



**COCOA  
NECT.**

# Nahua, Costa Rica

**REGION:** Upala

**VARIETY:** Trinitario

**SOURCE:** Social Enterprise, directly purchased from smallholder producers

**FERMENTATION:** Fully controlled, 4 staged wooden box system over five to six days

**FLAVOR NOTES:** Rich notes of cherries, subtle grapefruit and the full body of caramel

**CERTIFICATIONS:** None

## THE STORY BEHIND THE BEAN

For over four centuries, family members of Juan Pablo Buchert, founder of Nahua, have been involved in agriculture. Although he started his professional career in the financial consulting industry, his path accidentally crossed into cocoa plantations where he made an instant and subsequently lifelong connection. He now continues his family's agricultural tradition with passion, commitment and confidence as the leader of Nahua, a social enterprise committed to quality, craft produced cocoa that makes a positive social impact.

In the northernmost reaches of Costa Rica, in the small hamlet of San José de Upala, Nahua has built an impressive, modern facility to manage the highest quality fermentation and drying of cocoa beans sourced directly from smallholder producers. From this strategic location, Nahua has good access to the unique selection of native cacao trees in the Upala and Guatuso regions. The oldest plantations are located on the banks of peaceful rivers, whose waters flow into Lake Nicaragua.

Other plantations are more remote; each with its own history and fascinating mix of trinitario and criollo genetics. In general, the region has an abundance of fertile soil that nourishes the cocoa trees and contributes to the unique flavor profile of the cocoa beans.

The Nahua team works closely with smallholder growers in the Upala area, around 240 are part of the sourcing community. Nahua has initiated several programs to improve smallholder producer livelihoods. Before Nahua's involvement, farming knowledge and basic resources were underdeveloped and in many cases nonexistent. Now, Nahua's field technicians directly advise smallholder producers on how to nurture and maintain their trees while increasing productivity and embracing sustainable growing practices.

Nahua has launched an innovative Cacao Renovation Program, which focuses on increasing productivity and family income of smallholder producers. This includes pruning and shade management, part of which is financed by Nahua and returned through a producer pay-back scheme.

Nahua is committed to contributing to environmental and social development of communities by reinforcing reforestation and sustainable farming. Nahua also ▶

supports initiatives that strengthen smallholder grower communities; this includes mobilizing volunteer doctor visits to perform health checks and medical services to rural families who live in remote areas.

As part of their strictly controlled post-harvest protocol, Nahua has built a custom facility with a pre-defined fermentation process that allows cocoa beans to develop in accordance with the desired physical and biochemical changes, matching the high standards and consistency of prized cocoa beans. Nahua's field team directly sources freshly harvested cocoa beans from smallholder plantations and brings them to the post-harvest facility within twelve hours. Once arrived, team members place wet beans in large, custom-built wooden boxes on four separate levels. The beans descend each level in the fermentation process under the watchful eye of Nahua's post-harvest management team, approximately one and a half days per box. After five to six days, the fully fermented beans are placed on elevated beds in an expansive greenhouse subjected to solar drying. Over the next ten days, appropriate airflow, consistent agitation and skilled oversight ensure that the beans reach a 7% moisture level. Nahua's skilled post-harvest team meticulously removes any non-cocoa matter to ensure the finished product is a clean selection of high quality cocoa beans.

When talking with Juan Pablo one notices the passion and devotion he has for bringing out the real value of superior quality and the commitment to making a meaningful social impact. We are honored and delighted to be a part of this mission.

## REVIEW BY



From left to right: Kiwook Shin, Sukhyun Choi, Inchul Kang

### Inchul Kang

from The Roasting Masters

*Korean consumers have extremely high standards and expect both outstanding quality and deep authenticity in their products. Nahua's cocoa beans have exceeded these expectations, and have brought smiles to the faces of many customers. The complex and deep flavor profile of the Maleku beans and the fruity, balanced acidity of the Caracche beans are both excellent choices for crafting exceptional bean to bar chocolate.*

## TASTE PROFILE

The Nahua cocoa beans embody the rich taste one expects when tasting Costa Rica. The warm and full cherry taste combined with subtle grapefruit notes and the full body of caramel elements make you think you're enjoying a full glass of Bordeaux Grand Cru red wine. Warm, sturdy and gentle at the same time.

**CHOCOLATE:**

**ACIDITY:**

**BITTERNESS:**



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Connecting the world of Cocoa