

# MERIDIAN

— CACAO CO. —

## FARMER FIELD NOTES

### CAMINO VERDE / ECUADOR

#### ABOUT CAMINO VERDE

Camino Verde is a cocoa farm near the city of Balao, two hours south of Guayaquil, Ecuador, and was rehabilitated after being abandoned for 16 years. Camino Verde and Meridian Cacao Company have developed a long-standing relationship built on a passion for impeccable quality and consistency in beans, as well as an understanding of the applied science in cocoa fermentation that pushes the boundaries for new-age methods of cocoa post harvest processing. Camino Verde's owner, Vicente Norero, has years of experience in microbiology, which brings a unique approach to cocoa farming. With Vicente's deep understanding of fermentation methods he produces a variety of flavor profiles, using enzymes and inoculants to push specific flavor precursors forward in the beans.

#### SOCIAL PILLARS

Beyond environmental practices that earn Camino Verde an Organic Certification, they practice a unique labor program, paying staff 15% above minimum wage, as well as productivity bonuses, which strengthens staff retention. Camino Verde has a doctor visit the farm weekly to care for any farmers needing assistance. Vicente teaches his farmers the big picture of cocoa farming, providing them with extensive training. Teaching farmers how to be responsible of their own domain, from irrigation system management, pruning, and harvesting to disease management, gives employees pride and ownership over their portion of the farm; teaching them the precision required to harvest high quality cacao.



*Estate Name:* Camino Verde

*Owner Name:* Vicente Norero

*Origin:* Balao, Ecuador

*Nearest City/Region:* City of Balao; Region of Guayas

*Variety:* Nacional, EET, Venezolano

*Certifications:* Organic, UTZ

*Terroir:* Nestled between the foothills of the Andes and Pacific Ocean

*Elevation:* 350 ft

*Soil:* Fraco Limoso

*Harvest Season:* March - December

*Fermentation Procedure:* Efficient micro organism/inoculant controlled

*Fermentation Method:* Bag fermented in temperature/humidity controlled room

*Drying Style:* Sun dried and mechanically dried if necessary

*Butter Fat Content:* 49%-52.4%

*Bean Count:* 82/per 100 grams

#### *Accolades:*

Salon Du Chocolat - Paris, 3 Years

NW Chocolate Fest - Gold Medal - 2013

Good Food Awards - 3 Years

## CAMINO VERDE / ECUADOR

### THE FLAVORS OF CAMINO VERDE

Camino Verde is unique in its ability to control and manipulate the fermentation process to accentuate different flavors within the Nacional varieties on the farm.

When cocoa beans are fermented, there is a microbial succession of yeasts, lactic acid, and acetic-acid bacteria, during which high temperatures and microbial products (ethanol, lactic acid and acetic acid) kill the beans and cause production of the flavor precursors we have come to love in chocolate.

Each unique fermentation has its own procedure, which involves a calculated mixture of different Nacional pods grown on the farm, as well as a unique microbial cocktail inoculum used to control the fermentation process.

#### Camino Verde A

Smooth base chocolate with strong floral flavors and a mild nutty finish. Made to have a very low acidity.

Camino Verde A uses Nacional beans with Criollo influences. The infamous Nacional hybrid, EET103, plays a predominant role in the floral flavors and accounts for 80% of the genetics used to create CV-A. Approximately 15% of the mixture accounts for red Trinitario pods and 5% are the highly acidic Venezolano pods. CV-A is kept at a lower temperature and fermented longer than other varieties.

#### Camino Verde B

Bright chocolate flavor, with fruitier notes and a clean sweet finish.

Camino Verde B is brighter and more fruity. To achieve this, Vicente uses 10% more Venezolano pods which contain significantly more natural acidity.



CV-B is fermented at a higher temp for a shorter period of time. Cut tests show a slightly lower fermentation rate.

#### Camino Verde C

Well rounded chocolate with almond, sweet marzipan and floral flavors.

A calibrated mix of 40% CV-A and 60% CV-B.

#### Camino Verde Banana

A sweet chocolate with deep notes of fresh banana, blueberries, and cream.

A game changer in the world of cocoa post harvest process. The genetic makeup of CV-B inoculated with sugars from bananas.

#### Camino Verde Spice

Chocolate with a kick of spice and hints of vanilla and sweet milk.

The genetic makeup of CV-B inoculated with pineapple sugars treated with Aji Gallo Ecuadorian Peppers.