



GUATEMALA RFA HUEHUETENANGO FINCA HUIXOC SHB EP

Notes: DRIED APRICOT, CHERRY, CHOCOLATE, SYRUPY

ORIGIN INFORMATION

Grower	José Alejandro Solís Finca Huixoc
Variety	Bourbon, Caturra, Catuai, and Mundo Novo
Region	La Democracia, Huehuetenango, Guatemala
Harvest	October – February
Altitude	1250 – 1740 meters
Soil	Clay minerals
Process	Fully washed and dried in the sun
Certifications	Conventional

BACKGROUND DETAILS

Alejandro Solís' unshakable drive to renovate Huixoc might come from his responsibility to preserve and improve upon what his grandfather left him. But it seems even more evident that he feels a responsibility to the families who have worked on the estates alongside his family over the generations.

Alejandro as the demeanor of a university professor and he takes an academic approach to cultivating coffee in search of solutions to the impact of climate change that go way beyond the traditions passed down from his grandfather who established Huixoc a 320-acre estate in the 1940s.

There is a culture of learning on the estates that goes beyond the classroom. Anacafé Guatemala's National Coffee organization) has



open access for conducting research on the estate. Alejandro also makes a point of having monthly seminars on conservation so that the families working and living around the estates can actively participate in protecting the natural resources.

For the last several years most of Alejandro's field work has been focused on aggressive farm renovation to recover from several years of severe leaf rust damage. He has increased his regular renovation plan from 5 percent of the estates per year to 8 percent per year. The efforts start in the nursery where Alejandro has invested in new technology, he calls tubitos (plastic tubes) to grow seedlings. The tubs are specially designed to be long enough to support an extended root-stem, which means a stronger plant to transplant of the estate. Unlike the traditional plastic bags, the tubitos are reusable and work well with organic compost made from coffee pulp.

In addition to leaf rust damage, yields over the last two years have been reduced by record low rainfall, which has caused about 5 percent crop loss because the cherry dehydrates on the tree before it can fully mature. To account for the unpredictable drops in precipitation, he is replanting with wider spacing between rows and terracing the hillsides. He is also planting cover crops between rows to help fix nutrients in the soil and control erosion.

The estate has its own wet mill, which still functions in a very traditional way. There is an abundance of fresh spring water for floating cherries to remove the less dense, under ripe and damaged beans. The force of water passing through the wet mill is also used to power the depulper. After depulped, the coffee is submerged in water and fermented for 48 to 72 hours. Next, it is mechanically washed to reduce water contamination and then dragged by clean water through long classification channels to separate out less dense beans. The washed parchment is then taken to patios to dry in the sun.