



The Tobacco Beetle

Tobacco beetles, and tobacco worms are a common occurrence in cigars. An expensive collection of Cuban's can indeed get destroyed by these pesky little insects. Please note that the above image is a highly magnified image. A cigar beetle will have the size of a grain of sand. You may also notice small holes in the wrapping of your cigars. Many major manufacturers today take the liberty to pre-freeze the cigar leaves even before rolling, nevertheless one day you might need to use the advice outlined in this resource.

Tobacco beetles derive from eggs deposited on the tobacco leaves during growth. Over time, the eggs naturally hatch if the correct conditions apply. Ideal beetle hatching conditions consist of higher temperature and higher humidity (typically over 75 degrees F and 80% RH). If you are an occasional smoker, you may open up your humidor one day only to find you are not the only one enjoying your cigars! Despite of the fact that the tobacco leaves are dried and hung, these eggs still sometimes stay on the leaves as they are virtually undetectable. The only way to avoid damage of your cigars by these insects is to prep your cigars once they are bought.

Prepping the cigars involves freezing the eggs in a freezer, killing off all the eggs. You must be careful, however to only freeze the cigars for an allocated amount of time, or else you could damage them in other ways. If there are eggs in the tobacco, you shouldn't notice the difference in the flavor or taste.

Here's how to correctly freeze your cigars, avoiding damage:

Place your cigars in a sealed, freezer safe container, like a Tupperware container. Allow them to freeze for about 4 days to up to a week. If you can find a deep freezer, all the better. At this time, we need to slowly unthaw the cigars. Take them out of the freezer and place them in your refrigerator for about a day. After a day you may remove them from the refrigerator and place them in room temperature. If you pull them directly from the freezer into a humid room, you could run the risk of bursting the cigars from speedy humidity absorption. Take care, and avoid the tobacco beetle and tobacco worm problem.

The best means of defense of these insects are to maintain consistent temperature and humidity below the hatching point threshold. If you keep your humidor in your basement, were the temperature typically does not get any higher than 70 degrees F, and the humidity stays below 75% RH, you will most likely not have any problem at all with the Cigar Beetle.