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Carlos Oliva, founder of Tabacalera Oliva S.A. (Tabolisa), has been in the tobacco business all of his life, and was making cigars in Honduras before coming to Nicaragua to open a facility—originally in Ocotol, then Esteli. The company moved into its current factory about four years ago and at the time thought it was going to be too big, explains Gilberto Oliva who, along with his brother Carlos, run the factory. “Now, it’s too small,” he says. Production stands at 30,000 cigars per day, but with a recent addition to the building, Oliva hopes to reach 40,000. A year ago, the family also opened a facility in Danlí, Honduras, where it is currently producing another 12,000 cigars daily, gradually increasing production to as much as 19,000 daily.



Gilberto (l.) and Jose (r.) Oliva of Tabacalera Oliva.

The company has expanded its premium product line over the past few years, emphasizing several different blends in its flagship Oliva brand—Serie G, a medium-bodied blend and Serie O, a Nicaraguan puro—both offered in natural or maduro. Special S is a medium- to full-bodied, complex blend with a sun-grown Ecuadorian wrapper, while the newest and currently best-selling release—Serie V—is a very full-bodied blend. Every two or three years, the company also releases a Master Blends, a limited “artisanal” blend currently in its third edition.