

# NICARAO

Press Release

July 13rd 2012

**Meier & Dutch**  
— Wholesale Cigar Distributors —



**A NEW CIGAR FOR OUR AMERICAN AFICIONADOS! PRESENTING THE “NICARAO”!** The long awaited cigar has finally arrived with solid partners for its distribution. **NICARAO, CIGARS INTERNATIONAL and MEIER & DUTCH** are happy to announce their partnership. What does this mean? A giant step in making Nicarao cigars available to aficionados in the U.S. has just been taken! [cigarsinternational.com](http://cigarsinternational.com), [meierdutch.com](http://meierdutch.com), and [nicaraocigars.com](http://nicaraocigars.com)

NICARAO cigars have been around the U.S. market for a while now - and chances are, that U.S. aficionados have already come across them once or twice.

Today the partnership with CIGARS INTERNATIONAL and MEIER & DUTCH marks a very positive progression for NICARAO in the U.S. market.

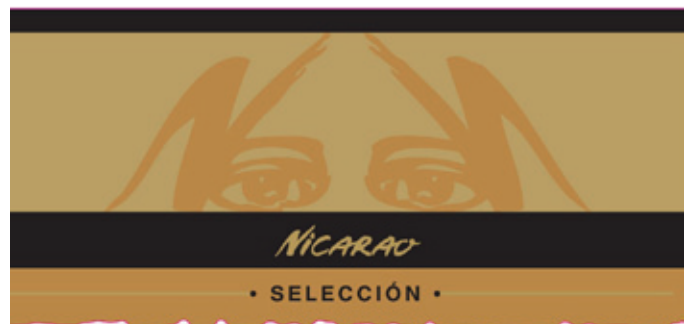
We believe that our NICARAO cigars are excellent in many different facets. Our goal is to present aficionados cigars with personality, done with dedication and love, and always perfectly rolled. Being a boutique company, our human size affords us the time and ability to be creative and different, producing some outstandingly tasty handmades, the NICARAO cigars.

Despite being a major player in the U.S. cigar industry, CIGARS INTERNATIONAL remains a customer-focused company, relating to its customers through unrivaled service and selection, and developing long-lasting relationships built on trust and loyalty.

Also MEIER & DUTCH Wholesale Cigar Distributor is probably one of the most appreciated distributor among cigar retailers. It is acclaimed for the diversity of its portfolio, quality of products, and swiftness of service. Always attentive to both retailers and cigars, MEIER & DUTCH is a reference in the U.S. cigar industry.

As we believe this connection between the business and the passion is an absolute necessity in making genuine and quality cigars, NICARAO is very happy to have such partners in spirit with CIGARS INTERNATIONAL and MEIER & DUTCH.

Together, our uncompromising approach to cigars making will help us deliver our best to the most demanding of aficionados.



# NICARAO

To mark these partnerships, two new lines of cigars have been developed: NICARAO SELECCIÓN and NICARAO HAVANA SUN GROWN, exclusively available in the U.S. market. In addition to these special cigars, our 3 lines will also be available: NICARAO CLASICO, NICARAO ESPECIAL, and NICARAO EXCLUSIVO.



NICARAO SELECCIÓN comes draped in an oily Havana Connecticut Oscuro wrapper and is loaded with bold, Cuban-seed long-fillers from Nicaragua. This rich, full-bodied and complex blend is perfectly balanced. NICARAO SELECCION delivers a delicious array of flavors: espresso, cocoa, pepper, cream, and a slight sweetness on the finish.

Sizes: Robusto 5x50 / Toro 6x50 / Torpedo 6x52 / Churchill 7x50

NICARAO HAVANA SUN GROWN employs a dark Sun Grown Habano (sp) wrapper and a rich blend of Nicaraguan and Honduran long-fillers to create a hearty, robust smoke that's loaded with character. Expect a creamy, medium to full-bodied experience that's brimming with notes of cedar, leather, cocoa, and pepper.

Sizes: Robusto 5x50 / Toro 6x50 / Torpedo 6x52 / Churchill 7x50

The logo has been crafted with as much care as the cigars themselves. The artistic concept envisioned usage of subtle techniques of tone on tone, dimension, embossing, feathering, and use of metallic colors against one another. The NICARAO logo is nicely eye-catching without being too prominent, delivering a refined punch. Like in our blends, personality and character are evident but remain true to their heritage and genuine. The artistic subtleties and refinements invite the aficionado to investigate further.

Also, with prices unmatched for the quality provided, we are expecting NICARAO to become a very familiar friend to aficionados around the country

Read attached interview and visit [cigarsinternational.com](http://cigarsinternational.com) and [meierdutch.com](http://meierdutch.com) to discover NICARAO!





## AN INTERVIEW WITH DIDIER HOUVENAGHEL



Didier Houvenaghel:  
The face behind Nicarao.

**Alex Svensson:** Didier, you have a degree in agricultural engineering with a specialty in black tobacco and you even studied in Cuba. Can you tell us more about your background, education, and what drove you to the tobacco industry?

**Didier Houvenaghel:** Yes, I studied Agronomy Engineering at the Free University of Brussels in Belgium. During those studies, my main course was general agronomy even though I always liked tropical crops. My attraction to agronomy was generated by my love for Latin American countries. I then earned a master's degree at the University of Hermanos Saiz de Pinar del Rio in Cuba. After that accomplishment, I began studying a real exciting topic: black tobacco and sugar cane; both are raw materials in cigars and rum. Beyond agricultural elements, this journey was getting me closer to my passion for cigars and to my dream of understanding Latin America from the inside. My family has connections with Cuba so I was eager to discover the island that was universally famous for its cigars, rum, salsa, and revolution. Believe it or not, my connection to tobacco and cigars all started because I was bad at statistics! During my first year of engineering, the statistic courses were pretty hard and I was a poor student. A friend of mine, a PhD student, excelled at statistics and offered me his help. Consequently, I started to frequent his lab where he introduced me to the pleasure of tasting cigars. He was a passionate aficionado and he was good at transmitting his passion. Eventually, I excelled at statistics and a little bit at cigars too!

**AS:** That's quite an impressive resume. So how did you go from agricultural engineer to having your own cigar brand?

**DH:** Through my passion and the writing of my

book: *The Cigar: From Soil to Soul*. After I completed my studies in Cuba, I began learning about the production of black tobacco leaves, but not so much regarding the rolling and tasting of cigars. Wishing to expand my knowledge, I bought all the books I could find on cigars and started reading. Not finding satisfying answers to my questions, I decided to collect my own notes on cigars and tobacco. Quickly, my notes naturally became a book project. To give my book a neutral orientation, I began collecting information and traveled to most of the cigar-producing countries.

This was a fantastic and challenging period of my life. I visited libraries, laboratories, companies, and have met a variety of people who enriched me on cigar science, but also in the values and experience of life itself. At one point, I visited Nicaragua where I met some Cubans that wanted to start producing cigars there. A rather new country in the cigar industry, Nicaragua was recovering from a recent, severe civil war and was living the first moment of the development of the majority of its industries. I was immediately impressed by this period of Nicaraguan reconstruction and I could feel the effects or potential effects of the cigar industry.

**AS:** Your dedication to cigars definitely shows and size and geological diversity, which was perfect for bringing the tobaccos there a rare richness.

I was also amazed by the country's cigar tradition; Nicaragua has always been recognized for the quality of its soils. After the Agrarian reforms and after the nationalizations from the

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## NICARAO

**Nicarao Exclusivo:** A complex Nicaraguan puro blend with a maduro wrapper. Medium to full-bodied with notes of sweetness masked by toasted spices. Expels a chocolaty, coffee-like aroma.

**Nicarao Especial:** A medium to full-bodied Habano-wrapped Nicaraguan puro with a bold, robust character. Quite aromatic and incredibly rich, expect notes of toast with a sweetness on the finish.

**Nicarao Clásico:** A Nicaraguan puro with a Rosado Claro Habano wrapper from Jalapa. Complex, with medium-bodied spice and a floral aroma.

**Nicarao Selección:** Cuban-seed, Nicaraguan long fillers make up this Havana Connecticut Oscuro wrapped beauty. Full-bodied with complex flavors ranging from espresso and cocoa to pepper and cream.

**Nicarao Havana Sun Grown:** Masked with a Sun Grown Habano wrapper with Nicaraguan and Honduran long leaf fillers. Hearty and robust with hints of leather, pepper, and a cedar-like aroma.

## The Art of Blending... Evolved

NEW	NICARAO EXCLUSIVO (Medium)				NICARAO ESPECIAL (Robusto)				NICARAO CLÁSICO (Habano)				NICARAO SELECCIÓN (CT)				NICARAO HAVANA SUN GROWN			
	Size	Single	Box of 20	Price	Size	Single	Box of 20	Price	Size	Single	Box of 20	Price	Size	Single	Box of 20	Price	Size	Single	Box of 20	Price
	Don Bata (2.0"x5.6")		16.00	20	\$219.95	Gordo (6.0"x5.6")		10.00	20	\$149.95			Churchill (7.0"x5.6")		14.16	20	\$49.95			
	Pranide (6.5"x5.2")		16.00	20	\$219.95	Herrero (6.5"x4.8")		10.00	20	\$149.95			Robusto (6.0"x5.6")		13.32	20	\$39.95			
	Robusto (6.5"x5.6")		16.00	20	\$219.95	Toro (6.0"x5.2")		10.00	20	\$149.95			Toro (6.0"x5.6")		13.74	20	\$44.95			
	Salomon (7.1"x5.8")		15.00	10	\$129.95								Torpedo (6.0"x5.2")		14.16	20	\$49.95			
	Toro (6.0"x5.2")		15.00	20	\$215.95															

**AS:** Who should read this? Anyone in particular, or is your book for the experienced enthusiast?

**DH:** Any aficionado or enthusiast eager to develop his or her knowledge about cigars, their production, their quality, and mainly the pleasure of enjoying them; in a fun, simple but deep way.

**AS:** Didier, I am excited to see your product finally reach the U.S. Your cigars are fantastic. Is there anything you want to add before we wrap up the interview?

**DH:** Thanks for your nice words. The character and the quality of Nicarao cigars have been recognized and we've had nice success. But nothing is carved in marble. I am sure that the personality and balance of our blends will talk loud and conquer the heart of aficionados in the U.S. Our type of cigars, their strength, aromas and combustion, should correspond to the tastes of American aficionados. At the same time, tasters here have a fine palate; they are sophisticated and demanding. So nothing is done for sure, never. I will be very demanding with the execution of production. I'll pay extra attention to quality control and I will use evolution to increase the standards. I want everything I produce to be more than perfect! This will also be an opportunity to reinvent ourselves, improve ourselves, and then innovate. It will be very challenging at times but also very positive for Nicarao. But finally, the important idea here is the transmission of passion. We produce with love, and the very best present I can receive is to see or hear an aficionado experiencing those feelings while tasting Nicarao. Emotions are the best return I can expect. It would be a wonderful present. ■

**FREE BOOK**

**The Cigar: From Soil to Soul**

Get an in-depth look at Didier, the mastermind behind Nicarao as he clearly depicts the life of a cigar in great detail, from soil to soul.

**The Cigar: From Soil to Soul | FREE with Nicarao & Sun Grown purchases ONLY!**

**65% OFF | Only \$29.95**

**Sample of 10**

**Nicarao 2 x 5 Collection**

Take home a slice of Nicaraguan greatness. This collection features nearly all of what Nicarao has to offer, including Didier's book: *The Cigar: From Soil to Soul*. Includes 10 cigars, 2 each of Nicarao Havana Sun Grown, Nicarao Selección, Nicarao Clásico, Nicarao Especial, and Nicarao Exclusivo.

• **FREE BOOK** 10 cigars • \$29.95 • **USE + OFFER**

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----- End of Press Release -----

If you feel like discovering more about the Nicarao environment, please refer to our

- Website [www.nicaraocigars.com](http://www.nicaraocigars.com)

- Facebook Community [www.facebook.com/pages/Nicarao/170603460825](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nicarao/170603460825)