Notes of
Granny Smith, star fruit, pecan and jasmine

LOT ÉPHÉMÈRE AUGUSTO ORTEGA

Huila, Colombia

Augusto Ortega is seen in his community as a true coffee-growing legend, having started out at a very young age on the family plantation where he single-handedly tended to 500 coffee trees.

In **1985**, at the ripe age of 22, he decided to break free and set up his own farm – still active today - on the arid, crumbly lands of **Kennedy**. Where few saw a future, young Augusto turned it into an opportunity!

At the turn of the 21st century, he joined **the Los Naranjos group**, helping raise the quality of the region's coffee. Twenty years later, Don Augusto made the decision to **integrate gesha on his land**, a less robust coffee variety producing far less fruit, but with **a potentially greater monetary return per pound.**

Specifications

Lot	harvested at the Las Asturias farm, in Kennedy, San Agustin from the Huila region of Colombia
Cultivar	Gesha
Altitude	1680 m
Harvest	2022
Process	Washed
Imported by	Semilla Coffee

As with many specialty coffee growers, **growing gesha sounds interesting** but is associated with **far more risk.** Nevertheless, in just a few years, Don Augusto Ortega has succeeded in perfecting this coffee and giving it the value it deserves. We're delighted to have been able to get our hands on a few bags from a 'past-crop', and to offer it under **the «Lot éphémère»** label. Augusto Ortega's coffee offers a unctuousness familiar to fans of the Gesha variety, except that here it is also given **a lovely apple vivacity and a nutty, pecan-like finish.**

Feedback from our team

« It's comforting, with its pecan and green apple aftertaste. »

— Camil

« I see what Camil means by pecan. To me, the taste and texture are also reminiscent of nuts. For my part, I especially appreciate its star fruit-like liveliness. »

— Caroline

« As the days and weeks go by, a sweetness emerges and reveals the well-known personality of the Gesha variety. That said, subtle fruity notes also stand out, making this a distinctly refreshing coffee. I detect notes of grapes, green apple and peach, as well as nuts and flowers. »

— Sebastien

Recipes

For a 'pour-over'

We recommend a **1:17 ratio**, i.e. **25 grams of medium-ground coffee** for **425 grams of water** at **94°C**.

In the cup, the sum brings us comforting aromas of flowers and sweet fruits, nuances of green grapes,**Granny Smith apple and star fruit.**

For espresso

We think it's highly unusual to drink Gesha coffee as an espresso, since this variety is highly valued for its nuances, and espresso is not an extraction method renowned for its nuances...

That said, we've tried it, and the result is surprising! With **18 grams** of Augusto Ortega's coffee beans, we extracted around **40 grams of liquid coffee** in **32 seconds.**

Gesha

While it's always interesting to try less accessible coffee varieties, some are **more difficult for growers to acquire and even cultivate**. Such is the case of the Gesha variety, which every year makes it into the top coffee lists around the world for its tastefulness, despite the fact that it can be quite risky for farmers to produce it.

The Gesha coffee tree is **delicate**, produces less fruits on its slender branches and **requires more care** throughout its cultivation. Yet more and more farmers are venturing to grow it in the hopes of finding buyers willing to pay top dollar. But nothing is ever certain...

The name Gesha is said to have been inscribed on colonial trade papers in Central America, leading us to believe that **the variety originated in the Ethiopian village of the same name**. Nowadays, you can also see it spelled **"geisha"**.

Its distinctive features include pointed tips, a slightly longer shape, **jasmine aromas** and a silky texture.

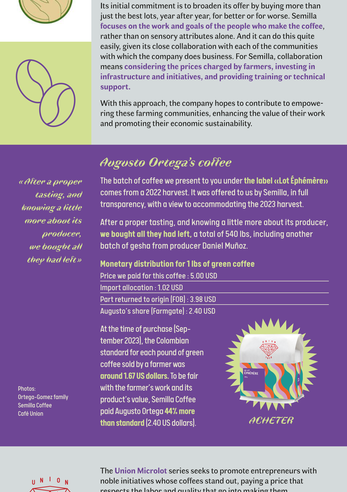
San Agustin

The town of **San Agustin** and the surrounding area has never been able to mass-produce coffee, due to its **mountainous location and limited land area**. For this reason, producing commodity coffee is not a financially viable option for anyone.

The region's producers must therefore **focus on quality and more direct business relationships**, but it's not that simple to adapt farming practices to meet the different needs of the market.

Too often, coffee growers see a price assigned to their coffee without receiving any justification, without even having a say in the matter.

With **the Monkaaba project**, local coffee growers like Augusto Ortega have the chance to better evaluate their product, enhance its quality and anticipate demand.



The Monkaaba initiative

Monkaaba is a San Agustin-based initiative aimed at **empowering small-scale coffee producers**, led by Esnaider Ortega-Gomez. Many of them are closely or remotely associated with the Los Naranjos group, and have recently begun to feel the need to further **develop their autonomy in coffee production**, as well as their involvement in its marketing and sale.

Monkaaba's aim is therefore to help other producers in the region to move away from relying solely on intermediaries, and instead **take control of the production, marketing and sale of their coffee.**

The initiative aims to provide training, technical support, access to specialized markets and other resources necessary to enable small producers **to develop and prosper in the coffee industry.**

It was through this initiative (and that of Los Naranjos) that Augusto Ortega was introduced to **Semilla Coffee** and found buyers for his coffee in Canada.

Semilla Coffee

Semilla is a Montreal-based coffee importer that **engages directly with coffee-growing communities** ready to connect with the specialty coffee market.

Its initial commitment is to broaden its offer by buying more than just the best lots, year after year, for better or for worse. Semilla **focuses on the work and goals of the people who make the coffee,** rather than on sensory attributes alone. And it can do this quite easily, given its close collaboration with each of the communities with which the company does business. For Semilla, collaboration means **considering the prices charged by farmers, investing in infrastructure and initiatives, and providing training or technical support.**

With this approach, the company hopes to contribute to empowering these farming communities, enhancing the value of their work and promoting their economic sustainability.

« After a proper tasting, and knowing a little more about its producer, we bought all they had left. »

Augusto Ortega's coffee

The batch of coffee we present to you under **the label «Lot Éphémère»** comes from a 2022 harvest. It was offered to us by Semilla, in full transparency, with a view to accommodating the 2023 harvest.

After a proper tasting, and knowing a little more about its producer, **we bought all they had left**, a total of 540 lbs, including another batch of gesha from producer Daniel Muñoz.

Monetary distribution for 1 lbs of green coffee

Price we paid for this coffee	5.00 USD
Import allocation	1.02 USD
Part returned to origin [FOB]	3.98 USD
Augusto's share (Farmgate)	2.40 USD

At the time of purchase (September 2023), the Colombian standard for each pound of green coffee sold by a farmer was **around 1.67 US dollars.** To be fair with the farmer's work and its product's value, Semilla Coffee paid Augusto Ortega **44% more than standard** [2.40 US dollars].

ACHETER

Photos:
Ortega-Gomez family
Semilla Coffee
Café Union

The **Union Microlot** series seeks to promote entrepreneurs with noble initiatives whose coffees stand out, paying a price that respects the labor and quality that go into making them.

That's why we're proud to collaborate with Semilla Coffee and present this past-crop coffee under the «Lot Éphémère» label. In this way, we have the chance to taste the work of Don Augusto Ortega and indirectly contribute to Monkaaba's noble initiative.