**Specialty Coffee Origins: Myanmar**

Export Bag Size: 60kg

Main Producing Regions: Shan State, Mandalay

Botanical Species: 80% Arabica, 20% Robusta

Genetic Varieties: S-795, Catimor, SL 34, Caturra, Catuai, Blue Mountain, Gesha

Annual Production Quantity: 7500 tons

Processing Methods: Washed, Natural, Honey

Harvest Period: Dec-Mar

When missionaries started several tiny farms near Pyin Oo Lwin in 1885, British colonists brought the first coffee to Myanmar (previously Burma). Initial commercial output stalled, and once the British withdrew, the coffee industry entered a state of forced slumber. During that period, the majority of the coffee produced in this country (mainly in the states of Kachin, Mandalay, and Shan) was exported via "unofficial" means to China, Laos, and Thailand.

The coffee trade continued to expand slowly for the following 50 years or so on a relatively small scale. However, as the Myanmar economy has opened up in recent years, various organizations have started to concentrate more on the coffee trade. Investments in milling and education have led to the emergence of a legitimate specialty coffee industry in the nation. Private organizations and non-profit organizations have been working with growers to enhance agronomy and harvesting procedures. The scorching days and cold nights of Myanmar's highlands are ideal for growing coffee. Although a large volume of washed coffee is also produced, it is particularly well adapted to natural processing given the relative regularity of very, very dry and hot weather throughout harvest season.

Specialty coffee was essentially nonexistent when a 5-year USAID Value Chains for Rural Development initiative started in late 2014. Although there were estates selling lower-quality washed coffee, farmers were strip-picking cherry and selling it to the neighborhood market for close to nothing if they hadn't chopped down their trees and given up on coffee entirely. The sole dry mill in the nation was a government-run one in Pyin Oo Lwin, and coffee was mostly exported through clandestine ways to China and Thailand.

Let's go back five years. The Myanmar Coffee Association (MCA) holds an annual specialty-coffee competition in Yangon, and there are at least five dry mills spread out around the nation. Specialty coffee roasters have competed in beans contests in 2019 using coffee from Myanmar. The total annual production of coffee is estimated to be between 3,500 and 4,000 metric tons (MT) (official estimates are closer to 7,500 MT), of which 400–500 MT are exported to countries like the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Singapore, Australia, Russia, South Korea, and others. Another 400–500 MT is expected to be consumed domestically, with Thailand buying the majority of the remaining coffee.

The majority of Myanmar's coffee is grown in Mandalay and Shan State, although Kachin and Chin States have lately begun to cultivate coffee as well. The majority of farmers in Mandalay cultivate washed coffee on sizable estates. Almost all of the farmers in Shan State are smallholders, with the majority of them having less than a hectare of land.

The Mandalay Coffee Group (MCG), a wet and dry mill, exporter, and consortium of 50 estates estates in Mandalay, Amayar (a wet and dry mill and exporter in Ywangan owned and operated by Daw Su Su Aung), Shwe Taung Thu (a consortium of 19 villages in Ywangan who produce naturals almost exclusively), and Behind the Leaf are some of the organizations leading Myanmar's specialty coffee movement (a wet and dry mill and exporter in Pinlaung).