

A Long Time Brewing

Specialty Coffeehouses Are Cropping Up Around Town

Written by Joshua Lurie



Lattes become art at Espresso Profeta

Los Angeles has long been bereft of coffee culture. Thanks to an exciting new crop of specialty coffeehouses, the city finally warrants the kind of caffeinated acclaim that both Portland and Seattle have already garnered.

INTELLIGENTSIA

In the past year Silver Lake has become the epicenter of LA's coffee culture, and this Sunset Junction coffeehouse is a big reason why. Doug Zell's Chicago-based company has established a reputation for delivering farm-to-cup coffee, sourcing green coffee via direct trade from Africa, Central and South America, then roasting the beans locally in Glassell Park. Pass under twin arches to find an L-shaped coffee bar that encourages interaction with brewing-savvy baristas. Espresso drinks are prepared to order using a custom Synesso. Clover coffees are listed on a countertop blackboard.

**3922 W. Sunset Blvd., Silver Lake
323.663.6173**

www.intelligentsiacoffee.com

LA MILL

Craig Min has a similar commitment to the farmer's role in coffee production, telling each farmer's story in LA Mill's bound menus. LA Mill roasts beans in Alhambra and brews coffee in a glass-fronted Silver Lake space that Rubbish Interiors' Scott Mangan designed using refurbished furniture and hand-painted



Caffe Luxxe

wallpaper. Market-driven coffees are brewed using five different extraction methods, such as Clover, Chemex and siphon. Experimental signature beverages include Coffee and a Jelly Doughnut: strawberry "essence" with donut-infused milk and espresso. Providence's Michael Cimarusti contributes premium food offerings like pork belly panini and chai-spiced duck breast with black olive and rosemary honey.

**1636 Silver Lake Blvd., Silver Lake
323.663.4441**

www.lamillcoffee.com

CAFFE LUXXE

On the Westside, Mark Wain and Gary Chau have set the coffee pace on chic Montana Avenue in a sleek space with high, exposed-wood ceilings and dapper black-clad baristas. Caffe Luxxe debuted in June 2006 with a focus on textbook European-style espresso drinks with artistically crafted crema. As a result of Wain's Argentinean descent, he sells addictive dulce de leche cookies that pair well with coffee. Wain and Chau plan to open a roasting facility within the next year in order to become a full-fledged

farm-to-cup shop. In the meantime, a second Caffe Luxxe is set to debut in the former Brentwood home of Dutton's Bookstore Café.

**925 Montana Avenue, Santa Monica
310.394.2222**

www.caffeluxxe.com

ESPRESSO PROFETA

Mitch Hale was one of the original baristas at Seattle's Espresso Vivace and managed Caffe Luxxe before partnering in September with Samantha Langford on Espresso Profeta ("the espresso prophet"). Hale's mentor, David Schomer, is the prophet in question, and Profeta's northern Italian-style espresso drinks are made with beans roasted at Schomer's Vivace. Every espresso shot is pulled short and sweet using LA's first Synesso and the drinks are decorated with intricate latte art. The horseshoe-shaped brick building dates back to 1927 and previously housed a wig store and Christian Science reading room.

**1129 Glendon Avenue, Los Angeles
310.208.3375**