



## Research Article

# Kapeng Barako and the roots of Batangueño Identity: A cultural, historical, and ethnographic study

Lionel E. Buenaflor<sup>1</sup>

University of Batangas, Batangas City, Philippines

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### Abstract

This study explores Kapeng Barako—the distinct *Coffea liberica* variety cultivated in Batangas, Philippines—as a symbol of Batangueño identity and cultural resilience. Through a qualitative approach combining historical analysis, ethnographic interviews, and cultural documentation, the research examines how coffee transcended its agricultural function to become a core component of Batangueño heritage. Drawing on archival records and oral histories from farmers, historians, and local residents, the study traces the historical trajectory of coffee from its ancient origins in Ethiopia and Yemen to its introduction and flourishing in Batangas during the Spanish colonial era. The findings illustrate how Kapeng Barako not only served as an economic commodity but also evolved into a cultural emblem associated with strength, hospitality, and community solidarity. The discussion highlights key historical transformations—from the 18th-century coffee boom in Lipa to the catastrophic decline caused by coffee rust in the late 19th century, followed by postwar revitalization and contemporary sustainability efforts. Moreover, the paper contextualizes Kapeng Barako within the global coffee narrative, emphasizing its unique characteristics and its potential use as a base for specialty coffee beverages. The research underscores the need for renewed local and governmental support to sustain *Coffea liberica* cultivation, integrate it into agro-tourism, and preserve Batangas' cultural heritage. Ultimately, Kapeng Barako emerges as both a product and a metaphor of Batangueño endurance—linking agricultural history, cultural identity, and economic revitalization. The study calls for continued appreciation and promotion of Kapeng Barako as a symbol of regional pride and a living tradition in Philippine coffee culture.

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## Introduction

Coffee is a fundamental element that characterizes the dietary habits of all globally civilized persons who follow rational eating practices (Al Mokha, 2024). An overwhelming majority of about 90% of adults from various backgrounds consider coffee to be their beverage of choice. In addition to its fundamental importance for human existence, they perceive coffee as a basic need that has moved beyond its previous classification as a luxury or indulgence. This viewpoint establishes coffee as a fundamental stimulant that drives human energy levels and operational effectiveness. Working people consider coffee the essential energy source that maintains their drive, which results in increased productivity levels during their workday.

Coffee (*Coffea*) plants represent a member of the *Rubiaceae* family, including Madder plants. These species exhibit distinctive characteristics, including the production of purine-type alkaloid caffeine. The chemical entity in question

<sup>1</sup> Corresponding Author: Associate Professor, University of Batangas, Batangas City, Philippines. E-mail: [lionelbuenaflor@yahoo.com](mailto:lionelbuenaflor@yahoo.com)

demonstrates a capacity to prolong the operational lifespan of various hormonal agents like adrenaline. The stimulant effect of coffee serves as a counteragent to the depressant properties found in certain alkaloids, according to Elpel's 1997 study.

Coffee is the most contested nonalcoholic drink due to its classification as a religious superstition coupled with medical prejudice. For a time, coffee had significant opposition and numerous financial barriers, including inequitable taxation and burdensome duties. Despite facing many adversities throughout its development, this beverage managed to withstand these obstacles and achieve a dominant status among widely consumed drinks (Al Mokha).

This paper presents the historical trajectory of coffee from its primordial origins to its eventual arrival in the province of Batangas while also analyzing how coffee became ingrained in Batangueño culture. This relationship has led to the term *Kapeng Barako*, intrinsically linked to Batangueño identity.

Coffee occupies a critical position in the formation and evolution of Batangueño identity, as it has become deeply embedded in their everyday existence. Because of the Batangueños' profound affection for coffee, the province has cultivated a rich and intricate history of coffee cultivation, particularly exemplified by varieties such as *Kapeng Barako*. This distinctive coffee mirrors the province's agricultural methodologies and traditions and engenders a sense of pride and cultural affiliation. Therefore, when one utters the term *Kapeng Barako*, individuals instinctively associate it with Batangas, recognizing that Batangas is the unequivocal origin of *Kapeng Barako*.

In the early epochs of Batangas, coffee is the nucleus of social gatherings and interpersonal interactions. Sharing a coffee nurtures relationships, making it an indispensable element of communal life, from familial reunions to local festivities. Hence, it is not uncommon for passersby to overhear Batangueño residents say: "*Sinsay muna dine at makapagkape*" or "*Parne muna at magkape*" (Come over and have some coffee). Such invitations signify not merely hospitality but also an overture of friendship and camaraderie, which resonates deeply within the culture of the community.

Coffee is integral to the existence of Batangueños; thus, the coffee industry serves as a vital source of livelihood for numerous individuals in the region. The coffee cultivation, production, and distribution bolster local economies and play a crucial role in preserving traditional farming practices. However, the presence of coffee farms has catalyzed a growing interest among tourists in agro-tourism, particularly in the province of Batangas—most notably in Lipa and its adjacent cities and municipalities. This phenomenon highlights the region's rich agricultural heritage and reinforces the identity of Batangueños through shared experiences centered around coffee. Although there may be challenges ahead, the significance of coffee in this context remains profound and multifaceted.

The odyssey of Batangas coffee, navigating from the agricultural land to the final cup, serves as a poignant reflection of the resolute spirit of the Batangueños. These individuals have adeptly navigated through various challenges; however, they have steadfastly preserved their cultural traditions. During the late 1880s, the coffee sector experienced a significant downturn in output, primarily due to the proliferation of coffee rust (a pathogenic disease instigated by the fungus *Hemileia vastatrix*) and the infiltration of coffee borers (arthropods that inflict harm upon coffee crops). Nonetheless, the Batangueños did not perceive this situation as a definitive termination of their agricultural pursuits. Instead, coffee cultivators temporarily diverted their efforts towards alternative crops such as sugarcane, citrus, and rice. When the opportunity arose to cultivate a new coffee variant, the agricultural industry began to rebound, little by little, until it ultimately acquired substantial momentum. Thus, coffee became intrinsically interwoven into the essence of Batangueño identity, symbolizing community cohesion and resilience.

The author finds this study significant in various academic, cultural, and socio-economic contexts. By examining the role of *Kapeng Barako* in Batangueño identity, this study contributes to the documentation and preservation of the region's rich cultural heritage. It highlights how coffee is more than a commodity but a living tradition that reflects Batangas values, character, and history. It also provides an in-depth analysis of how *Kapeng Barako* has influenced the identity and traditions of Batangueños over generations. It contributes to local history and cultural anthropology by documenting the historical significance of coffee cultivation in Batangas.

Moreover, understanding the cultural and economic importance of *Kapeng Barako* can help promote sustainable farming practices, support local coffee farmers, and advocate for policies that protect and revitalize the declining *Coffea liberica* industry in the Philippines. Since the research explores how *Kapeng Barako* serves as an archetype of Batangueño identity, symbolizing strength, resilience, and pride, this endeavor can serve as a means for the government to support the proliferation of the *Kapeng Barako* variety throughout the province of Batangas to increase its yield. This paper contributes to identity studies by showing how regional products shape self-perception and social belonging.

In addition, this research adds to scholarly discussions on food studies, cultural symbolism, and regional identity in the Philippines, serving as a reference for future studies on coffee culture and identity information. Ultimately, this study emphasizes the need to protect, promote, and sustain *Kapeng Barako* as a cultural and economic asset, ensuring that the legacy continues to thrive for future generations.

## Methodology

The investigation presented in this paper utilizes a qualitative research design that incorporates historical, ethnographic, and cultural analysis methods to explore how *kapeng barako* represents Batangueño identity. The approach involves an examination of historical records and events through detailed analytical methods. The researcher undertook extensive archival research to document the historical evolution of *kapeng barako* in Batangas by examining its initial introduction, subsequent peak popularity period, followed by its decline and the efforts for revival. An extensive analysis of primary and secondary sources, alongside historical records, was conducted to establish the context of its importance within Batangueño heritage.

In addition to her other methods, the researcher conducted direct interviews with local coffee farmers to gather their viewpoints regarding the cultural heritage and economic importance of *kapeng barako*. Experts in history and culture participated in interviews to deliver detailed analyses regarding *kapeng barako's* influence on Batangueño identity formation. Furthermore, the researcher underwent an extensive consultation process involving coffee shop proprietors and baristas to examine the methods of coffee marketing alongside its perception in modern environments. Simultaneously, researchers interviewed long-established Batangas inhabitants to document their oral histories and personal narratives about *kapeng barako*. The research employed qualitative methodologies to construct an extensive cultural and historical account of *kapeng barako* while examining its persistent influence on Batangueño identity formation.

## Results and Discussion

### *The History of Coffee in the World*

Ancient scholars believed that the first cultivation of coffee in Yemen can be traced back to 575 CE. Although the authentic source of coffee may remain eternally obscured, shrouded in myth and folklore, scholars have amassed substantial evidence indicating that coffee has been acknowledged in Ethiopia “since time immemorial,” and the proofs they presented appeared plausible. Records suggest that quite possibly, the cradle of humanity—the ancient territory of Abyssinia (or Ethiopia)—functions as the birthplace of coffee.

Of the many legends about coffee, one of the most captivating features is the dancing goats (Pendergrast, 2019). This particular tale recounts the story of an Ethiopian plateau known as Kefa (Kaffa),<sup>2</sup> where a goat herd named Kaldi delighted in tracing the meandering paths of his goats as they foraged for sustenance on the mountainsides. When the goats did not respond to Kaldi's call, he searched for them and found them engaged in a lively display: they butted one another, danced upon their hind legs, and bleated with exuberance. He saw that the goats were eating the glossy green leaves and red berries of a nearby tree and realized that the trees have induced a form of madness in his goats. He tried to taste the berries and experienced a peculiar sensation (Myhrvold, 2024).

<sup>2</sup> The Kaffa Afromontane rainforest in Southern Ethiopia is believed to be the birthplace of *Coffea Arabica*, a coffee plant which grows wild only in Ethiopia. As one of the last remaining evergreen coffee forests in Ethiopia, the Kaffa Zone is regarded as a site of international importance and lies within the Eastern Afromontane Hotspot, one of the 34 global priority areas for conservation (National Picture Library).

Kaldi told this encounter to his father, who disseminated this information to the community until coffee became a part of the Ethiopian cultural identity. They called the leaves and beans *Bunn* (the early name of coffee). The Ethiopians devised more gratifying methods for extracting further, as they ground the beans and combined them with animal fat to create an expedient snack for energy. Additionally, they crafted a fermented wine from the pulp and an exquisite beverage known as *qishr*, derived from the mildly roasted husks of the coffee cherry. This beverage is presently known as *kisher*<sup>3</sup>.

Throughout this century, there were also enduring Mohammedan traditions asserting the preeminence of the initial utilization of coffee as a beverage. One such narrative recounts how, in 1258 CE, Sheik Omar stumbled upon the coffee drink serendipitously in proximity to a desert cave near Ousab in Arabia, where he had been exiled. According to this legend, this discovery was not merely fortuitous; it was imbued with profound significance. According to the legend:

The dervish (a member of a Muslim Sufi religious order who has taken vows of poverty and austerity) Hadji Omar was driven by his enemies out of Mocha into the desert, where they expected he would die of starvation. Due to extreme hunger, he tried to taste some strange berries growing on a shrub. While they seemed edible, they were very bitter. He tried to improve the taste by roasting them. When it became very hard and so he softened it with water. The berries turned harder but the water turned brown. Omar drank the water and it refreshed him, enlivened his sluggishness and raised his drooping spirits. He returned to Mocha where his salvation was considered a miracle. Because of this, coffee became well-known and Omar was made a saint (Ukers).

Regardless of the origin of coffee, its stimulating properties rendered it widely valued. Although Islamic authorities declared it intoxicating, much like alcohol—and consequently prohibited by the Qur'an, numerous Muslims remained drawn to the beverage, viewing it as an alternative to alcohol. However, despite the looming threat of severe penalties, the consumption of coffee proliferated swiftly among Arabs and their adjacent communities, ultimately leading to the emergence of a novel social and cultural phenomenon: the **coffeehouses** (Myhrvold).

After the Ethiopians discovered coffee, the distribution of coffee occurred through trade interactions with the Arabs, traversing the narrow expanse of the Red Sea. According to Pendergrast, it is plausible that during their approximately 50-year dominion over Yemen in the 6th century, the Ethiopians purposefully established coffee plantations. Thus, this period marks the inception of the Arab's growing appreciation for the invigorating beverage. They cultivated the coffee trees using irrigation systems in the proximate mountains, calling the beans *qahwa*— an Arabic term signifying “brew.” The term “coffee” found its way into the English lexicon in 1582, derived from the Dutch word *koffie*, which, in turn, is rooted in the Ottoman Turkish *kahve*, ultimately from *qahwa*. Notably, *qahwa* may denote coffee as an appetite suppressant because the Arabic term *qahiya* means “to lack hunger.” Furthermore, the Arabic root *qhb* signifies ‘dark color,’ while *qahwah*, the feminine variant of *qahwa*, also connotes ‘wine’ or a beverage characterized by its dark hue.

During the 15th century CE, coffee gained greater appreciation. Individuals began cultivating coffee trees in the Yemeni district of Arabia (National Coffee Association, 2024). Notably, the first reliable reference to coffee appears in written form in the year 1454. The *Mufti* (a Muslim legal expert endowed with the authority to issue rulings on religious matters) of Aden, called Muhammad Ibn Said Al Dhabhani, encountered this intriguing beverage during a journey through Ethiopia. Upon returning to his home in Aden, he fell ill. He used several medications yet remained sick. He remembered the dark, bitter drink he met in Ethiopia and wondered whether it might improve his condition. He instructed his servants to procure some dark beverages. Upon drinking this concoction, he felt better and more active and he could postpone the onset of sleep. He endorsed this beverage to the *Sufis* (also called dervishes), who maintained that it would endow them with the vitality necessary to “spend the night in prayers or other religious exercises with more attention and presence of mind” (Kerr). The endorsement of Al Dhabhani transformed coffee into an immensely fashionable drink within the confines of Yemen.

<sup>3</sup> In Yemen, *kisher* coffee is considered the classic afternoon ritual for many households. When the host serves *kisher* coffee, socializing with family and guests starts. It is also best for digesting after a heavy meal, as it is usually accompanied by spices such as cinnamon and ginger (<https://yemenkitchen.wordpress.com>).

In its beginning phases, coffee was not considered a beverage but a medicinal substance or a spiritual adjunct (to religious practices). Later on, it became part of everyday life. As a societal appreciation for coffee consumption flourished, many affluent families (in various regions) constructed coffee rooms in their residences for ceremonial indulgence. Conversely, individuals lacking the means to establish such a space would frequent coffeehouses, commonly called *kaveh kanes*. By the end of the 15th century, Muslim pilgrims had disseminated coffee across the Islamic realm—covering Persia, Egypt, Turkey, and North America, rendering it a highly sought-after commodity.

According to “The Rich History of Coffee” (Nescafe, 2024), individuals made coffee part of their daily routine. They consumed coffee within the domestic sphere and extended it to their visitors as a facet of their hospitality. This widespread appreciation for the beverage prompted the Turks to establish a coffeehouse in Constantinople (now Istanbul), Turkey, in 1475. People frequented these establishments to savor coffee while participating in the discourse, enjoying musical performances, observing entertainers, engaging in chess, gossiping, and keeping abreast of current events. Coffee houses became the epicenter for exchanging and gathering information and were characterized as “Schools of the Wise.”

### The Coffee Detractors

Due to the growing popularity of coffee, its cultivation grew from Yemen to Mecca and Medina, where people used it for religious purposes. Because of the unprecedented rise of coffee popularity, controversies emerged against ardent coffee enthusiasts. The act of consuming coffee earned a reputation as a subversive indulgence. For some political authorities, individuals appeared to derive excessive enjoyment from the coffeehouses. In his exploration of the Arab coffeehouses, Ralph Hattox (1985) wrote: “There has been a lot of improper pastimes occurring at coffeehouses, ranging from gambling to involvement in irregular and criminally unorthodox sexual situations.” Although many circles revered coffee, people should not overlook the societal implications of its consumption because some deemed it a catalyst for moral decay.

During the 1500s, various Arab rulers and religious leaders denounced coffee. The Grand Vizier Kuprili of Constantinople, fearing sedition amidst a war, issued a decree that led to the closure of the city’s coffeehouses. He mandated that anyone caught drinking coffee a second time would be stitched into leather bags and thrown into the Bosphorus (situated in Istanbul, Turkey). But despite this strict regulation, many individuals continued drinking coffee. Consequently, the authorities withdrew the ban.

In 1511, the young governor of Mecca called Khair-Beg,<sup>4</sup> while exiting the mosque, saw a group of men drinking in a hidden corner. These people were merely preparing for an evening of prayer, but Khair-Beg thought they were drinking wine. Learning that the entire populace of the city partook in this beverage, he investigated and ultimately concluded that he should suppress this drink. He called his religious, medical, and legal advisers for a meeting and recounted his observations at the mosque. The congregants engaged in musical performances, danced, and participated in games of chance for monetary gain—all of which opposed the sacred law. Some of the dignitaries present attempted to justify the beverage. Ultimately, the opposing faction prevailed, promulgating an edict prohibiting coffee consumption. The governor emphasized that, like wine, he should ban coffee according to the Qur’an; hence, even the coffee reserves housed in municipal warehouses were burned (Luckett, 2024). Many individuals perceived the edict as an ill-informed and inequitable decision. Many coffee enthusiasts discreetly disobeyed the edict, but the *mufti* supported the beverage. Nevertheless, the authorities persisted in penalizing those who violated the order.

In 1524, Sultan Suleiman I<sup>5</sup> reprimanded the governor of Mecca for his actions in banning what was, in fact, something perfectly acceptable in Cairo, Egypt. Because of this, the authorities lifted the prohibition immediately. The coffee enthusiasts perceived justice in the eventful fate of Khair-Beg, who was ultimately convicted of being an extortionist and a thief. His punishment was severe; he was then tortured to death (Kerr). What accounts for the enduring practice of coffee consumption amidst adversity? Numerous scholars have posited that coffee is an intellectual

<sup>4</sup> Hayir Bey (sometimes spelled Kha’ir bey or Kha’ir Beg) or Khayrbak ruled Egypt in the name of the Ottoman Empire from 1517 until he died in 1522 [[https://dbpedia.org/page/Hayir\\_Bey](https://dbpedia.org/page/Hayir_Bey)].

<sup>5</sup> Sultan Suleiman is the only son of Sultan Selim I (reigned 1512-1520). Selim I was the one who introduced coffee in Constantinople in 1517 (Kerr).

stimulant, facilitating a pleasurable elevation of energy levels without overtly detrimental consequences. Furthermore, coffeehouses emerged as vital social hubs. In Turkey, the integral role of coffee became apparent, as a lack thereof at home could furnish justification for a woman to pursue a divorce (Pendergast).

### Coffee in Other Middle Eastern Countries

Around 1570, prominent Muslim clerics voiced their dissent regarding coffee consumption, primarily because the coffeehouses thrived while their mosques remained desolate. For this reason, several religious figures believed that attending a coffeehouse was more sinful than frequenting a tavern that served alcoholic beverages.

In 1580, Murad III (whose reign spanned from 1574 to 1595) proclaimed that they should categorize coffee in the same vein as wine. He, therefore, mandated the prohibition of coffee according to the dictates of the Prophet Mohammed. However, this legislative measure did little to deter the people from clandestine consumption.

### Coffee Entered Europe

In 1536, when the Ottoman Turks established their dominion over Yemen, coffee beans emerged as a significant export commodity within the expansive Turkish Empire. The Turks procured these beans from the Yemeni port of Mocha. However, despite earlier assertions regarding the origins of coffee beans in the mountainous terrains of Western Ethiopia, it is in 12th-century Yemen that we find the earliest documented evidence of coffee cultivation. Historians have posited that they most likely transported coffee across the Red Sea by Ethiopian invaders during their incursions into Yemen. Once planted, coffee became an integral element of Islamic culture on the Arabian Peninsula, as the favorable agronomic conditions present in the Yemenite highlands facilitated the cultivation of the preferred species of the coffee aficionados—*Coffea arabica* (McGonigal, 2024).

As Yemeni coffee took root and demand arose, the beans crossed the hills towards Mocha Port on the Red Sea. The beans acquired another well-known name: *mocha*. For centuries, this small city served as the exclusive channel for coffee sold on the international stage. Although tightly regulated by their Ottoman overlords, authorities mandated that coffee beans could not exit Yemen without undergoing the roasting process—this precaution ensured that they could not propagate in foreign locales (McGonigal).

The commercial trajectory of coffee necessitated its transportation to the Suez Canal. Here, French and Venetian merchants would subsequently acquire the commodity. This increasing coffee trade emerged as a significant source of revenue; however, the Turks zealously protected their monopoly over the cultivation of coffee trees in Yemen.

Ultimately, the Europeans developed a profound appreciation for coffee, disseminating it throughout various cities across the continent. Conversely, many individuals regarded the consumption of coffee as morally dubious; indeed, some labelled it as the devil's beverage. This sentiment persisted until Pope Clement VIII (24 February 1536 to 3 March 1605) sampled the Muslim concoction, prompted by his priests, who requested him to prohibit its use. In response, he exclaimed: Why, this Satan's drink is so delicious that it would be a pity to let the infidels have exclusive use of it. We shall fool Satan by baptizing it and making it a truly Christian beverage (Pendergast). **The Development of Coffee**

### Business in Europe

Throughout the initial half of the 17th century, people continued regarding coffee as an exotic elixir. Its primary use was as a costly pharmaceutical reserved for the elite. However, in the ensuing fifty years, Europeans unearthed the Arabian drink's social and medicinal advantages. Thus, by the 1650s, coffee became readily available on the streets of Italy and sold by *aquacedratajo* (or lemonade vendors), who also sold chocolate drinks and liquor (Pendergast).

In 1651, a Jewish entrepreneur named Jacob inaugurated a coffeehouse in Oxford, England (Atreum, 2024). Observing the flourishing profitability of these establishments, a multitude of others soon emerged, particularly within the confines of London. During this era, coffeehouses functioned predominantly as male sanctuaries. Those who opted for coffee in exchange for alcohol began their days with heightened alertness and energy; consequently, their productivity markedly improved.

The appreciation for coffee led to the emergence of coffeehouses as pivotal centers of social interaction and discourse in the main centers of the cities of England, Austria, France, Germany, and Holland. In England, coffee centers called

‘Penny Universities’<sup>6</sup> proliferated, garnering widespread acclaim because a customer could procure a cup of coffee for merely a penny while participating in intellectually stimulating dialogues (National Coffee Association). However, despite the proliferating enthusiasm for coffee among the French, they were somewhat tardy in embracing the concept of coffeehouses compared to their Italian and British counterparts.

Because of the growing coffee craze, many detractors from the different distillers in London emerged because of their financial losses. These critics connected the act of coffee consumption with the ‘godless Turks’ responsible for introducing coffee from Constantinople. In 1674, there was a circulation in England entitled “The Women’s Petition Against Coffee,” which served as retribution because coffee consumers, men in particular, prohibited women from entering cafés unless they were prostitutes. The petition attributed sexual impotence in men to coffee consumption. Women asserted that their husbands were perpetually absent from their homes and families, thus neglecting their domestic responsibilities (turning Turk, indeed) all for “a little base, black, thick, nasty, bitter, stinking, nauseous, puddle water” called coffee (Luckett). The evidence suggests that the petition opposing coffee did not significantly influence the coffee industry, primarily because by the year 1675, England boasted over 3,000 coffeehouses. Some establishments even provided overnight accommodations, mimicking the Turkish coffeehouse model.

As the subsequent century unfolded, the café continued to allure esteemed philosophers, writers, and notable figures, including Voltaire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Denis Diderot, and Benjamin Franklin (Pendergrast). Coffee also facilitated a livelihood for fortune-tellers, as they purportedly could interpret coffee grounds. The widespread appreciation for coffee not only diminished alcohol consumption but also led to the emergence of cafés, which served as remarkable intellectual hubs. These venues ultimately contributed to the onset of the French Revolution.

During the 1700s, the consumption of coffee experienced a meteoric rise in Sweden. Similar to the situation in England and other countries, governmental authorities harbored suspicions regarding coffeehouses, perceiving them as bastions of subversion wherein opponents of the monarchical regime would conspire to orchestrate revolts. Consequently, King Gustav III promulgated a law in 1746 that explicitly condemned coffee drinking. Furthermore, he imposed excise taxes on coffee consumption and ordered that those who neglected to remit the tax face penalties.

In curtailing this escalating phenomenon, the government also outlawed coffee paraphernalia, leading to the police confiscating cups and dishes. King Gustav engaged in a series of experiments involving two identical twins to substantiate his claims regarding the deleterious effects of coffee and the detrimental consequences of coffee consumption, and this medical trial was considered the first clinical trial conducted in Sweden: the king ordered that one twin drink substantial quantities of coffee daily, whereas his counterpart was mandated to consume equivalent volumes of tea, ostensibly to establish that coffee could reduce lifespan. However, it is ironic that King Gustav met his death first, having been assassinated in 1792; subsequently, the two physicians overseeing the trial also died. Meanwhile, in stark contrast, the tea-drinking prisoner lived to the venerable age of 83. The final individual to pass away was the twin, who should have suffered an early and excruciating death attributed to coffee (Luckett). Eventually, coffee ascended to the status of the predominant beverage in Sweden. The nation has since transformed into one of the highest consumers of coffee per capita worldwide.

In 1766, King Frederick II of Prussia instituted a state monopoly on coffee imports, a strategic economic move where he maintained that coffee was a beverage suited for the aristocracy. He subscribed to the perspectives of Prussian physicians, who asserted that coffee would affect one’s health because it induces effeminacy in men and sterility in women. Consequently, on September 13, 1777, the king promulgated this decree:

It is disgusting to notice that everybody is drinking coffee instead of beer. Consider the amount of money we are losing. We must drink beer. Your king was brought up on beer, and so were his ancestors and his

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<sup>6</sup> In 17th-century Britain, coffee houses were referred to as “Penny Universities” (a term that reflects their cultural significance). These establishments served as gathering places for academics, artists, and intellectuals; however, their impact extended beyond mere socialization. They democratized learning, opening avenues for individuals of diverse backgrounds to engage in scholarly discourse. This phenomenon was particularly noteworthy because it included those who could not access higher education—although such barriers existed, the coffee houses provided a space for intellectual exchange. Thus, these venues contributed to the broader dissemination of knowledge [https://bigthink.com/the-past/penny-universities-coffeehouse/].



officers. Many battles have been fought and won by soldiers nourished on beer. I do not believe that coffee-drinking soldiers can be depended upon to endure hardship or to beat their enemies in case of the occurrence of another war (Luckett).

However, over the next 30 years, coffee became a cultural staple in Austria, Germany, Spain, and the rest of Europe. Although the Europeans greatly appreciated coffee, growing coffee in Europe was a struggle because of its colder climates. For this reason, European traders began growing coffee elsewhere.

### **Coffee in North America**

Captain John Smith, the illustrious founder of the Virginia colony at Jamestown, introduced coffee to North America in 1607. He became well-acquainted with this stimulating beverage during his journey in Turkey. When New Amsterdam (now known as New York) existed under Dutch governance, the colonizers imported coffee from Holland. Coffee was accessible in the Amsterdam market as early as 1640, and the merchants transported substantial quantities of the green bean from Mocha. However, no evidence substantiates this claim. What is known is that before the introduction of coffee, the Dutch consistently imported tea from Holland across the Atlantic. Tea emerged as the favoured libation among colonists because of British cultural influence. Although coffee enjoyed limited popularity, it engendered a modest following among merchants, intellectuals, and political figures who convened in coffeehouses to exchange ideas and engage in commerce.

In 1773, during the infamous Boston Tea Party, the inhabitants of Boston (disguised as Indigenous peoples) boarded English vessels anchored in the Boston harbor, subsequently throwing their tea cargo into the bay. This event triggered the emergence of the coffee industry across North America. Later on, cities such as New York, Pennsylvania, and Charleston also engaged in their protests against tea, thereby facilitating the ascendance of coffee to the status of *King of the American Breakfast Table* and its designation as the preeminent beverage of the American populace (Ukers).

In 1919, coffee received the highest honor awards. An American general proclaimed it as the most essential element that contributed to the victory of the Allied Forces in World War I. By the early 19th century, there was an increase in coffee consumption within the United States. The growing demand led to a need to cultivate coffee in Central and South America, regions whose climates were particularly conducive to its growth. Consequently, the United States became a prominent importer of coffee from Latin America, especially Brazil and Colombia. This reliance on coffee imports fostered partnerships between Americans and their Latin American counterparts.

Maxwell House was founded in 1892, leading to the widespread appreciation of coffee. Instant coffee began in 1901, but it did not gain commercial success until Nescafe introduced its instant variety in 1938. This innovation facilitated rapid and convenient coffee preparation, appealing to busy and pragmatic Americans. During World War II, instant coffee generated increased popularity, particularly among soldiers in the field.

After World War II, coffee consumption grew in the U.S., where coffee became a cultural norm, particularly within workplaces where coffee became a productivity enhancer. Diners and coffee shops proliferated throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, solidifying coffee's image as an integral component of American life. Peet's Coffee and Tea was founded in 1966 in Berkeley, California, and became a seminal force in the specialty coffee movement, emphasizing the importance of high-quality, freshly roasted beans. Inspired by this trend, Starbucks emerged in 1971 in Seattle, offering specialty coffee and catalyzing increased public interest in espresso beverages and café culture.

### **The Arrival of Coffee in the Philippines**

The Philippines, which boasts a complex and profound coffee history, has a timeline that goes back several centuries. The evolution of coffee cultivation in this nation has undergone numerous shifts primarily due to economic demands, colonial influences, and changing agricultural conditions. The world recognized this country as one of the leading producers of coffee globally. However, today, there is a palpable desire to reclaim the former glory of Philippine coffee, particularly Batangas coffee. Although the challenges are significant, Batangueños are working diligently to revive the *Kapeng Barako* industry because this legacy is worth preserving.

In her article entitled "Coffee Anyone," Atienza (2024) wrote:



Spain was arguably the most prosperous nation in Europe at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with a large colonial empire and holdings in Europe. Spain's wealth came from gold and silver mines in its South American colonies.

However, in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, its power declined due to successive wars that weakened and drained Spain's resources. Despite that, Spain did maintain its overseas empire until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. To recapture lost glory and revive its prestige marked the spirited attempt to stimulate economic development in the Philippines. Thus, triggering economic recovery. That's when the coffee industry was established among others.

According to Rafael Bartolome, in 1740, a Spanish friar named Claudio de la Concepcion brought three *gantas* of coffee, allegedly instructing a servant to plant these seeds in a garden located in Laguna or Lipa; later, they also planted them on his father's land in Pinagtung-ulan (Kape de Filipina, 2023). However, *Café de Lipa* gave a different account by saying that two Franciscan friars cultivated coffee, and they taught two Filipino natives the technique of propagating coffee plants. Although these individuals were members of the Macasaet family, who significantly contributed to the growth and care of the *Coffea Liberica* seedlings, this divergence in historical narratives highlights the complexities surrounding the origins of coffee in the Philippines. It is crucial to acknowledge that historical records suggest the introduction of *Coffea Liberica* to the Philippines occurred later (rather than earlier). In contrast, the variety that was brought to this archipelago by the Franciscans was, in fact, *Coffea Arabica*. It is also important to note that the province of Batangas, due to its geographical and ecclesiastical importance, was under the guidance of the Augustinian friars. Consequently, the responsibility of coffee cultivation did not lie solely with the Franciscans. The Augustinians were most likely assigned this task after they obtained coffee beans from their Franciscan colleagues and then facilitated their cultivation in Lipa.

In 1778, Governor-General Jose de Basco y Vargas (1733-1805) arrived in the Philippines to fulfil his role as the governor of the archipelago under the auspices of the Spanish Empire, a position he maintained until 1787. In his term as governor-general, people recognized him as one of the most economically astute governor-generals to have governed the Spanish-ruled Philippines. On March 10, 1785, the government instituted the *Real Compañía de Filipinas* (The Royal Company of the Philippines) through a royal decree (Alchetron, 2024). This Royal Company was a chartered entity designed to establish a trade monopoly throughout the Spanish territories in the Philippines. It aimed to supply Manila with European products while simultaneously facilitating the export of Philippine goods and merchandise sourced from the Orient. It also aimed to promote agricultural development within the Philippines. As the coffee export market flourished, numerous farmers, particularly in Lipa, Batangas, opted to cultivate and propagate coffee (The Kahimyang Project, 2024).

Gobernadorcillo Don Gallo de los Reyes initiated a campaign that underscored the significance of coffee cultivation. He mandated that every household must plant a coffee tree in their backyard. This order remained in effect until 1832, when his son, Santiago de los Reyes, was elected to the same post. Santiago asserted that those who failed to comply with the order would receive beatings and had to walk around the town with an offending sign on their back (Atienza).

In 1814, due to a vigorous influx of agricultural commodities into the global market, an event attributed to the Royal Company of the Philippines and various economic societies, and perhaps also because the Augustinian priests, particularly Frays Elias Nebreda and Benito Varas, were acutely aware of coffee's growing reputation in international trade, they actively encouraged the local populace to engage in coffee cultivation. This initiative subsequently facilitated the dissemination of coffee cultivation practices to other regions with Batangas, including Ibaan, Lemery, San Jose, Taal, and Tanauan. The plant, botanically classified as *Coffea arabica*, flourished in Batangas' tropical climate and volcanic soil; however, this rendered the cultivation process comparatively straightforward.

*Coffea arabica* spread rapidly and became a highly valued agricultural commodity among Filipino cultivators. The soil and climatic conditions of Batangas, which were exceptionally favorable, established it as a crucial center for coffee cultivation within the archipelago. The humble seedling signalled the beginning of a coffee revolution in the Philippines. Moreover, the climate and topography of Lipa proved to be particularly advantageous for coffee production. By that

point, coffee had become remarkably prevalent among Batangueños. As a result, *Coffea arabica* earned the title *Kapeng Tagalog*, which indicates its indigenous roots. The *Cabeza de barangay* of Lipa, known as Francisco Montuano, amassed significant wealth because of the extensive cultivation of coffee.

Although the eruptions of the Taal Volcano in 1749, 1754, 1781, 1790, 1808, 1873, 1874, and 1878 significantly impacted the coffee industry, coffee farmers continued with great determination in their cultivation efforts. This determination of the coffee farmers led to the growth of the coffee industry, especially when the Philippines adopted Trade Liberalization, a direct result of the cessation of the galleon trade between Mexico, Canton, and Manila. As a result, this unassuming seedling marked the beginning of a coffee revolution in the archipelago since the region has a climate and terrain suited for coffee cultivation. Eventually, as if it were inevitable, the coffee business developed into a thriving industry. In the 1800s, the Philippines had emerged as the fourth leading coffee-producing and exporting nation, celebrated for its rich and aromatic beans. Nevertheless, it was the resilience of these farmers that characterized this period.

Following its promising debut in Batangas, the cultivation of coffee spread to various regions across the Philippines, including Cavite, Laguna, Mindanao, and the elevated terrains of Benguet in Luzon. By the advent of the 19th century, coffee (especially the *Coffea arabica*) had established itself as a popular crop among Filipino farmers. By the midpoint of the 19th century, the increasing demand for coffee in the international market was becoming evident, and the Philippines emerged as a crucial producer of this commodity.

The illustrious coffee era in Lipa spanned from 1840 to 1890, leading to the remarkable growth and expansion of Batangas coffee within the global market despite the fluctuating supply of this esteemed beverage (Atienza). In 1860, the coffee trees that managed to endure the volcanic eruptions continued to thrive and produced an abundance of cherries and the volcanic ash appeared to serve as a fertilizer, which enabled the coffee trees to flourish even more, ultimately elevating Batangas as the fourth-largest coffee supplier worldwide.

In 1869, Batangas emerged as the epicentre of coffee in the Philippines and became the primary supplier of coffee to the United States under the brand name *Batango* Coffee, which commanded the highest prices among various coffees sold in neighbouring countries. Furthermore, the opening of the Suez Canal in that same year, coupled with the American expansion after the Civil War concluded in 1865, significantly opened up vast European and American markets for Philippine agricultural products (Atienza).

By the 1880s, the Philippine archipelago was experiencing a notable coffee boom, and Lipa emerged as the nucleus of the Philippine coffee industry. Thus, it earned the title *Coffee Capital of the Philippines* due to its vast coffee plantations and substantial contributions to the national economy. During this time, the Philippines rose to become the fourth-largest coffee producer in the world, providing a significant share of the global coffee supply. However, at one point, it momentarily claimed the title of the exclusive coffee supplier to the United States. Although other regions of the world, particularly South American countries, suffered from coffee rust, the coffee industry in Batangas thrived, ultimately accounting for 7% of the total Philippine exports. Due to Lipa's economic growth, which reached approximately 4 million pesos, Queen Regent Maria Cristina of Spain issued a decree granting Lipa the title *Villa de Lipa*. This title allowed the city to utilize the Coat of Arms, facilitated through Don Victor Balaguer.

### **The Decline of the Philippine Coffee Industry in the Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

During the latter years of the 1880s, the coffee industry in the Philippines declined because of the disastrous epidemic of *Hemilia vastatrix* (commonly known as coffee rust) and an invasion of coffee borers. These insects cause substantial harm to coffee plants. These coffee afflictions ravaged a significant portion of the *Arabica* crop, recognized as *Kapeng Tagalog*, particularly in Batangas. The emergence of fungi and genus *Aphbis* severely weakened the entire coffee sector. This calamity happened between 1890 and 1894, just before the Philippine-American revolution.

During this time, Brazil emerged as a formidable force in the coffee sector, swiftly ascending to become the world's largest coffee producer. Many Filipino farmers, particularly those in Batangas, abandoned coffee cultivation in favor of

alternative crops, such as sugarcane, citrus, and rice. Although this transition was due to economic reasons, it ultimately diminished the Philippines' prominence in the coffee trade.

Despite the significant downturn experienced by the Philippine coffee industry in the latter part of the 19th century, there was a subsequent recovery in the early 20th century. During this period of transformation, the coffee aficionados introduced the *Coffea canephora* (*Robusta*) variety. These cultivars exhibited higher resistance to coffee rust and could thrive at lower elevations. This adaptability rendered them particularly well-suited to the Philippine climate.

During the early 20th century, particularly during the 1950s and 1960s, the coffee industry bounced back, and the Philippine government, in collaboration with various international aid initiatives, actively promoted the replanting of coffee. They introduced *Robusta* to facilitate diversification within the nation's coffee production. For a faster recovery in the coffee industry, aficionados expanded coffee cultivation to diverse regions throughout the Philippines. These regions included Benguet in the northern Cordillera region, parts of Mindanao, and the island of Mindoro. These areas offered favorable climatic and altitudinal conditions for cultivating *Arabica* and *Robusta*; thus, the industry gradually regained its footing. However, challenges remained because the market dynamics were constantly shifting. Although the efforts were significant, the farmers knew they had not attained the full potential of the coffee industry.

### The Discovery of the *Coffea Liberica*

The coffee industry thrives globally, illustrated by the *Coffea arabica*, often regarded as the first variety cultivated in Lipa, and *Coffea canephora*, known as *robusta*. However, another coffee variety debuted in 1843 within the tropical forests of West and Central Africa, Liberia, designated as *Coffea liberica*. This particular variety flourished naturally in Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, and Ghana (Spring, 2024). Although *arabica* and *robusta* had gained widespread acclaim worldwide, *liberica* was not readily accepted by coffee enthusiasts, except those seeking unique and diverse flavor profiles. This scenario unfolded against an increasing global demand for coffee, which the current supply could not sufficiently satisfy. The dependence on *robusta* alone proved inadequate due to the declining *arabica* stocks strained by coffee rust. At this pivotal moment, *Coffea liberica* was introduced into the international coffee market, acting as a solution to the challenges faced by other coffee varieties.

European colonial powers (including the Dutch and the British) embarked on the cultivation of *liberica* coffee in their colonies, particularly in Southeast Asia, like the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia, and also in the Caribbean. However, because *liberica* shows greater resilience to diseases and pests, it became a viable crop in areas where *arabica* faced challenges. Although it thrives in lowland tropical climates marked by high humidity, this distinct adaptability makes it a valuable alternative to other coffee species.

*Coffea liberica* was introduced to the Philippines by American colonizers between 1890 and 1894, just before the onset of the Filipino-American Revolution. This specific variety of coffee found an optimal environment in Batangas; however, Manuel Genato was the first to bring the *Coffea liberica* variety to Batangas from Manila. He cultivated three hectares of land in Sitio Abra, Banay-banay, San Jose, and Lipa. Furthermore, he distributed coffee seeds to the towns of Rosario in Batangas, San Pablo in Laguna, and Tiaong and Sariaya in Quezon (Morada, 1925). As a result, the Batangueño coffee farmers referred to the coffee variety as *Kapeng Amerikano* (likely because the Americans introduced this variety to the region) and later transformed into the name *Kapeng Barako* (homophonic) derived from the *Coffea liberica* (kape [li] berica) variety. *Kape Liberica* traditionally adopted *Kapeng Barako*. However, although this particular variety flourished and became a cultural emblem within Batangas—particularly in Lipa and nearby municipalities—it gained notoriety mainly due to its bold and robust flavor, distinguishing it from other types of coffee.

However, despite its manifold advantages, *Coffea liberica* encountered challenges, including its relatively low yields, and this occurs because *liberica* trees yield fewer beans per hectare in comparison to both *Arabica* and *Robusta* cultivars; thereby, rendering them less economically viable for large-scale production. Although the *liberica* coffee is characterized by a robust, smoky, and somewhat bitter flavor profile, which might not resonate with most consumers, this limitation restricts its demand within global coffee markets, which are predominantly influenced by milder *Arabica* blends.

Additionally, coffee farmers have observed that due to the larger size of *liberica* beans than other coffee varieties, distinct processing techniques are needed, thereby introducing additional complexities for producers.

Although a segment of coffee aficionados began to recognize the merits of *liberica* coffee due to its potent aroma and flavor; thus, it emerged as the preeminent choice among the Batangueños. In 1905, this audacious and robust coffee, characterized by its earthy and woody undertones, became popularly referred to as Batango coffee or Batangas coffee. It flourished particularly within the coffee's melting pot in America, especially in the bustling coffee market at Pike Place in Seattle, Washington, where the renowned coffee establishment Starbucks first took root.

### **Coffee During the American Colonial Period and World War II**

When the *liberica* coffee first penetrated the United States market, it emerged as a favored variety within the Philippines, ultimately evolving into a cultural emblem in Batangas and Cavite. *Liberica* continues to possess a distinctive place in Filipino coffee culture to this day.

In 1922, the government authorities distributed more than 60,000 seedlings (of both *liberica* and *excelsa* coffee varieties) among the coffee cultivators of Batangas. The Provincial Inspector Ambrocio Lontok and Municipal Inspector Crispulo Bagui spearheaded this initiative, and these extra trees contributed to a greater yield of coffee in the region.

The Japanese occupation during World War II engendered significant problems in coffee production and trade. Farmers neglected the numerous plantations, resulting in a marked decline in coffee production during this tumultuous period. When the Japanese commandeered international trade routes, they halted coffee exports from the Philippines. Instead of prioritizing coffee cultivation, they redirected agricultural efforts towards local consumption or appropriated by Japanese authorities to bolster their military operations.

During the war, coffee rose to the status of a luxury item for a considerable number of Filipinos, primarily due to its scarcity. Alternative beverages and substitutes emerged, including roasted rice, corn, or sweet potatoes, which they ingeniously brewed to simulate coffee. Those who did not have access to *Kapeng Barako* resorted to stretching their supply by reusing grounds or diluting the brew.

In light of the prevailing hardships that were quite significant, coffee maintained its cultural importance throughout the war. Sharing a cup of coffee—regardless of whether it was a substitute version—became a way for individuals to uphold a semblance of normalcy and community amidst trying times. Coffee, therefore, continued to be a powerful symbol of hospitality, but scarcity often necessitated serving reduced portions or alternative iterations to guests. This dynamic illustrates the complex relationships between tradition and adversity because, despite the challenges, the act of sharing coffee persisted.

### **Post-War Recovery and Coffee Revitalization**

In the aftermath of the war, the Philippines encountered considerable obstacles in reconstructing the agricultural sector, particularly the coffee industry. Numerous plantations, which had previously thrived, were obliterated and the nation grappled with the arduous task of reinstating pre-war production levels. Efforts aimed at cultivating coffee encompassed the promotion of varieties such as *Kapeng Barako* and *Robusta*. These varieties had demonstrated superior resilience under the exigencies of wartime conditions. However, to avert future crises, it became evident to the populace that a transition towards more sustainable agricultural practices and diversification was imperative. The challenges the coffee farmers and their communities encountered during the war underscored their resourcefulness and contributed significantly to the resilience and adaptability inherent in Filipino coffee culture. Indeed, the scarcity of coffee experienced during World War II illuminated the tenacity and perseverance of the Batangueño farmers when confronted with adversity.

During the 1950s up to the 1960s, significant efforts were made to reinvigorate the Philippine coffee sector, particularly in light of the growing global demand for coffee. International interest in *robusta*, especially for its use in instant coffee production, facilitated the Philippines' discovery of a niche market for its coffee offerings. During this period, the archipelago was already home to four predominant varieties of coffee: *Arabica*, *Robusta*, *Excelsa* (a variety of

*liberica*), and *Kapeng Barako (liberica)*. They cultivated these varieties in distinct regions across the Philippines, with specific locales specializing in particular cultivars. The principal coffee-producing places in the Philippines at present encompass Batangas (*Kapeng Barako* or *liberica*), Cavite (*robusta*) and the Cordilleras, which includes Benguet and Sagada (*arabica*), as well as Bukidnon and Davao in Mindanao (*arabica* and *robusta*).

In the 1970s, Nestlé, a multinational corporation, partnered with local farmers to facilitate training initiatives and promote large-scale *robusta* coffee production for incorporation into instant coffee blends. The government established the Philippine Coffee Board to bolster the industry and advocate for coffee as a viable agricultural crop for local farmers. During this period, specifically in 1970, numerous Lipeños worked hard to sustain the propagation of *kapeng barako*.

### Challenges in the 1980s and the Decline in Coffee Production

During the 1980s, there was a significant decline in coffee production. The global surplus of coffee precipitated a dramatic decrease in prices. This downturn rendered coffee farming increasingly unprofitable. Therefore, numerous Filipino farmers abandoned coffee cultivation, culminating in a marked reduction in production levels. Although many farmers turned to alternative agricultural products because of the volatile pricing of coffee, the Philippine coffee industry encountered substantial setbacks. Because there were about 250,000 farmers who depended on the coffee industry, the government promulgated the Republic Act 2712 to prevent coffee imports to protect local producers (Atienza).

The nation's coffee production plummeted to unprecedented lows. Hence, coffee producers revitalized the coffee sector through various initiatives, including government programs, farmer cooperatives, and collaborations with international organizations. Given the persistent high demand for coffee, the government exerted considerable effort to rejuvenate the industry. For this reason, they implemented the Philippine Coffee Roadmap (2017-2022) to promote sustainable coffee production, augment yields and enhance Philippine coffee quality, enabling it to compete effectively in the global market.

The coffee sector underwent a significant renaissance, primarily due to the growing interest in specialty coffee and the people's increasing affinity for local varieties. Consequently, both local and international demand for unique types such as *kapeng barako*, *excelsa*, and the *arabica* markedly escalated organizations, including the Philippine Coffee Board, alongside various local non-governmental associations, have collaborated with governmental entities to advance sustainable coffee farming practices, provide essential training, and rejuvenate coffee production.

### Kapeng Barako as Base for Specialty Coffee Drinks

Although numerous varieties of coffee have emerged from *arabica*, *robusta*, and *liberica*, where coffee producers conceptualized specialty coffees, Batangueño baristas have the potential to innovate a specialty coffee using *kapeng barako* as its foundational element. This particular coffee can yield a unique flavor profile for such applications. Traditionally regarded as more robust and potent coffee, often characterized by earthy, nutty, or even faintly bitter notes, specialty coffee can harness distinctive traits. Provided it is prepared and brewed with meticulous attention.

*Kapeng barako* is frequently, yet not linked to bold, dark brews. However, employing a lighter roast can illuminate more nuanced flavor profiles; thus, it becomes particularly suitable for specialty coffee. Roasting at a medium to light gradient may accentuate delicate notes of sweetness, floral undertones, and acidity that baristas often overlook when brewed excessively dark. However, this approach aligns more closely with the fundamental principles of specialty coffee, which prioritize complexity and flavor diversity.

Although *kapeng barako* has not traditionally been utilized to the same degree in the specialty coffee domain (as beans such as *arabica*), the distinctive flavors and cultural relevance render it a viable foundation for producing high-quality specialty coffee. With meticulous attention to processing, roasting, and brewing methods, *kapeng barako* can emerge as a unique and a flavorful specialty coffee that appeals to local and international consumers.

### Making Use of Kapeng Barako in Specialty Coffees

Because of the unique characteristics of *kapeng barako*, it warrants consideration for inclusion in the specialty coffee spectrum. Here is the different specialty coffee where *kapeng barako* can be the base coffee:

**Espresso:** While *Coffea arabica* and *robusta* are the predominant varieties used in espresso coffee, *kapeng barako* offers a distinctive and bold flavor profile that can improve an espresso experience. Its formidable aroma substantially enhances the sensory perception of the espresso shot, and its viscous, syrupy texture is highly sought after in espresso preparation. In contrast to *Arabica*, renowned for its acidity and fruity notes, *kapeng barako* reveals complex, smoky, nutty, and woody flavors that contribute to an unparalleled espresso profile. When subjected to appropriate roasting and extraction techniques, it possesses the potential to unveil sweet, floral, and dark, chocolate undertones.

**Doppio:** *Kapeng Barako* is a viable alternative for *doppio*, although its pronounced, smoky, and earthly characteristics may yield a particularly bold *doppio* compared with traditional *Arabica*-based espresso. Its low acidity with a robust body renders it less sour yet more substantial than its *arabica* counterpart. A *doppio* with *kapeng barako* may be too intense or bitter for some. Hence, it is advisable to opt for a medium roast rather than a dark roast or partner it with *excelsa*, thereby introducing a fruity, complex nuance to the blend.

**Ristretto** is an espresso variant, being shorter and more concentrated and will amplify the already robust and full-bodied characteristics inherent in *kapeng barako*. Because the *ristretto* uses merely half the water of a standard espresso, it heightens the sweet, bold, and comparatively less bitter notes. Since *kapeng barako* has low acidity and is rich in deep, woody notes, it can yield an exceptionally smooth yet powerful *ristretto*. If a coffee enthusiast enjoys strong, low-acid coffee with a substantial body, then a *kapeng barako ristretto* represents an excellent selection.

**Lungo** (translated as long coffee [Italian]) consists of an espresso shot extracted with more water. Hence, *kapeng barako* heightens its bold, earthy, and nutty flavors, rendering the beverage less concentrated than a standard espresso. *Kapeng barako* is well-suited for *caffè lungo* due to its intense, full-bodied profile that maintains flavor even when diluted with additional water. Unlike *arabica* coffee, which tends to exhibit a weak flavor when over-extracted, *kapeng barako* preserves its assertiveness in a *lungo*.

**Caffè Americano.** The robust, full-bodied, and smoky characteristics of *kapeng barako* present a compelling alternative has naturally low acidity, resulting in a velvety, mellow Americano. This quality is excellent for those who favor black coffee without sharp acidity.

**Long Black Coffee** is created by delicately pouring a *doppio* or a double espresso over hot water, thereby preserving the crema and the markedly more concentrated flavor profile than *Caffè americano*. Traditional long blacks crafted from *Arabica* beans can often exhibit excessive acidity. Yet, *kapeng barako* offers a more harmonious, balanced taste. This characteristic renders it ideal for those who favor less sourness and a more substantial black coffee.

**Red Eye Coffee.** When we use *kapeng barako* as the basis for red-eye coffee, the resultant beverage is characterized by an extraordinary boldness, elevated caffeine concentration, and a remarkably intense flavor profile. Given that Red Eye Coffee integrates an espresso shot into a standard brewed coffee, using *kapeng barako* significantly augments the drink's potency and richness. Notably, *kapeng barako* possesses a higher caffeine content than *arabica*. A red eye crafted with *kapeng barako* serving as both the brewed coffee and the espresso base will be exceptionally caffeinated—ideal for individuals seeking a substantial energy boost.

**Cappuccino.** Since *cappuccino* is fundamentally composed of a 1:1:1 ratio of espresso, steamed milk and milk foam, the inclusion of *kapeng barako* as the espresso ensures that the flavor characteristics of coffee persist robustly, even when combined with milk. In contrast to *arabica*, which may succumb to the overpowering influence of milk, *kapeng barako* steadfastly preserves its boldness, thus rendering it particularly suitable for aficionados who favor a pronounced coffee essence in their *cappuccino*, while *arabica*-based *cappuccinos* may occasionally become overly acidic, especially when harmonized with milk.

**Caffè Latte.** Given that a *latte* typically comprises a singular shot of espresso and a more substantial quantity of steamed milk (usually adhering to a 1:3 ratio of espresso to milk), the use of *kapeng barako* as the espresso base yields a rich, full-bodied and creamy concoction and this ensures that coffee's flavor remains distinctive, even when combined with milk.

**Caffè Mocha.** The composition of a mocha—comprising espresso, steamed milk and chocolate (often in syrup or powder form)—is notably enhanced by the use of *kapeng barako* as the espresso base, thereby augmenting the drink's

depth and complexity with its smoky, nutty, and subtly woody flavors, rendering it an excellent complement to the rich and sweet essence of chocolate.

**Flat White.** Since a flat white is a double shot of espresso and steamed milk with a velvety microfoam texture, a *barako* coffee will give the drink a rich, full-bodied flavor. *Kapeng Barako's* bold and full-bodied profile will stand out even in a drink with more milk. Its naturally low acidity will make it ideal for a flat white because it will create a smooth and balanced cup if paired with steamed milk, preventing the coffee from becoming overly sharp or sour.

**Caffè Macchiato:** Using *kapeng barako* as the foundational element for *caffè macchiato* engenders a coffee markedly stronger, bolder, and more intense than its *arabica*-based counterpart. A *macchiato*, which has a shot of espresso complemented by a minimal quantity of steamed milk or foam, benefits from incorporating *kapeng barako*. The low acidity inherent in *kapeng barako* becomes an excellent choice for a *macchiato*, as the milk component does not hide the flavor.

**Caffè Cortado** comprises equal proportions of espresso and steamed milk. The milk in a *cortado* intends to harmonize with the pronounced coffee flavor rather than dominate it. Thus, the robustness of *kapeng barako* remains prominent even when combined with milk.

**Café au lait** usually consists of equal proportions of brewed coffee and steamed milk, distinguishing it from espresso-based concoctions such as *lattes* or *cappuccinos*. Using *kapeng barako* for the brewed coffee segment will bestow a full-bodied flavor that remains pronounced even in the presence of milk. Indeed, *kapeng barako* harmonizes well with the abundant milk content characteristic of a *café au lait*.

**Cold Brew Coffee.** *Kapeng barako* is an exceptional foundation for cold brew coffee because the bold, full-bodied, and naturally low-acid profile of *kapeng barako* coffee renders it particularly suitable for this brewing method. As a result, one obtains a smooth, rich, and invigorating coffee concentrate. Unlike the traditional hot brewing techniques that often extract bitterness and acidity, cold brewing accentuates the inherent flavors of *kapeng barako*, thus rendering it an outstanding choice for an iced coffee experience. For the one who seeks a potent morning coffee or an afternoon revitalizer, *kapeng barako* cold brew will undoubtedly deliver.

**Caffè affogato.** *Kapeng barako*, renowned for its full-bodied, smoky, and subtly chocolatey characteristics, harmonizes exquisitely with the inherent sweetness and creaminess of ice cream, thereby engendering a luxurious juxtaposition of hot and cold, as well as bitter and sweet sensations. Furthermore, *kapeng barako* distinctly asserts itself even against the sumptuousness of vanilla ice cream. Notably, the espresso derived from *kapeng barako* produces a rich, thick crema that enhances the overall texture and creates a sumptuous mouthfeel upon contact with the ice cream. Because *kapeng barako* possesses a higher caffeine concentration than *arabica*, an affogato crafted from it delivers a more potent kick, making it an exceptional post-meal indulgence or energy revitalizer.

**Irish Coffee.** Conventionally, Irish coffee comprises hot brewed coffee, Irish whiskey, brown sugar, and a delicate layer of lightly whipped cream—ingredients that harmonize exquisitely with the full-bodied, smoky, and subtly chocolatey profile of *kapeng barako*. This particular drink is renowned for its profound, rich, and smoky flavor, a characteristic that remains pronounced even when combined with whiskey and cream.

## Conclusion

Batangueño coffee aficionados typically exhibit a pronounced preference for coffee characterized by its boldness, strength, and full-bodied nature, accompanied by a rich aroma yet possessing low acidity. This inclination arises from the fact that coffee drinkers in Batangas and those from other provinces, who have sampled the pronounced characteristics of *kapeng barako* regard it as a superior option. Those who prefer milder, fruitier, or sweeter blends would find *Arabica* a more suitable alternative. Additionally, individuals who perceive *kapeng barako* as cost-prohibitive due to its limited availability may instead opt for *robusta*, and this raises a pertinent question: why should one choose *kapeng barako*?

*Kapeng barako* represents a significant facet of Batangueño heritage coffee. Supporting the cultivation of *kapeng barako* not only bolsters the livelihoods of local Batangueño farmers but also plays a crucial role in preserving traditional



Philippine coffee practices and industries. The distinctiveness of *kapeng barako*, especially when compared with other *liberica* varieties, can elevate Batangas' prominence on the global coffee stage. However, the prioritization of *liberica* as a preferred coffee option must originate with the Batangueño farmers themselves, who ought to recognize that the limited availability of *kapeng barako* could be advantageous primarily because the beans will have an enhanced market value relative to other coffee varieties.

The coffee farmers, producers, and roasters of Batangas must establish a standardized processing methodology conducive to the improvement, maintenance, and sustainability of various stages: cultivation, harvesting, brewing, and preparation to produce a more delectable coffee. For a superior and more gratifying *kapeng barako* experience, it is essential to employ precise roasting, grinding and extraction methods, which are crucial for attaining an ideal equilibrium between betterness and sweetness in traditional and specialty coffees.

Training programs must be implemented for aspiring baristas and coffee shop proprietors within the Batangas province, thus positioning Batangas as a sought-after destination for coffee aficionados. An excellent quality cup of *barako* coffee may evolve into a popular term among tourists frequenting various locales in Batangas. In this context, the selection of *Kapeng Barako* emerges as a pivotal factor in promoting Batangas and fostering a sustainable tourism development strategy for the entire province.

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