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El Salvador Alaska

Coffee: El Salvador Alaska
Farm: Alaska
Varietal(s): 55% Red Bourbon, 40% Orange Bourbon, 5% Pacamara
Processing: Fully washed and sun-dried
Owner: Juan José Ernesto Menéndez Arguello
City: Santa Ana
Region: Santa Ana
Country: El Salvador
Certification: El Salvador Cup of Excellence 2007 – 8th place

Cup profile/tasting notes: excellent sweetness and fragrance with notes of sweet chocolate, caramel, butter, vanilla, almonds, cinnamon, brown sugar. Citric and floral notes in the after taste, round body and long aftertaste

Additional information:

Alaska farm is located an hour's drive from the city of Santa Ana on the northwest slopes of the Santa Ana volcano, one of the most privileged coffee growing areas in El Salvador. The microclimate, fauna and flora, together with incredible landscapes allow this farm to have enormous eco-tourism potential as well.

Alaska is mainly planted with red and orange bourbon varieties and the owner, Ernesto Menéndez, strives to a balance between the areas under coffee and the surrounding environment. Ernesto is replanting cypress trees in some areas and replanting new red and orange Bourbon trees every year. The two Bourbon varieties contribute notable organoleptic characteristics in the coffee produced at Alaska, enhancing the brightness of the acidity and delivering a huge range of flavour and fragrance characteristics.

The coffee is harvested with extreme care, the whole process being supervised by Ernesto. Only perfectly ripe cherries are accepted and post-harvest cherry selection is always done at the farm to eliminate any remaining immature bean or dry pods.

The coffee is processed at San Carlos farm which also belongs to Ernesto and which was inherited in 1995 on the death of his father, Carlos Menéndez. Ernesto took over the running of the farm at just 18 years of age. The coffee is processed under strict quality controls, beginning with de-pulping within few hours after harvesting. The wet parchment is then dropped into tanks where it remains for 10 to 12 hours until it reaches the adequate point of fermentation. The coffee is washed with clean fresh water to remove the mucilage. It is then dried on cement patios for 10

to 12 days until reaches 12% humidity. After this, it is stored to protect the quality for a longer period.

Alaska farm employs 4 to 5 permanent workers and provides work for a further 30 people during harvest time. The workers earn around \$1.10 to \$1.25 per 25 pounds of cherries. This compares very favourably with the regular wage earned by other workers in the countryside of a little under 0.80 cents.

Ernesto is proud and satisfied to see all the extra effort put in by the workers who remain motivated and committed. This is reflected in continuing improvements in quality.

Other Statistics:

Coffee varieties: 55% Red Bourbon, 40% Orange Bourbon, 5% Pacamara

Type of Shade: Pepeto peludo, gravileo, cypress, copalchi, etc.

Average Annual Rainfall: 2,100 mm

Average Temperature: 17° C

Type of Soil: Sandy loam

Annual Production: (60kg) 50 bags

Mill and company where lot was process: San Carlos Mill

Fauna: Armadillos, Torogoz, Agouti, snakes, squirrels, orioles, deer, hawks, rabbits, etc.

Property Characteristics:

GPS Coordinates:

Latitude: N 13° 52' 22.2"

Longitude: W 89° 36' 22.6"

Farm: Alaska

Farmer: Juan José Ernesto Menéndez Arguello

Rank: 8

City: Santa Ana

Region: Santa Ana

Country: El Salvador

Farm Size: 3.15 Hectares

Coffee growing area: 3.15 Hectares

Altitude: 1,650 m.a.s.l.

Coffee Characteristics:

Variety: Bourbon

Processing System: Washed & Sun-dried

Lot Size: 21 bags

International Jury Score: 88.02

Cupping Number #: HLB-529

International Jury 2007 COE Descriptions:

Sweet & smooth (12), creamy (10), sweet chocolate (12), caramel (13), buttery (9), vanilla (10), peanut (11), great fragrance (7), almonds (5), fig (4), berries (8), cinnamon (4), brown sugar (3), complex, honey, lemony crispness, grapefruit