tz'ikin blend remains the same, with the added benefit of supporting sustainable coffee production. The name change also recognizes the challenges that come with coffee farming in a changing climate.

Today, about 75% of Huehuetenango's population are indigenous Maya. Tz'ikin is sourced from smallholders in a micro-region around La Libertad, Cuchamantes mountain range and San Pedro Necta municipalities in the Huehuetenango region.

Cultivation

People have been farming the land in Huehuetenango for thousands of years. Traditional farming techniques include using manure from their sheep for organic fertilizer, rotating land to give the soil time to recover and harvesting communally. Farmers have also traditionally planted a wide variety of crops in a way that best utilizes the sharp altitude changes along Huehuetenango's steep slopes.

Thanks to the region's unique location, which brings in hot air from the west and cool air from the north, farms in Huehuetenango are able to cultivate coffee at heights that often exceed 2,000 meters above sea level. These conditions help produce the dazzling acidity and lively fruit notes so beloved in coffees from the region.

Harvest & Post-Harvest

Due to its remoteness, most producers in Huehuetenango process their own coffee. Fully washed home processing is the most common method.

Farmers selectively hand pick cherry and pulp it on their farms, usually with small hand-powered or electric drum pulpers. After fermenting, parchment is agitated to remove remaining mucilage and washed with clean water. All water used during pulping and washing will be filtered – usually through earthen holes – so that the organic solids do not contaminate local waterways.

Farmers typically lay parchment to dry on raised beds that are stacked on top of each other to maximize space. Patios are also frequently used.

Our exporting partner evaluates coffee for quality before finalizing the purchase at their purchasing site in Huehuetenango City. After purchase, parchment is sent to the dry mill where it rests until it is milled and prepared for export.

About Huehuetenango

Huehuetenango is well-known for its high altitude and consistent weather patterns. The region lies at a nexus of hot air sweeping eastwards from the Plains of Tehuantepec in Oaxaca, Mexico and cool air rushing down from the Cuchumantanes Mountains. The meeting of this hot and cold air creates a microclimate that keeps frost in check and enables coffee cultivation at higher altitudes: coffee production at 2,000 meters above sea level is common. These conditions are perfect for producing the sparkling acidity and distinctive fruit flavors of the

region. **Strictly Hard Bean (SHB)**

Strictly Hard Bean (SHB) specifies the altitude at which the coffee was grown. A coffee must be grown at 1,200 meters above sea level or higher to be considered SHB. The higher altitude and lower temperatures mean that the coffee fruit matures more slowly, creating a denser bean.

European Preparation (EP)

EP stands for European Preparation. EP beans are Screen 15+ with a low defect tolerance.

Coffee in Guatemala

Guatemala boasts a variety of growing regions and conditions that produce spectacular coffees. Today, the country is revered as a producer of some of the most flavorful and nuanced cups worldwide. We are proud to work with several exceptional in-country partners to bring these coffees to market.

The Guatemalan coffee industry experienced a major setback with the 2010 appearance of Coffee Leaf Rust (CLR) in Latin America. The epidemic peaked in severity in 2012, and though CLR continues to affect some farms, Guatemala continues to produce high-quality, record-breaking coffees. In 2017, new and varied processing methods pushed prices at the Guatemalan Cup of Excellence contest to record highs.

The quality of coffee being produced in Guatemala is increasing, overall, due to the diversity of the industry's producers. There are more and more small holder farmers producing

exceptional coffee at high altitudes. Cooperatives are becoming more appealing to so many smallholders because they often offer farmers financing and other support for improving their farming and processing and are frequently able to offer higher prices for cherry than middlemen. Many cooperatives have initiated quality improvement training for farmer members and are becoming more adept at helping members market their coffee as specialty.