



Selectos No.3

UK Regional Edition



La Flor de Cano

La Flor de Cano was created in Havana during the first half of the 20th century. It began in 1932 when Juan Cano Sainz and his wife hired a cigar roller to make cigars, literally, on their kitchen table. The business grew into a sound family company and in 1936 they registered the brand in Spain, the country which went on to become their largest export market.

In the early 1950s the company invested in machines to make many of their cigars such as the Predilectos, Preferidos and Selectos. After the Cuban revolution, La Flor de Cano continued to produce cigars with the emphasis on machine-made sizes, mostly destined for the Spanish market. In the early years of this century production of all sizes changed to short filler (tripa corta), handmade. Within the standard portfolio this remains the case today.

However, for a brief period between 1988 and 1992 Cubatabaco, the forerunner of Habanos S.A., introduced a small range of long filler hand-made La Flor de Cano cigars, which would go on to become legendary. The range consisted of a Churchill size called the Diadema, a Corona Gorda named the Gran Corona and a Robusto size known as the Short Churchill. These three sizes were all made at a cigar factory in the Marianao district of Havana named Heroes del Moncada (the Heroes of Moncada), named after one of the early engagements of the Cuban Revolution.

Small quantities of these cigars started to appear in London and Geneva from 1988, and latterly Hong Kong. The stopped in 1992 but those four years were long enough to create a lasting impression.

"There are not many people around today who remember these cigars," recalled Simon Chase, the late Marketing Director of UK Habanos importers, Hunters & Frankau. "Very few cigars were ever shipped and when they arrived no one had ever heard of the brand except perhaps as machine made cigars. They were sold only in a few of the top London Cigar Merchants."

"At a Christie's auction in December 1999, there were five boxes of 25 Short Churchills in the catalogue that sold for £2,100 each. This compared with a 1990 retail price of £130 per box inc. VAT. Not a bad return in less than ten years. Four months later, again at Christie's, a box reached £3,600. They were achieving prices that were expected for Cuban Davidoffs or Dunhills, but not for La Flor de Cano!"

It is the memory of these short lived and highly prized cigars that provide the inspiration for the UK's La Flor de Cano Regional Editions.

All Flor de Cano cigars are medium bodied. The blend used for long-filler Regional Editions is exclusively made up with tobacco leaf from Vuelta Abajo whereas the brand's standard, short-filler lines, also use tobacco from Semi Vuelta.



Regional Editions

In 2005, Habanos S.A. decided to highlight some of the less well-known brands in its portfolio. To do so, it decided to harness the talents of all the companies that distribute Habanos in markets around the world. In exchange for exclusive rights to sell the cigars within their territories, each distributor was invited to select a brand and size for their market.

The U.K helped to pioneer the project when, at the start of 2005, it was granted exclusive rights to the Ramón Allones Belicosos. The idea was refined throughout that year when it was decided that every box would be numbered, and each cigar would carry a second band identifying the country or region for which it had been made. These cigars are now known as Habanos Regional Editions and have become famous around the world.

Since 2007 all the UK's Regional Editions have carried the second band indicating the country for which they were made. (The Ramón Allones Belicosos, first released in January 2005, carried only one band).

To date, the U.K has commissioned twenty-one Regional Editions from Habanos and the Selectos No.3 is the third one to be made by La Flor de Cano.

Over the years, Flor de Cano has been chosen by several markets to create Regional Editions, but the United Kingdom was the first market to take that decision.





Short Robusto

4" (102mm) x 50 ring gauge

In 2010 when Hunters & Frankau choose La Flor de Cano to create a UK Regional Edition, the brand's range was made up entirely of short-filler cigars. This posed a significant challenge when attempting to recreate the blend of the famous, long-filler, Flor de Canos of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The challenge was further complicated by the fact that the Heroes del Moncada factory had been reduced to a support facility for La Corona factory and was no longer producing cigars.

In February 2010, the initial blend presented to La Corona's tasting panel and Cuba's National Tasting Commission, failed to meet the required standards and was rejected. However, the team at La Corona found someone, still working at Heroes del Moncada, who had been closely involved in blending the original cigars. After close consultation, another blend was made, this time based faithfully on the original.

Jemma Freeman, H&F's Executive Chairman, Davidoff of London's Edward Sahakian, and cigar writer Nick Foulkes were invited to La Corona to sample the new blend in November 2010. Sahakian brought a number of the original Flor de Cano Short Churchills with him, which allowed the panel to conduct a like for like comparison. The new blend was deemed a successful match in style and character to the much-admired original.

The National Tasting Commission was now satisfied with the result and production could begin.

30,000 Short Robustos were made. Presented in 1,200 numbered SLB boxes, each box was hot stamped in the brands distinctive green ink and a band with clearer embossing was commissioned especially for the cigar from the Dutch company Vrijdag Premium Printing.



Gran Cano

5½" (141mm) x 50 ring gauge

Following the overwhelming success of the Short Robusto, Hunters & Frankau revisited Flor de Cano in 2013, to provide another Regional Edition for the United Kingdom. This time the cigar was considerably larger. The Gran Cano is a classic Gordito size. This is the same ring gauge as the Short Robusto, but an inch and a half longer, giving the smoker an additional 30 minutes or so to enjoy.

Once again, the original blend of tobacco was recreated and the unique green ink hot stamps were used.

50,000 Gran Canos were made and presented in 5,000 SBN boxes of ten cigars. The boxes included the addition of a specially commissioned papeleta (the colourful end label), recreating a design dating back to the 1930s. The cigar bands were also redesigned to include the size name embossed across the middle.



Selectos No.3

6½" (165mm) x 42 ring gauge

The name Selectos No.3 was chosen in recognition of the Flor de Cano's brand development. The original Selectos was machine made. Later it became handmade but with short-filler tobacco before being discontinued at the turn of the millennium. So, the third Selectos No.3, handmade with long filler, was deemed a suitable designation. Serendipitously, it is also the third UK Regional Edition from the brand.

The cigars have all been rolled at El Caney factory of Santiago de Cuba, in the east of the island, under the supervision of La Corona factory (which has been headquarter of the brand since 2010 and guarantees the consistency of the blend). 125,000 cigars have been produced and are presented in 5,000 cabinet boxes (SLBs) of 25. The boxes are all hot stamped with the instantly recognisable green ink and each cigar is dressed with a unique band printed with the size name.

The Selectos No.3 is a Cervantes size, often known as a Lonsdale. It is said that Rafael Gonzalez was commissioned to create the first 'Lonsdale' cigar by the fifth Earl of Lonsdale, Hugh Cecil Lowther (1857–1944). The famous English sporting Earl and cigar aficionado asked for a Corona cigar, but with a little extra length. The size became extremely popular and many other brands reproduced it, often even using the Lonsdale name.

Despite well over half the 27 Habanos brands having once made a Cervantes sized cigar, only one remains today, the medium to full bodied Montecristo No.1.

A pleasure to smoke now, they also exhibit many of the same characteristics that they will age with all the grace and refinement of their illustrious predecessors.



Short Robusto



Gran Cano



Selectos No.3

Hunters & Frankau

EST. 1790

Habanos s.a.

HECHO EN CUBA

Totalmente a mano



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