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Coffee Varieties Grown in Colombia

By: www.BuyOrganicCoffee.org.

When coffee growers in Colombia sell their coffee harvest, the price is based on the New York commodity price, the USD to COP exchange rate, and a premium for coffee grown in Colombia. Colombia is the world's biggest producer of Arabica coffee. Virtually no Robusta is grown in Colombia! The soil, weather conditions, coffee-growing culture, and excellent coffee varieties grown in Colombia all contribute to Colombia producing the largest amounts of the finest coffee in the world.

Coffee Varietals

The taste, aroma, and overall quality of coffee varies from country to country, climate to climate, region to region and coffee farm to coffee farm. Local conditions are important when it comes to coffee quality and so are the coffee varieties that the coffee farmer plants and nurtures. The coffee varieties grown in Colombia are all Arabica, ranging from old, pure, Arabica strains typically grown at the higher altitudes like 6,000 to 8,000 feet and leaf rust-resistant strains that do better at lower altitudes like 3,000 to 4,000 feet.

Coffee Varieties Grown in Colombia

Typica

Typica is the old variety from which most modern varieties were derived. Typica dates back to when coffee was taken from Ethiopia and Yemen to plant throughout the world. Typica is a taller coffee plant that produces beans of excellent quality but a lower-than-average harvest volume.

Bourbon

Bourbon is the other old coffee variety, named for the island in the Indian Ocean where Dutch traders first planted it. Bourbon produces about a fourth more yield than Typica and also has an excellent, sweet, fruity, slightly acidic taste profile. As this variety spread across the world, mutations resulted in three standard sub-varieties, red, yellow, and orange Bourbon. We have written about a cross-bred sub variety, [Pink Bourbon](#), which is a cross between yellow and red Bourbon. Pink Bourbon gives the farmer more coffee per plant and greater resistance to leaf rust.

Caturra

Caturra is a "transplant" that occurred by natural mutation from Red Bourbon around the town of Caturra, Brazil. It is significantly more resistant to leaf rust, a shorter plant with higher yield, commonly planted in lower altitude coffee farms (2,000 feet to 5,000 feet). This coffee has a medium to low body, slight acidity, and with less sweetness than Bourbon. Because of the issues that Colombia had with leaf rust a decade ago, much of the "lower" coffee growing regions were replanted with Caturra. The same is true in Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

Castillo

Castillo was developed by Cenicafe which is the Colombian Coffee Growers Federation research arm in 2005. Because of leaf rust issues, Cenicafe used a Timor hybrid (leaf rust resistant) and Caturra (somewhat resistant to leaf rust) to produce Castillo. They crossed male Caturra with female the Timor hybrid. This new variety has a high yield, can be grown at both higher and lower altitudes and produces an excellent cup of coffee. [Castillo Tambo](#) is a sub variety of Castillo developed by Cenicafe specifically for the departments of Cauca, Nariño, Tolima, Huila, and the Cauca River Valley. Castillo has a citric acidity, is smooth, and has a pleasing aroma.

Colombia

This variety is, like Castillo, a cross between a Timor hybrid and Caturra. It was responsible for helping save Colombia's coffee industry in the 1980s. Besides being leaf rust resistant, Colombia has a high yield and is a first choice for many small coffee farms. Colombia is full-bodied, sweet, and bright with hints of chocolate and cherry. It was also used as a base for sub varieties of Tabi and Castillo.

Tabi

Tabi is the newest variety to be released by Cenicafe. They crossed Typica, Bourbon, and a Timor hybrid to get a coffee that is typically planted in the higher altitudes like in Caldas, Tolima, and Huila. It produces a tall plant with long branches with larger fruit and coffee beans. Tabi is both leaf rust resistant and an excellent coffee. The name comes from the word for good in the Guambiano dialect (an indigenous tribe in Colombia).

At Buy Organic Coffee we are pleased to be able to provide access to any and all Colombian coffee varieties, both in bulk and artisanal coffees from small, local producers and coffee farms.

For more insights and useful information about organic coffee, visit www.BuyOrganicCoffee.org.

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