

Commodity chain analysis of coca from latin america research paper example

[Health & Medicine](#), [Drugs](#)



Abstract

Peru is the largest producer of coca in the world. A lot of land in Peru has been dedicated to the growth of coca. Coca was a very important cash crop in Peru in the 19th century. The 20th century marked a decrease in export of coca. This was as a result of the revelation that coca was being used to make cocaine. The United States has since been the major drive force for the ban of coca. Farmers needed an alternative desperately for their product. The answer was coca wine. Coca wine is wine that has coca extractions. This wine has a very unique taste and provides a unique experience for wine enthusiasts.

Peru is the largest producer of coca leaves in the world. Most of the coca in Peru is grown in the rural areas by rural farmers. Due to the revelation about the potentially harmful uses of coca the United States of America has been on a campaign to reduce the amount of coca produced as much as possible. This means loss of revenue and job opportunities for thousands of rural farmers who earn their living as coca farmers. This attitude towards coca was triggered by the use of coca to make cocaine which is a narcotic substance with very addictive and dangerous side effects. It therefore became a matter of urgency for Peruvian coca farmers to find an alternative use for their agricultural product or risk being put out of business permanently. The silver lining for these Peruvian farmers came in the form of wine. Mariano amalgamated wanted to introduce a unique blend of wines that had never been tasted before and would have wine enthusiasts drooling. The answer was coca, coca wines to be exact.

Coca wine is an age old tradition in Peru. A blend of coca wine from Peru

dates back as far as 1863. Angelo Mariani was a chemist who was fascinated and intrigued by the effects of coca on the human body. Peru was the best place for growing coca since it has a low altitude that is optimum for the growth of coca. Angelo Mariani started treating his wine with coca leaves from Peru and the results were fascinating to say the least. This was a wine that could give people the effects of coca yet at the same time sideline threats like addiction and all the negative side effects associated with cocaine (Hellin, 2003).

Once the coca leaves are harvested they are dried using sunlight by the farmers themselves. Once dried the farmers transport the leaves to the factories. There is no collaboration between the farmers and the factories in terms of transportation of the product. This means that the farmers transport the products at their own expense sometimes over extensive distances. Once at the factory the farmers receive their pay in exchange for their product. After this exchange the real work begins. The leaves are first sorted and then cleaned. After cleaning they are further dried. Incorporation of coca into the wine is a rather simple process. The ethanol in the wine is the primary solvent. The ethanol in the wine extracts the coca from the coca leaves almost surgically. This alters the taste of the ethanol and in turn the taste of the wine. The quantity of coca in the wine is however closely monitored and calibrated. This is due to the stigma associated with taking large amounts of coca. This is also due to the fact that taking large amounts of coca is dangerous to human health. The amount of coca in the wine must therefore be kept at a universally acceptable minimum. Originally this wine contained no more than 6 mg of coca per ounce of fluid wine. This is safe by

any medical or social standards. Due to the demands of the market and the reception of the product overseas the amount of coca in coca wine was bumped up to 7.2 mg per ounce of fluid wine (Smith, 2009). Though significantly higher than the original amount, this concentration still lies in the safe zone as far as human health is concerned. This increase in concentration was also motivated by the markets. Other coca products especially in the United States had a much higher coca concentration and this increase was necessary to ensure effective competition and profits. The production of coca wine is very important to Peruvian farmers. Coca growing has been an age old tradition in Peru. For rural farmers coca growing has been the primary source of income. With an increase in negative perception of coca these farmers needed a new avenue in which to present their product so as to ensure the continued lifeline of their traditions as well as to put food on the table. Coca wine saved farmers from encountering devastating losses. In the absence of this product thousands of farms dedicated to the cultivation of coca would all go to waste. This would mean a waste of manpower and man-hours dedicated in the cultivation of coca. Coca wine provided an alternative use for coca thus ensuring that farmers can still rely on their products for financial prosperity (Starn, 2005). Coca wine greatly impacts the Peruvian culture. The people of Peru were previously not big on wine or other liquids alcoholic. The onset of coca wine changed the balance in Peru in terms of recreational drinks. More and more people from Peru started exploring this new product and marveling at its unique taste. The majority of the Peruvian population is Christian. The Peruvian government has especially strong ties with the Catholic Church.

This means that most regions of the country are under the umbrella of the Catholic Church. This has greatly encouraged the production of coca wine. This is because the Christian religion does not have firm laws forbidding the consumption of alcohol.

Coca wines are exported to Europe and primarily Italy. This process encourages cultural interaction between people on opposite sides of the world. It is fascinating to note that a man in Italy can find pleasure in a product made so far away in Peru.

References

- Burnett, J. (2005). *Liquid pleasures: a social history of drinks in modern Britain*. London: Routledge.
- Hellin, J., & Higman, S. (2003). *Feeding the market: South American farmers, trade and globalization*. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.
- Minnis, N. (2002). *South America*. Singapore: APA Publications ;.
- Smith, P. H. (2009). *Drug policy in the Americas*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Starn, O., Degregori, C. I., & Kirk, R. (2005). *The Peru reader: history, culture, politics* (2nd ed.). Durham: Duke University Press.