

Teacher's Guide: Coffee in Costa Rica and Colombia

In this activity, students explore the cultural, historical, and economic importance of coffee in **Costa Rica** and **Colombia**. Through research, comparison, and discussion, students analyze how coffee production has shaped national identity and cultural traditions in both countries.

Students will examine articles about coffee culture, evaluate the role coffee plays in everyday life and national development, and participate in a structured discussion about cultural recognition and heritage.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the activity, students will be able to:

- Identify the historical development of coffee production in Costa Rica and Colombia
- Explain how coffee influenced economic growth and rural communities
- Analyze the cultural significance of coffee in everyday life
- Compare cultural heritage recognition between two countries

Materials

- Student worksheet (Spanish and English version)
- Articles
- Comparison chart (included in worksheet)

Part 1: Introduction

Purpose: Connecting prior knowledge and introducing the cultural theme

What students do:

Students discuss the role of coffee in culture and society. Begin with a few guiding questions:

- What countries are known for producing coffee?
- Why might coffee be important beyond being a drink?
- Can food or drinks represent national identity?

The teacher introduces the context of coffee culture in Costa Rica and Colombia:

Coffee exports played an important role in **Costa Rica's** nineteenth-century development and continue to shape social traditions and everyday life.

In **Colombia**, coffee is strongly connected to national identity, and Colombia's "Coffee Cultural Landscape" has been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Part 2: Research

Purpose: Developing cultural knowledge through research

What students do:

Students work in pairs. Each pair is composed of:

- One student researching Costa Rica and completing the Costa Rica column on the worksheet
- One student researching Colombia and completing the Colombia column on the worksheet

Each student focuses on **one country only**. While reading the articles, they fill out the comparison chart for their assigned country.

Part 3: Compare & Discuss

Purpose: Sharing research findings, practicing listening comprehension, and developing a comparative understanding of coffee culture in Costa Rica and Colombia

What students do:

Students work with their partner and share their findings **orally in Spanish**.

1) Pair Exchange (in Spanish)

- Each student explains what they learned from the articles.
- While listening, the partner takes notes and completes the other country's section of their comparison chart.

By the end of this exchange, both students should have a fully completed comparison chart.

2) Class Discussion

Once all pairs have finished sharing their findings, the teacher leads a whole-class discussion using the guiding questions below.

Discussion questions:

- 1) How did coffee production develop historically in Costa Rica and Colombia?
- 2) How has coffee shaped rural communities and agricultural traditions?
- 3) How is coffee connected to everyday cultural practices and social interaction?
- 4) Why is coffee economically important for both countries?
- 5) What similarities and differences exist between the role of coffee in Costa Rica and Colombia?

3) Final Vote

After the discussion, students vote on the final question:

Should Costa Rican coffee receive official national heritage recognition similar to Colombia's UNESCO-recognized coffee heritage region?

Students should briefly explain their reasoning using the information gathered from the articles and the comparison chart.

Student Worksheet & Answer Guide

Comparison Chart

	Costa Rica	Colombia
Historical development of coffee	<u>Arguments and Examples</u>	<u>Arguments and Examples</u>
Role of coffee in rural communities and agricultural traditions	<u>Arguments and Examples</u>	<u>Arguments and Examples</u>
Cultural significance of coffee	<u>Arguments and Examples</u>	<u>Arguments and Examples</u>
Economic importance of coffee	<u>Arguments and Examples</u>	<u>Arguments and Examples</u>

Answer Key: Sample Comparison Chart

The answers below represent key points students may identify from the articles. Students may express these ideas using different wording or examples based on their interpretation of the sources.

	Costa Rica	Colombia
Historical development of coffee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee cultivation expanded in Costa Rica during the 19th century. • Coffee became one of the country's first major export products. • Coffee exports contributed to economic development and national modernization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee has long been one of Colombia's most important agricultural export products. • Coffee production has played a major role in the country's economic and social development. • In recent years, coffee was officially declared Colombia's national beverage, recognizing its historical and cultural importance.
Role of coffee in rural communities and agricultural traditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee cultivation contributed to the development of rural communities and local agricultural economies. • Many rural families have historically been involved in coffee production and farming. • Coffee farms are an important part of the country's agricultural landscape and rural traditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee production is deeply connected to rural communities and coffee-growing families. • Coffee culture reflects the connection between agriculture, heritage, and community life. • Coffee-growing traditions and farming practices have been passed down through generations.
Cultural significance of coffee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee is part of everyday life and social interaction in Costa Rica. • Sharing coffee is associated with hospitality and social connection. • Coffee forms part of Costa Rican cultural traditions and national identity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee is widely recognized as a symbol of Colombian national identity. • The UNESCO-recognized coffee heritage region of Colombia highlights the cultural traditions associated with coffee production.
Economic importance of coffee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee has historically been one of Costa Rica's main export industries. • The coffee industry contributed to the country's economic growth. • Coffee trade helped generate national income and economic development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coffee remains a key product in Colombia's national economy. • Coffee exports contribute to national income and support rural livelihoods. • The international reputation of Colombian coffee strengthens the country's position in the global coffee market.

Answer Key: Discussion Questions

1) How did coffee production develop historically in Costa Rica and Colombia?

Refer to the Comparison Chart

2) How has coffee shaped rural communities and agricultural traditions?

Refer to the Comparison Chart

3) How is coffee connected to everyday cultural practices and social interaction?

Refer to the Comparison Chart

4) Why is coffee economically important for both countries?

Refer to the Comparison Chart

5) What similarities and differences exist between the role of coffee in Costa Rica and Colombia?

Similarities

- **Coffee became a key export crop in the 19th century** in both Costa Rica and Colombia and helped integrate both countries into international markets.
- In both countries, coffee cultivation contributed to the **development of rural agricultural regions** and supported farming communities.
- Coffee production in both countries is associated with **family-based farming traditions**, where many small producers participate in cultivation.
- Coffee plays a role in **national identity and cultural pride** in both Costa Rica and Colombia.
- In both countries, coffee is connected to **daily consumption and social interaction**, such as sharing coffee in homes and social settings.
- Coffee production helped shape **national economic development** and generated income through exports.

Differences

- **International recognition**
Colombia's coffee culture has received international recognition through UNESCO's Coffee Cultural Landscape, while Costa Rica's coffee heritage has not received the same global designation.
- **National recognition**
Colombia has officially declared coffee the national beverage, whereas Costa Rica has not adopted a comparable official designation.
- **Global branding**
Colombian coffee has developed a strong global brand identity and reputation in international markets.
- **Scale of production**
Colombia is one of the largest coffee producers in the world, while Costa Rica produces coffee on a smaller scale but is known for high-quality specialty coffee.
- **Cultural framing**
In Colombia, coffee is widely promoted as a symbol of national identity, while in Costa Rica coffee is often discussed more in terms of historical development and social traditions.