LOCAL NEWS

Feature: the story of Panamanian coffee and Boquete

When	No date given
Where	Boquete, Chiriquí
Source	gn_boquete
Outlet	La Mañana
Published	2026-11-04 10:07-05:00
Discovered	2026-11-04 12:00-05:00
Link	https://www.xn--lamaana-7za.uy/cultura-y-deporte/el-cafe-en-panama-una-taza-entre-dos-oceanos/

Summary

La Mañana traces the history of coffee in Panama, with Boquete at its centre: from colonial introduction to the 2004 Geisha breakthrough at Hacienda La Esmeralda.

Details (summary of the article)

The newspaper La Mañana published a long feature on coffee in Panama, contrasting the capital's café culture with the growing areas of the Chiriquí highlands. Coffee reached the isthmus around 1742 from the Caribbean, with the first Coffea arabica plantings near Portobelo between 1780 and 1790; because the coastal climate was unsuitable, cultivation moved to higher ground, finding volcanic soils and cool temperatures in Chiriquí and especially Boquete. Scholar Eusebio A. Morales dated the start of coffee growing in the Boquete municipality to about 1884. The article recounts the Café Coca Cola in Santa Ana, Panama City, opened in 1875 as "Nueve Puertas" and renamed in 1906 when the soft-drink company set up a plant to supply Canal workers. It also profiles Finca Lérida, founded in the 1920s by Norwegian engineer Tollef Bache Mönniche, who came for the Canal and patented a siphon for sorting coffee cherries in the United States in 1936; the farm's 1929 shipment to Germany helped build the reputation of Chiriquí coffee in Europe. The turning point came in 2004 when the Paterson family's Hacienda La Esmeralda entered a high-altitude Geisha lot in the Best of Panama competition, winning and fetching $21 per pound at auction, launching Panama as a specialty-coffee reference. The piece also notes that much of the harvest depends on the hand-picking work of Ngäbe-Buglé indigenous families.

Original (es)

El café en Panamá: una taza entre dos océanos

El café en Panamá: una taza entre dos océanos La Mañana

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