

SAN JUAN BAUTISTA JAYACATLÁN | *Oaxaca*

San Juan Bautista Jayacatlán is located in Oaxaca in south-western Mexico. The town is a part of the ETLA District in the Valles Centrales Region. Much of the land is dedicated to agriculture and pastures for raising livestock.



TERRAIN

San Juan Bautista Jayacatlán covers a mere 74 miles² and rests at 4,133 feet elevation. The rivers of the Virgin, Salinas and Simón run through it.

CLIMATE

The average temperature of San Juan Bautista Jayacatlán is around 78°F and sees about 87 inches of rain annually.

AGAVES

CASTILLA

Part of the American Oaxacensis agave family, the Castilla is often discovered in the wild and is heavily influenced by its terroir.

TOBALÁ

A small agave varietal, the Tobalá has broad, spade-like leaves. Known to many as the king agave, Tobalá can only grow from seed and is becoming increasingly rare.



In the small village of San Juan Bautista Jayacatlán, maestro mezcaleros Israel Palestino Vasquez [pictured right, top] and Antonio Cisneros [pictured right, bottom] produce artisanal mezcal at their palenques in San Juan Bautista Jayacatlán.

PRODUCTION

1. Magueys are harvested from the hillsides of San Juan Bautista Jayacatlán.
2. The leaves and roots are cut off of the plant, revealing the piña, or heart, of the maguey.
3. The piñas are cooked in a small earthen pit oven over hot rocks and covered by the leaves of the maguey.
4. The cooked piñas are crushed using a tahona wheel pulled by a donkey.
5. Without the addition of artificial yeast, clay pot cold fermentation allows the sugars to ferment.
6. Israel then follows the “Ancestral” tradition by strictly using clay pot distillation to produce his mezcals.

TRADITION

This artisanal approach toward production creates an unadulterated style of mezcal, following traditions that have been passed down for over 200 years.

