

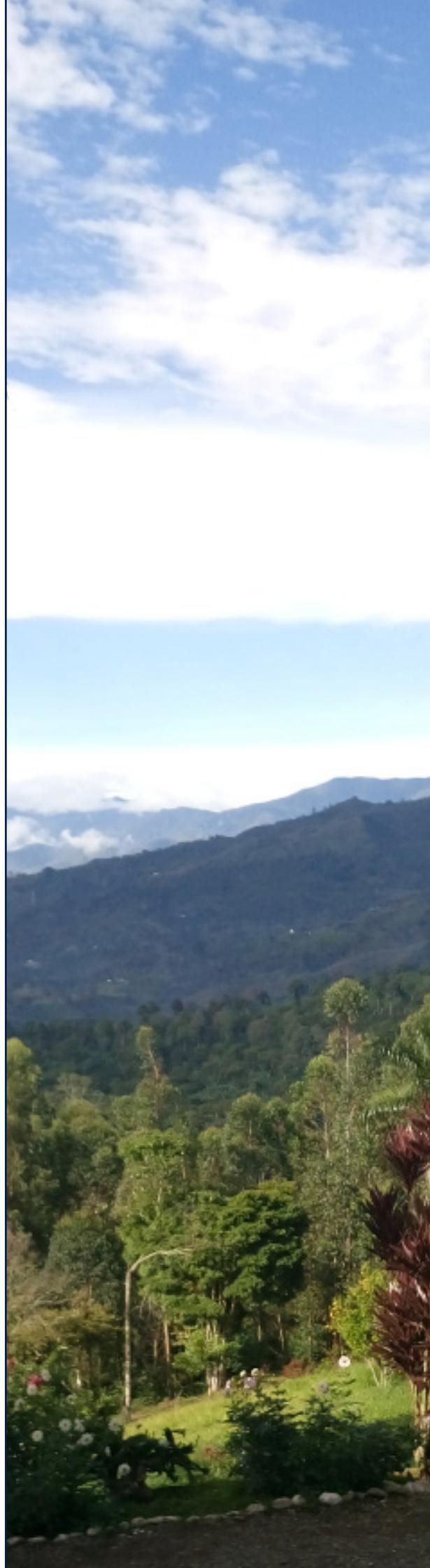


COLOMBIA

LAS MERCEDES

Profile

Country	Colombia
Department	Antioquia
Municipalities	Ciudad Bolivar
Farm	Las Mercedes
Altitude	1750-2100 masl
Varieties	Caturra, Colombia, Castillo, Bourbon
Harvest	October - December, March - May
Process	Washed





Colombia Las Mercedes

Colombia Las Mercedes

Antioquia is a mountainous area lying mainly within the Andes and is the 6th largest department in Colombia. Colombians are hugely into cycling, giving us the concept of closing roads in a city on a Sunday to allow cyclists free run of the roads and Ciudad Bolivar, the municipality that is home to Las Acacias to is known also for its association with professional international cyclists Carlos Betancur and Julián Arredondo. In an area that was historically rocked by violence, inequality and a culture of corruption, new life in the form of a renewed coffee industry and investment in the next generation of producers is welcome progress.

The Las Mercedes farm is owned by Juan Carlos Guerra, a third generation coffee farmer who has used his background knowledge alongside his entrepreneurial drive and passion to develop the quality on the farm. This sits alongside their desire to hit rainforest, Utz and 4C standards too. This innovation he shares with his father whom he works alongside on the farm. The farm itself is primarily Caturra, forming 70% of the varietals amongst the 140,000 trees. Bourbon is only around 2%, so very little, but there. Coffee here is carefully picked and fully washed, and wet fermented in open tanks before being mechanically dried to allow for precise control over the time and temperatures to do this.

Castillo and Caturra are two very common varietals in Colombia; Caturra originated as a single gene mutation of Bourbon leading to dwarfism, increasing yield due to greater planting density and was thought to represent nearly half of the country's production up until 2008. Castillo was introduced en masse to combat the ever-increasing reach of the Basidiomycota *Hemileia vastatrix*, otherwise known as Roya, or Rust. The fungus appeared in Colombia in the early 1980's, just after the release of the Colombia varietal by Cenicafe, the national coffee research centre in Colombia. Continuing their work on improving Caturra and cross breeding with Timor, the polygenic robusta/arabica cultivar, Castillo was released in 2005, the culmination of their research at the time. Three years later a large outbreak of the disease lead to the mass replanting of Caturra, Colombia and other traditional varietals with Castillo.



Drying Coffee on Las Mercedes Farm