



Rwanda Buremera MIG

Region of Origin: This coffee is produced in the mountains of the Buremera area in the Southern province of Rwanda.

Altitude: 1600-2200 meters

Growing Conditions: The Buremera region is a hilly, evenly populated, high altitude region that is covered by a mixture of small farms and dense forest. The small plantations that make up the bulk of Buremera farms are well mulched and pruned. These tiny plantations are among the best in the country.

Varieties: 100% Bourbon.

Cup Characteristics: The best Rwandan coffees burst forth with lush flavors of ripe red fruit. The Buremera flaunts flavors that include pomegranate and strawberry, and range towards watermelon, in a clean and crisp delivery. The finish to this contemporary African offering is long and sweet.

Production Notes: Approximately 1000 farmers deliver their cherries at MIG's Buremera washing station. These farmers each own an average of 200 coffee trees. Most of Buremera's families are second- or third-generation coffee farmers.

Processing Notes: The quality of cherries is controlled at their reception at the central washing station where only ripe, red cherries are bought. Greens, damaged, and blacks are sent back with the grower for processing at home. After a few times of hauling cherries back home, the farmer quickly learns that he's better off bringing in only the crème of the harvest for processing.



Natural fermentation is practiced in fermentation chambers that are cleaned daily with lime. Fresh spring water is used once fermentation is complete to wash the coffee 4 or 5 times before it is bathed in a spring water bath for 24 hours. Once washed and soaked, the parchment is brought to the pre-drying area under shade where scores of trained women sort the wet parchment at this critical 'translucent' stage allowing them to 'see through' the parchment and eliminate defects.

Afterwards, the coffee is taken to the full sun drying tables where more trained women slowly dry the coffee in a linear fashion over 10-14 days until it reaches 11% humidity. At this time, the coffee is stored in a wood floor warehouse designed to permit 360 degree air circulation.

The coffee is 'rested' for 30 days before it is dry processed. A high quality density table is used for further separation and selection based on density before grading is performed for size. Finally, the coffee is hand sorted by hundreds of trained women working on plastic sheets under a roof.

Each day's harvest is divided by zones. Parchment samples from each lot are collected routinely and are taken to the cupping lab located in Kigali. Every lot is cupped and scored. Any lots receiving a score of 79 or less are separated at this time to make up a 2nd quality coffee for regional sales or for standard 'C' grade markets. The first quality lots are consolidated and make up the bulk of Buremera's production.

As you can see, the exceptional quality of Buremera coffee is due not only to the high altitudes where it is grown between 1,600 and 2,200 meters but also to the delicate care these farmers devote to their only means of cash.



Farmer Profile

Uwimana Rose is one of the Buremera farmers that delivers her cherries to the Buremera MIG Washing Station. She first started farming on her dad's farm when she was a young girl. When she got older her dad gave her a coffee farm and she continued farming even after she got married as her husband was also a coffee farmer. Rose has been a coffee farmer for the past 40 years. She is married with 5 children and 2 grandchildren. Rose's husband is accused of participating in the genocide and as such has been in jail for the past 12 years. As a result, Rose has been tending to her

2800 coffee trees with her children and some seasonal hired help.

Rose is happy that MIG has built a washing station nearby. She says 'having MIG in the area has been very beneficial to us. Our workload has been reduced significantly since we don't have to hand pulp, ferment and dry the coffee at home anymore. We just pick the coffee and deliver it to the washing station'. MIG has also helped our region. "They have created jobs at the washing station, they even hired my daughter at the washing station.

Problems that Rose claims she faces as a coffee farmer is that coffee requires a lot of labour and the price they sell the cherries is very low. However, at the end of the day Rose does make a profit and out of her profits, Rose has been able to build a house, pay for children school fees and even buy some cows to produce manure for the coffee farm and some milk for her grandchildren.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott Merle'.

Scott Merle
Coffee Buyer/Roastmaster