



Vournas Coffee Trading, Inc.

805-379-5252 www.vournascoffee.com

Fair Trade Organic Mexico Oaxaca Zapoteca



We are very proud to be able to offer this exclusive, Fair Trade Organic Mexico coffee from Oaxaca after the growers' farms were almost completely lost in 2011 due to a fierce bout of roya. For decades the region has produced some fantastic coffee from old arabica vines (some up to 20 years old), but the vast majority of that crop is now gone, having been painstakingly replaced with literally hundreds of thousands of new, quality-driven and rust-resistant saplings courtesy of Growers First. Quality Fair Trade Organic Mexico coffees from Oaxaca are indeed a rarity, and in years past we would bring in as much of the Zapoteca as we could get our hands on and still sell out—quickly! In the cup, this Fair Trade Organic Mexico is uniquely Oaxacan – sweet with notes of orange-citrus, very clean, good acidity and no traces of any unpleasant, dusty or earthy characteristics

that lower quality Mexicans can frequently exhibit. In 2011 these Oaxacan farmers were facing a catastrophic roya epidemic. In response Growers First rallied, arriving with workers, chainsaws and fuel, shredding literally thousands of roya-damaged trees into tattered firewood. Many farmers witnessed the decimation of the only coffee crop they had ever known, and one which produced a sweet and very good quality cherry (as is typically the case with old vine), but the downside of old age is increased susceptibility to bacteria and fungus as well as invasive insects. This was a difficult and uncertain time for the farmers, and for a time our stock of Zapoteca found itself on an unscheduled furlough. During that period Growers First stayed behind to establish a nursery, plant a new root stock at just the right time and donate saplings that would eventually replenish the region and once again allow us to offer a Fair Trade Organic Mexico coffee from Oaxaca to our roasters. Thankfully our partnership continued through these critical years, and with production steadily increasing we're able to once again source a healthy volume of the Zapoteca green. This new Fair Trade Organic Mexico Oaxacan coffee features a crop of Costa Rica 95, Icatu and Sarchimor varieties—all crossbred hybrids, engineered to produce consistently good yields with extended life expectancies and strong disease resistance. Growers First conducted numerous preliminary tests before making the determination that these types were best suited for Oaxaca's microclimate to produce a high quality Fair Trade Organic Mexico coffee. Costa Rica 95 (ICAPE 95) is a Catimor-type cross of Timor and Caturra – it has very good resistance to both coffee berry disease and rust, and has been planted extensively throughout Honduras and Costa Rica since the 1980's. Icatu was developed in Brazil in the 1990's by the IAC (Instituto Agrônomo de Campinas) using Bourbon and Mundo Novo – it has a good cup quality, good disease resistance and produces significantly more cherry than Mundo Novo. Sarchimor (like Costa Rica 95) is a relative of Catimor and a disease resistant cross of Timor and Villa Sarchi, a Bourbon mutation similar to Caturra and Pacas. Coffee is the life blood of Oaxaca, and for the past several years the Unión de Productores Campesinos Tierra Indígena Zapoteca (UPCTIZ co-op for short) has been focused on improving quality through better picking, better processing and better drying—in turn receiving better pricing. They've even started a small scale honey bee program to boost pollination for the new saplings. These are all small farmers whose plots are tucked away into unassuming nooks and hillside pitches throughout the landscape, hidden from the journeyman and major roadways. The co-op was initially formed by a majority of Oaxacan farmers who decided to band together in order to acquire Fair Trade/Organic certification and produce a Fair Trade Organic Mexico Oaxaca coffee crop. For our part, we're very happy to substantially support the UPCTIZ growers with equitable and fair premiums that are stable and far in excess of the Fair Trade minimums. UPCTIZ represents several generations of proud growers from 13 different villages that have worked the same land for decades. The co-op headquarters is located in nearby San Miguel, where it maintains an arabica greenhouse and provides a number of benefits and services to its members. While visiting with Growers First, we met with one of patriarchal members, Mr. Lau, now the grandfather and his son Saul, who is a second generation grower. We emphasize that these are very hard working people who live off their own land as subsistence farmers, growing their own food and relying only on one another; coffee is their cash crop and everything else (beans, corn, herbs, produce) go right from farm to table. There's no sugar coating it, this a tough, rugged life that is largely dependent on coffee and the income it provides. Our fundamental goal is to strengthen the village and the co-op, and in the process establish operations as more sustainable, more lucrative and easier to maintain. Mexico as a whole is the world's 8th largest producer of coffee, with the majority of production occurring in the southern states of Oaxaca and Chiapas. Oaxaca is populated by several indigenous peoples, one of them being the Zapotecs, who account for a large portion of the overall population and for whom our 'Zapoteca' carries its namesake. As a whole Oaxaca claims nearly 36,000 square miles, much of it farmland, and where coffee is concerned, high altitude farmland with tropical microclimate conditions. Oaxaca is home to a number of national parks, including the massive Tehuacán-Cuicatlán Biosphere Reserve which covers nearly 2,000 square miles. To the north, Oaxaca borders the popular Gulf Coast tourist state of Veracruz, where coffee was notably first introduced from Cuba in 1790.

Cupping Notes: Very clean, good acid, sweet notes of orange-citrus, slight hints of brown sugar and cocoa.



Producer: Unión de Productores Campesinos Tierra Indígena Zapoteca (UPCTIZ)

Region: Oaxaca

Area: Sierra Mixe Zapteco

Variety: Costa Rica 95, Icatu, Sarchimor

Processing: Washed

Altitude: 3500 - 5200 ft (1000 - 1600m)

Coffee HG

Grading:

Harvest: Nov - Jan

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