The Story of Cardamom in Guatemala

Did you _____ that Guatemala is the world's _____ producer of one of the _____ expensive spices on Earth? It is not _____ or cinnamon, but cardamom! Often called "_____ _____," cardamom is a _____ green pod with dark _____ inside. It has a strong, _____, and spicy aroma. Although cardamom is deeply _____ to Guatemalan farming today, its _____ actually began thousands of miles _____.

Cardamom is originally _____ to the humid _____ of southern India. For centuries, India _____ the main _____ of this valuable _____. However, in the early 20th _____, a German _____ farmer named Oscar Majus Kloeffer introduced cardamom to Guatemala. In 1913, he _____ the very first _____ to the region of Alta Verapaz, near Cobán. He *wanted* to see if the spice _____ grow in the _____, wet _____ of the Guatemalan highlands.

The experiment was a _____ success. The _____ volcanic _____, heavy rain, and _____ humidity of Alta Verapaz provided the _____ environment for the plants to _____. _____, local _____ realized that cardamom was a fantastic _____ because it required less chemical treatment than coffee and fetched high _____ on the international _____. _____, Guatemala produces around 60 to 70 _____ of the entire global cardamom _____. Surprisingly, Guatemalans do not use _____ cardamom in their own _____ daily food. Instead, almost the _____ harvest is exported _____ the world.

In Guatemala, cardamom is much _____ than _____ a plant; it _____ the lives of over 300,000 small farming families, especially in _____ communities. _____ visiting the lush _____ of Cobán can tour local cardamom plantations, _____ the freshly _____ pods, and learn about the amazing _____ of this humble plant that became a global Guatemalan _____.

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