

***NEW* Guatemala El Tambor**



El Tambor means the drum, and it refers to a distinct thumping sound one might have heard years ago as an underground water source led to a waterfall that, at times, sounded like a continuous earthquake on parts of the farm. The "drum" hasn't been heard for several decades now, suggesting a dropping water table as more farms and families in the area tap underground water, and as Guatemala City moves closer and closer to what was once a remote area. Or maybe it was the giant mine that operated on the farm until not so many years ago. That is when Victor Calderon saw a chance to buy a farm that was, in parts, in a state of ruin, and challenge the mine firm, who had a lease on the land, to a showdown of sorts. It seems they were investing serious money without really producing much of anything, endless sinkhole for investing, with somewhat unclear intention. Because the lease wasn't properly

notorized, Victor had a bargaining advantage which led to the cessation of all mine operations several years ago. One mine shaft even collapsed on the farm just a few hours after Victor had been inside it, poking around. In any case, he had workers secure all the dangerous shafts, and has been working to rehabilitate mining areas with new coffee plantings. Not all the farm was a mine, in fact most of it is old Bourbon and Caturra trees, with new plantings of Pache and San Ramon cultivars. This coffee finished in 7th place for the 2010 Cupp of Excellence competition and, Victor had won 11th place for the sister farm beside it, La Pia!

Butterscotch caramel. That's the best descriptor for the intense sweetness in the dry fragrance of El Tambor. There is vanilla and a fudgesicle-like chocolate note. It's very sweet, but on the break there is a real woosh of bittersweetness. Interesting. The cup is a culmination of the various aromatic hints: Butterscotch and brown sugar sweetness with layers of tropical fruit, as well as apple and (again) tamarind. It's a big, round cup, with prominent acidity, bit not what I would call a bracing acidity, or one that gives a sense of structure. The finish tends toward bittersweet (just like the aromatics), and it's not exceptionally long on the palate. But as it cools the sweetness lingers, the brightness seems more and more malic (apple-toned brightness), the body more syrupy, and a cola sweetness comes out.

(\$6 ½ lb., \$12 lb.)

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