



Ethiopia

Project Origin has sourced coffee from Ethiopia since 2012 and we never cease to be amazed by the complexity and quality of the beans from this endlessly fascinating country. The country is home to the widest genetic diversity of coffee varieties, as the trees are left to grow wild and naturally mutate to match the landscape around them. As a result, the cherries that are picked become one great blend of hundreds of varieties, meshing the various colours and patterns together to what ends up creating the well-balanced, rounded, cohesive and complex cup profiles that we have experienced throughout Ethiopia. Therefore, we almost always list Ethiopian coffee varieties as **'Heirloom'**.

The classification of Ethiopian coffee has always been challenging, as it is structured differently to other coffee producing countries. Additionally, we often find the process of translating the language to result in various spellings of names and locations. Historically, the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX) has listed areas that are 'coffee growing areas' and sold these coffees to the world under the sole title of that area. Thanks to new exporters and increased education across the country, we are now able to classify coffee lots more accurately based on specific washing stations, or on the Woreda, in which it is processed. This provides us with a greater range of locations with which to identify Ethiopian coffee and greater traceability overall.



The geographic structure across Ethiopia can be broken down into five categories, with a sixth category existing from the ECX. The structure of Ethiopian geography is broken down as follows:

Country: Ethiopia

Region: the state, department or province

Zone: a subdivision of the Region

Woreda: county, municipality or district within a Zone

Kebele: village or community within a Woreda

Area: coffee growing area as defined by the ECX

The coffee growing areas defined by the ECX - Yirgacheffe, Sidamo, Guji, Harrar etc. - will be the names most commonly known and used to identify coffee lots up until 2018. Nowadays coffee lots from these areas can be broken down further, providing information about the Woreda, the Kebele and even the exact washing station.

Here is an example of how to relate this to coffee:

Country: Ethiopia

Region: Oromia

Zone: Arsi Zone

Woreda: Gololcha District

Kebele: (various)

Area: Gololcha

With the understanding of this structure, we can begin to refine our understanding of Ethiopian coffees and pay tribute to the stations responsible for producing the cherries they sell. In the special case of Grade 2 and Grade 3 lots, washing stations commonly sell these coffees to larger collection stations where the processed green beans are combined with other Grade 2 and 3 lots from the same Area to create a large volume of coffee with a cup profile representative of the Area. Project Origin proudly works with our exporting partners, Primrose, to respect the work of the producers, the farmers and the workers at the washing stations, to share the beautiful and diverse profiles of the region, and we hope to celebrate their coffees with the correct identification.



Hand sorting picked cherries in Ethiopia



Gololcha

Area	Gololcha
Region	Oromia
Altitude	1400 - 2500 m
Harvest	November - February

About Gololcha

Gololcha is produced in the Gololcha district of the Arsi Zone in Ethiopia's Oromia Region. Coffee here comes from a network of smallholder farmers, each growing coffee on small plots within garden farming systems rather than from a single estate.

The farms across Gololcha span a broad landscape, with coffee growing between approximately 1,400 and 2,500 metres above sea level, and it is this vast variance in altitude that really provide a wholistic flavour profile when representing the Gololcha district of Ethiopia. Among the varieties cultivated are 74110 and 74112, bringing together coffees from multiple smallholders to produce the Grade 4 Gololcha lot sourced by Project Origin.

Harvest typically takes place in November, when ripe cherries are selectively picked and delivered for natural processing. The whole cherries are dried on raised beds, with the drying carefully monitored for consistency. Keeping the coffee within its fruit throughout drying is particularly suited to the fruit-forward sweetness we look for in naturally processed Ethiopian coffees.

What makes Gololcha particularly interesting is its collective nature: the final coffee represents the work of many small-scale producers across the district, bringing their individual harvests together into a coffee representative of the wider Gololcha growing area.



*Downloadable
gallery*

Gololcha G4

Varietal: Heirloom

Process: Natural

Tasting notes: clean, balanced, sweet, silky, milk chocolate, brown sugar, lemon lime, black tea, orange, caramel



Processing Details

- o Coffees are grown and harvested in small-holder farmers' backyards (known as 'garden coffee') in the Gololcha Area of the Oromia region
- o Cherries are taken to the washing station where small-holder lots are combined and hand sorted to remove under- and over-ripe cherries and select cherries between 18-22°Brix
- o Cherries are dried on raised beds in full sun for 18-30 days to allow the beans to absorb the sweetness and fruitiness from the cherry pulp and skin
- o During drying cherries are regularly turned to ensure even drying and maintain clarity. On very hot days cherries are covered in plastic to control drying rate
- o Moisture content is reduced to 10-12%
- o Dried beans are then stored in the dried cherry pod for protection and to maximise sugar and fruit flavour absorption until milling and export preparation
- o Our local partner does further quality control and sorting during milling. As a minimum they do a triple-pass through a colour sorter and a triple-pass through hand-sorting tables to improve overall quality
- o Grade 2 and 3 and 4 natural lots are categorised this way by the ECX. These lots will have a higher defect count than Grade 1 lots, however, our exporting partner does further sorting and removal of defects during milling to ensure Project Origin's G2, G3 and G4 lots are cleaner than the minimum standard