

**cultivar**

Cultivating potential together



# Hermanas Contreras

## Technical facts

Country:	Peru
Department:	Junin
Province:	Huancayo
District:	Santo Domingo de Acobamba
Community:	Santiago de Oropel
Number of growers:	3
Average Farm size:	1 hectares
Varieties:	Typica and Bourbon
Altitude farm:	2000 - 2100 meters above sea level
Main Harvest period:	June - October
Processing:	Depulping and fermentation of 24 - 36 hours without water. Washed with clean water after that
Drying:	Dried on mesh pallets for 4 - 6 days

## Story

At the center of Peru is the province of Huancayo, considered the main center of commerce of the Peruvian Andes. Huancayo is known for its beautiful Andean landscapes, its great festivals and beautiful dances, such as the huaylas, for example. However, Huancayo also has land suitable for growing coffee, although even for Peruvians it is not very credible.



*The Huaylas is typical dance from Huancayo, Men and women dance and stomp flirtatiously <sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Learn more about Huaylas here:

<https://bicentenariodelperu.pe/yo-soy-huancaino-por-algo-6-canciones-de-zenobio-dagha-patrimonio-cultural-de-la-nacion/>

8 hours from downtown Huancayo is the Santiago de Oropel community. It is a small town in the middle of large rocky hills, which makes its climate warm unlike other neighboring communities. Families that began to grow coffee a few years ago live in it and within them we want to tell you more about the Contreras sisters. María, Teodora and Catalina are 3 of 5 siblings, children of Don Cornelio and Don Antonia. Unlike the stories of other coffee growing families, they did not learn how to grow coffee from their parents, since they were mainly engaged in growing fruits and other takeout bread products. They did not dare to grow cash crops because access to the community was difficult and their economy was basically subsistence. However, as the sisters grew older and each one formed their own families, access to Santiago de Oropel improved and thus the opportunity to market their products to other nearby cities was opened. This fact encouraged the community to plant more coffee to the point that today, this crop constitutes one of the main sources of income for the families of the community.

The Contreras sisters have stories of resilience and are testimonies to the importance of female economic empowerment. Catalina, the oldest of all, is the mother of 8 children. To many of them, especially the elderly, she has inherited her knowledge of coffee crops and today with their own families they have even surpassed their mother's production. Catalina a few years ago separated from her husband and thanks to the coffee she was able to finish paying for the education of her last 3 children who now have plans to continue studying at the university.

María is married to Mauro and together they have had 3 children. She was always growing fruit trees, but in 2014 the construction of a road destroyed her plot and her crops that were on it. Fortunately, with the help of her sisters and her other neighbors, she was able to prepare a field where she could sow again, but this time she gave the opportunity to coffee and they have done very well. She is always looking to learn new techniques that allow her and Mauro to obtain a better quality coffee and a higher production.

Finally, there is Teodora, the youngest of all. She has 4 children, some of whom are of legal age and the other 2 young ones in school. However, she recently separated from her husband and because she was able to keep her plot and continue to grow coffee she does not need her ex-husband to support her family. Despite the difficult situation she has had to live in, she remains motivated, she has the support of her 22-year-old son and her sisters, so she hopes to continue growing coffee and thus maintain her family.

This is how these 3 Contreras sisters with similar stories of overcoming have planted the coffee that we present to you today and that we hope you will find strong and empowering!