



 COLOMBIA

The Colombia *Coffee Guide*

From the Andes mountains to your cup — the complete story of the world's most famous coffee origin, and why no two bags ever taste the same.

500K+

SMALLHOLDER FARMS

1,800m

AVERAGE ALTITUDE

3rd

LARGEST ARABICA
PRODUCER

100%

ARABICA — BY LAW

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This guide is your passport to Colombia's coffee highlands. By the time you finish it, you'll never look at a bag of Colombian coffee the same way again.

CHAPTER 01

The Story of *Colombian Coffee*

Coffee arrived in Colombia around 1730, carried by Jesuit priests from Venezuela. By 1835, Colombia shipped its first commercial exports — and the country has never looked back.

In 1927, the *Federación Nacional de Cafeteros* (FNC) was established — a farmer-run cooperative that would become one of the most powerful agricultural organizations in the world. The FNC didn't just regulate coffee; it built schools, roads, and entire communities in the growing regions.

Then came 1958, and Juan Valdez. The fictional muleteer became the face of Colombian coffee globally — and the campaign that introduced him became one of the most recognized advertising icons in history, outscoring even Nike in brand recognition surveys.

"Colombia didn't just produce great coffee. They taught the world to want it."

CHAPTER 02

The Three Key Regions



HUILA

1,400–2,000m

Tropical fruit · Caramel · Full body

Colombia's most celebrated region. Volcanic soils and dramatic altitude swings produce coffees with tropical fruit brightness, deep caramel sweetness, and a full, lingering body. This is the crowd-pleaser — rich, complex, and unmistakably Colombian.



NARIÑO

2,000m+

Floral · Vibrant citrus · Delicate

Among the highest-grown coffees in the world. The extreme altitude slows bean development, concentrating sugars and building an aromatic complexity that few origins can match. Delicate, floral, almost wine-like. The connoisseur's choice.



ANTIOQUIA

1,300–2,000m

Chocolate · Red fruit · Balanced

Colombia's coffee heartland — the region that built the reputation. Balanced acidity, milk chocolate sweetness, and a subtle red fruit note make this the everyday cup that never disappoints. Dependable, warm, and deeply satisfying.

Flavor Profiles & *Tasting Notes*

Colombian coffee's flavor varies dramatically by region, altitude, and processing method — but there's a signature character that runs through all of them. Here's what to look for in the cup.



AROMA

Peach, jasmine, dark chocolate, brown sugar — the nose tells you everything about altitude and processing method.



BODY

Medium to full — Colombia's wet-processing method keeps the body clean and balanced without the earthiness of natural-process coffees.



ACIDITY

Bright and citrus-forward in higher-altitude regions. Nariño coffees often show a lemon-lime vibrancy that makes them exceptional for pour-overs.



FINISH

Dark chocolate and caramel linger long after the last sip. Huila's finish is especially memorable — like the end of a good meal.

Pro tip: Colombian coffees are exceptional at medium roast. Dark roasting them masks the nuanced fruit and floral notes — let the origin shine.

CHAPTER 04

La Cosecha: *The Harvest Tradition*

Colombia harvests twice per year — a main crop (*cosecha principal*) between October and February, and a secondary "fly crop" (*mitaca*) from April to June. But it's the harvest tradition, not the timing, that makes Colombian coffee different.

Every cherry is picked by hand. On a single tree, cherries ripen at different rates — machines can't do this work. Colombian *cafeteros* (coffee farmers) must walk their farms repeatedly during harvest, picking only the perfectly ripe red cherries each time.

This is why a Colombian farm employs 2-3x more people per acre than machine-harvested origins. It's why a single farmer might walk their plot 20 times during harvest. And it's why your cup tastes the way it does.

2×

ANNUAL HARVESTS

20+

FARM PASSES PER SEASON

100%

HAND-PICKED

How to Brew *Colombian Coffee*



Best for Nariño

1:16 ratio · 94°C water · Medium-fine grind · 3-minute brew. The slow pour amplifies the floral aromatics and citrus brightness of high-altitude Colombian beans.



Best for Huila

1:15 ratio · 93°C water · Coarse grind · 4-minute steep. The full-immersion method draws out Huila's caramel body and tropical sweetness beautifully.



Best for Antioquia

1:12 ratio · 92°C water · Medium grind · 2-minute brew. The pressure and speed cuts through to Antioquia's chocolate core — rich, clean, no bitterness.



Best for Any Region

1:8 ratio · Cold water · Coarse grind · 18-hour steep. Colombian coffee makes an exceptional cold brew — the natural sweetness needs no sugar, the body stands up to ice.

CHAPTER 06

Your Colombia *Exploration Checklist*

- Try a Huila — your first Colombian single-origin
- Brew it as a pour-over (V60 or Chemex)
- Now try a Nariño — same country, completely different cup
- Make cold brew with an Antioquia — serve over ice, no sugar
- Taste all three regions side by side in a single sitting
- Explore the next origin — Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya...



Your next origin is waiting. Meridian ships single-origin coffees from 20+ countries — each one with its own story, flavor, and tradition.



MERIDIAN COFFEE CO.

Every Cup, *A New Longitude.*

Colombia was just the beginning. We ship single-origin coffees from Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya, Sumatra, Brazil, and 15 more origins — each roasted fresh and delivered to your door.

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