

KENYA
KUNGU MAITU
Gikanda Edition

DIRECT TRADE PARTNER Gikanda Farmers Cooperative Society/Gichatha-ini Coffee Factory	ELEVATION 1800-2100 m
REGION Nyeri	HARVEST December 2017-January 2018
CULTIVAR SL-28, SL-34 and Riuru	LOOK FOR Baked pear, red currant, blood orange

There's a reason why most coffee cuppers will name Kenya as their favorite origin. We tend to obsess over organic fruit acids and clarity of flavor, and the best coffees from Kenya have a vibrancy that outshines all others.

It is easy to detect Kenyan coffees on a blind table, and even those new to specialty coffee learn to recognize their distinct character quickly, because they demand your attention. Nothing about Kenyan coffee is quiet—the volume is often at 11—and yet the great ones are so elegant and refined that they seem almost gentle despite their amplitude of taste. They manage to be intense, transparent, complex, and profoundly sweet all at once. It is very, very difficult to achieve this balance of power and grace in coffee, and the fact that Kenyan coffees accomplish it so consistently is downright amazing.

The second lot in our 2018 Kungu Maitu lineup comes from Gichatha-ini (gitch-ah-tah-EE-nee), one of Kenya's most renowned coffee factories, or washing stations. Located on the Eastern side of Mount Kenya National Park, Gichatha-ini is one of three factories (alongside its sisters Kangocho and Ndaro-ini) operated by the formidable Gikanda Coffee Farmers Cooperative Society, which represents more than 1,500 individual farmers.

Over the past 20 years, Gikanda has served as a poster child for the movement toward better quality through increased attention to both agronomic detail and post-harvest processing control, and has won over a dozen of quality awards for its coffees during that time span. Its legendary former

chairman, Mr. Charles Muriuki, was in charge of the group for 11 consecutive years and helped lead Gikanda to become the most successful cooperative in Kenya as measured not only by the exceptional quality its coffees but as a function of its efficiency in returning income to its farmer members and investment in social progress. In 2006, the organization won an award in recognition of having paid the highest rate of return in the entire country. Since then, it has been a fixture in the top 10.

We began working with Gichatha-ini in 2008, when we first began direct purchasing in Kenya and chose Gikanda as a partner based on both its exceptional track record for quality and Muriuki's commitment to a progressive social agenda.

Kungu Maitu is a song written in the Kikuyu (Key-koo-yoo) language that expresses profound gratitude for the sacrifices parents make to raise their youth. We chose the name to honor the work that goes into the patient nurturing of coffee and the joy that it provides when it is cultivated with care. As every parent and coffee grower knows, raising children and coffee is never easy and often downright difficult. But there is nothing quite like the feeling of satisfaction that comes when one's efforts help to ensure that the innate potential of a child — or a coffee — are fully realized.



Geoff Watts
Vice President of Coffee and Green Coffee Buyer for Kenya

