The Ija’tz Cooperative is located in San Lucas Tolíman on the shores of the beautiful Lake Atitlán. During the twentieth century, residents suffered hardships shared with many other coffee producers, included inequitable distribution of land and low wages on plantations. In recent decades, efforts of the Catholic church have provided some support for producers, and the town has become well known for its coffee production.

Ija’tz (meaning “seed” in Kaqchikel) is a community organization made up of indigenous Maya Kaqchikel-Tz’utuhil families. Members of the co-op grow coffee in surrounding communities on the slopes of the now extinct Volcan Tolíman. The cooperative is also dedicated to local environmental issues, in particular flooding and erosion caused by deforestation and development, and has constructed a sequence of channels and sink holes to help manage the water flow during rainy season.

**VARIETALS**: Bourbon, Caturra, Pache and Catuai

**ALTITUDE**: 5,000-6,200 ft (1,500-1,900 m)

**NUMBER OF MEMBERS**: 50, with 40% women

**REGION**: Lake Atitlán

**FLAVOR NOTES**: Aromatic with crisp and pronounced acidity and full body.

Of the five volcanic coffee regions of Guatemala, Atitlán’s soil is the richest in organic matter. The daily winds (called Xocomil) that stir the cold lake waters are an important influence on the microclimate, along with the high humidity which is normally around 70-80%. Harvest occurs between December and March.