



## Costa Rica Tarrazu *Cerro del Fuego*

Organic - Fair Trade – Relationship - Shade grown



**Region of Origin:** The farms are spread through the famed Tarrazu valley

**Altitude:** 1200 – 2000 meters

**Certifications:** Certified Organic by QAI, Fair Trade certified by FLO

**Growing Conditions:** Coffee trees are cultivated throughout the mountainous Tarrazu region on steep hillsides. Weathered soil and precipitous slopes make shade trees a necessity on these farms, where they anchor and enrich the soil and shelter the coffee from the intense mountain sun.

**Varietals:** Bourbon, Typica and Caturra

**Cup Characteristics:** Cerro del Fuego contains wonderful fleshy fruit notes of peach and Bing cherry, along with traces of hazelnut. Medium bodied, with an intense, yet soft and approachable acidity, and exquisitely well-balanced.

**Production Notes:** Bourbon, Typica and Caturra varietals are grown on densely shaded plots. The farms belonging to the AFAORCA coop adhere to strict organic cultivation standards. No artificial chemicals are used and yields are maintained through constant development of rich, organic compost, manual pruning and other natural methods.

**Processing Notes:** The cooperative owns a wet and dry mill, centrally located among the farms. At

harvest time, each farmer delivers cherries to the mill, where an initial quality inspection is performed. Only the ripe, red cherries are selected to process. After selection, the cherries are depulped and washed. Water for the mill comes from a nearby, natural spring and it is strictly conserved. All waste passes through the cooperative's biodigester. The coffee is 100% sun dried on elevated screens.

**Cooperative Notes:** The AFAORCA cooperative was founded in 1997. Local farmers decided to pool their resources and work together to improve their production and capture better prices. The group is kept small by design. The 42 farms range in size from 0.25 hectare to 6 hectares, with total yearly production around 250 bags. In addition to high-quality organic coffee, farmers cultivate organic fruits, vegetables and grains. The diversity of production helps control insect and plant pests and also boosts farm income. The farmers and their families consume the crops they grow and also sell them at local organic markets.

**Relationship notes:** We began working with AFAORCA in 2001, when our initial assessment of this coffee was that it had a huge potential – The cooperative seemed a likely fit with our own standards of high quality and hard work, the coop members we had the pleasure of meeting face to face were energetic, passionate, and dedicated to continuous improvement, and the coffee cupped out extremely well. Since our initial purchase, we have purchased about half of their entire production every year, and have assisted the coop members with monetary donations to travel to industry events, with milling and processing advice, and through continued financial support. A true relationship coffee.



Scott Merle  
Coffee Buyer/Roastmaster