



*Benigno Mejia – Producer - Honduras*



## La Joya

Producer	Benigno Mejia
Farm	La Joya
Altitude	1500 m
Region	Santa Barbara
Harvest	January - June
Awards	#1 Best of Honduras Auction 2018

## About La Joya

The mountainside scaling farm of La Joya is a great place to get the heart pumping. Cascading down the slopes in the mountains of Santa Barbara, La Joya is cared for by the now famous producer Benigno Mejia and his family. In 2018, he was encouraged to enter a coffee competition by Project Origin friend and local producer and exporter, Benjamin Paz. Benjamin thought his parainema coffee was amazing - and it looks like he was right! Benigno entered his coffee to his first competition, the Project Origin Best of Honduras 2018 Action Program, and took the gold medal. Project Origin were proud to present the award to Benigno, directly connecting him to exporters and roasters all around the world, and he graced his audience with a song to celebrate the occasion.

The La Joya farm is six manzanas in size, but it is not all planted with coffee. There is a section at the bottom of La Joya left because Benigno likes the forest that has naturally grown there, and near the top of the farm he has left the tall tress to grow as well. Growing coffee has been the only work Benigno has known and he has done this for 40-50 years. He was born locally in the same department of Honduras and he now lives to produce coffee to support his wife and five children. In a conversation with our Project Origin team, Benigno mentioned that he and his family never take holidays: "We have our life here... it has always been here, suffering. We have suffered more than enjoyed."

Project Origin hopes that through our auction programs and by creating more direct connections between producers like Benigno and roasters around the world, that farms such as La Joya can become more sustainable and we can, together, build a better lifestyle for all involved in this industry.

# La Joya

Varietal: Parainema

Process: Washed



## Processing Details

- o Picking of only red cherries
- o Cherries are floated as part of the pulping process to separate low density cherries
- o Cherries are pulped and dry fermented for 10-14 hours in concrete pillas under shade
- o After fermentation is complete coffee is washed in concrete channels to remove any remaining mucilage
- o Coffee is then laid on raised beds until moisture reaches 10-12%
- o Drying typically takes 12-15 days
- o Beans are stored in parchment until milling for export