

CLAG 2020 FIELDTRIP: COFFEE AND CLIMATE IN SOUTHERN GUATEMALA

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FIELDTRIP FACILITATORS:

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Café con sombra. Photograph by Matthew Taylor, 2003



Coffee fruit hulls. Taylor 2001

For a prelude of some of our research in Guatemala, see

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/video/shorts/1463260227610/>

<https://research.arizona.edu/stories/threatened-coffee-crops-tree-rings-may-offer-answers>



Secando café. Photograph by Michelle Moran-Taylor, 2001

Fieldtrip Description & Costs:

Cost per person based on a group of 8 (12 max): US \$350. This includes all food (not dinner on the 8th), accommodation on the 5, 6, and 7th, and truck/van rental. We will all share rooms on a coffee finca. Before the fieldtrip, we will provide you with a field guide with maps, articles, and all other relevant information.

The objective of this fieldtrip is to introduce participants to the world of coffee as we visit one of the first sites of coffee cultivation in Guatemala. As we visit several coffee *fincas* along the Samalá River we will discuss the past, present, and future of coffee in Guatemala, and how this industry relates to climate. These *fincas*, sitting at the piedmont of the Santa Maria and Santiaguito volcanoes have been exposed to several natural disasters including explosions from the volcanoes themselves, lahar events associated with extreme precipitation, but also to the coffee leaf rust which triggered, in association with low market prices, the latest coffee crisis in Guatemala.

Day 1: After driving from Antigua to the Samalá River, we will walk along the Samalá River and discuss the direct impact of flooding on coffee plantations but also the relevance of the Samalá discharge to hydropower production near the coffee fincas. As we speak to farmers, we will discuss with them the challenges they face to stay in a profitable market and the difficult enterprise of adapting perennial crops to climate change and variability and the associated loss of ecosystem services that could be lost once coffee is replaced by other crops. We will stay in a traditional coffee finca near San Felipe Retalhuleu whose owners have implemented adaptation strategies to try to surpass the current crisis.

Day 2. We will complete a 5-hour coffee tour and enjoy the views from the finca. Later in the day, we will drive west to enjoy views of nearby active volcanoes (rain permitting).



Seleccionando café, Photo: Diego Pons, 2018

Day 3. We will visit an experimental finca run by ANACAFE (National Coffee Association) to understand what has been done regarding new scientific advancements and technological improvements to help coffee farmers succeed.

After these guided visits, we will finish with a relaxing tour at the nearby Olmeca-Maya site Takalik Abaj for a nice two and a half walk around beautiful ruins. We will then drive back to Antigua and you will be set free!

