

## Tarqui, Huila, Colombia

 <b>VARIETY:</b> Caturra	 <b>PROCESS:</b> Honey	 <b>HARVEST TIME:</b> June	 <b>FLOWER SEASON:</b> October
		 <b>WET MILLING:</b> Depulped, then floated for density first before fermenting for 24 hrs in tile-lined tanks. After fermentation, the coffee is washed in the same space in a small channel.	
 <b>ELEVATION:</b> 1600–1800 MASL	 <b>PRODUCER:</b> Wilmar Guarnizo	 <b>DRYING:</b> Dried on shaded raised beds for 3 weeks	 <b>DRY MILLING:</b> Processed by Caravela in their plant in Armenia, Colombia. Sorted for density and size, sorted to remove defects, parchment removed before bagging.

**CUP SCORE:**  
88

**PARTNER SINCE:**  
2013

*The Atlas Collection seeks to highlight our coffee sourcing values—quality, ethics, collaboration, and integrity—which act as our tools for exploring the complex world of coffee. This coffee from Wilmar Guarnizo in Huila, Colombia is a wonderful example of quality.*

Grown on the fertile Andean slopes of Huila, Colombia, this honey processed coffee comes to us through a strong relationship with Wilmar Guarnizo, one of nine siblings of our longtime partners, the Guarnizo family. A wide spectrum of sweet and crisp fruit flavors—such as poached pear, mango, and fresh white peach—offers an expansive experience of the flavor characteristics we expect from a honey processed coffee.



Wilmar Guarnizo on his farm.

Don Wilmar and his siblings own and operate several farms near Tarqui, Huila, and collectively produce our year-round single origin La Familia Guarnizo. Tarqui sits in an area of Colombia where the Andes mountains split into three separate mountain ranges. Situated on the remote eastern slopes of the Central Cordillera you'll find the Guarnizos' farms, which sit approximately 1,600–1,800 meters above sea level.

With the exception of the micro-lots, we purchase coffee from the Guarnizos through Caravela Coffee with forward, fixed price contracts. In this arrangement, both parties agree on a steady price for a set quantity of a certain quality level throughout the year. This fixed contract allows the families to count on a stable income for a percentage of their annual yield while easing the worry of fluctuations in the commodities market. Likewise, it allows us at Joe to rely on a consistent product at a consistent price for our own business while staying in tune with their business needs and the challenges they face to produce consistent quality month after month.

Don Wilmar owns 5 hectares of land, Finca La Vega, inherited from his parents, who were among the first generations of coffee growers in their area. He and his siblings primarily grow Caturra and Colombia coffee varieties, though they are also cultivating other varieties like Yellow Caturra, Bourbon, and Gesha. Along with their

neighbors, their coffee reaches maturation twice a year. This allows for income more than once a year, which is a benefit, but it can also constrain their work and push them to extreme diligence in order to ensure consistency across multiple seasons. The first semester, or harvest, runs from April–July while the second usually runs from October–December.

Processing and drying in this region of Colombia occur at the individual farm-level, as most farms are small and remote. The end goal is to transport dry parchment down to the cooperatives in the towns at lower altitudes, as it would be much more difficult to transport heavier cherries down the steep slopes.



In general, the washed process is the most common in Colombia. Other processing methods, like honeys and naturals, are not impossible, but they are difficult to do well due to the changing microclimates. When speaking with Don Wilmar on our last visit to their farms in 2019, he noted the difficulty in the proper and adequate drying that honeys and naturals require due to climate change. Although they used to be able to predict the rainy season, it has become fractured and spotty, making it tricky for them to plan for when to fertilize, and how to control for proper fermentation and drying in wetter conditions. Erratic rainfall also affects their ability to target when to collect the cherries during harvest, because if there is too much rain, the fruit will absorb water, and present as bigger, heavier cherries. This sometimes causes the fruit to fall off entirely, or prompts its premature harvest out of fear that it will fall. Of course, suboptimal maturation levels won't result in the same level of sweetness that's expected of ripe cherry, so it's a careful risk to weigh.

This is not the first time Don Wilmar has experimented with the honey process, as he has been very interested in making it work in any condition. It is, however, the first honey we have purchased from Colombia. Don Wilmar harvests the cherry for this process at a further level of ripeness than the cherry for normal washed coffees, so it proves an even greater set of calculations—but an even greater success when the cup reflects the diligence throughout the process. After harvest, the cherries are then gently washed, lightly depulped, and dried for 3 weeks.

Working with Caravela allows us to learn about the Guarnizo family's fermentation methods and experiments. Maricela Trujillo Fiesco is the PECA representative for the region of Tarqui for Caravela. The PECA program ("Programa de Educación a Caficultores") is Caravela's education initiative, created to benefit farms and farmers. Maricela visits each farm about once a month, in order to encourage harvesting at peak ripeness (she teaches with a Brix meter), uncompromising fermentation times, careful drying, and all other recommendations she feels would assist in reaching greater quality and overall farm health.

She gives us insight into what each sibling does exceptionally well, and she also encourages the family to learn from each other's successes and failures. She was the first to encourage specific fermentation times, and because of her influence, Don Wilmar has become the sibling most keen on experimentation, and is a fermentation wizard. Many of the siblings bring small lots to Don Wilmar's drying beds in order to test certain theories together. This is yet another great example of the family's meticulous pursuit of quality, and all the more special that we are able to gain these insights through Caravela's transparency.

