

# PUTTING BEANTOWN ON THE MAP

BY KATHLEEN PIERCE

Serious purveyors of serious coffee – single-origin, specially brewed, pricey cups worth a trip across town – have arrived in Boston.

From the South End to the South Shore, serious coffee is suddenly swirling through Boston. “Three years ago there was one shop in town doing anything progressive. Now there are a dozen,” says Jamie van Schyndel, general manager of Barismo, a small-batch roaster in Arlington that supplies beans to a handful of local cafes.

Thinking Cup, Render Coffee, and Barrington Coffee Roasting Co. are part of a new breed of coffeehouse that’s singly dedicated to coffee’s complex flavors, its origins, and, of course, its preparation, joining the very few stalwarts like Simon’s Coffee Shop in Cambridge, which has been living up to (coffee) Beantown’s name for a decade. Out-of-town coffee roasters and suppliers are starting to notice.

Durham, North Carolina,

What’s not to love about a Gibraltar at Simon’s Coffee Shop in Cambridge?

wholesaler Counter Culture Coffee hired Jake Robinson eight months ago to help the company establish roots here. “I feel passionately that Boston is one of the next big coffee towns,” says Robinson, who has worked at Espresso Royale and Pavement Coffeehouse in Boston; the trend is decades old on the West Coast and has more recently drifted east. Counter Culture is building a training center here to school the cafe pros known as baristas in latte art — designs made with just the right mix of steamed milk and espresso.

Back in the thick of things is local coffee godfather George Howell, who this winter opened a place in Newtonville after a hiatus away from the local cafe scene. The founder of Coffee Connection, one of the East Coast’s first independently owned companies to source and roast beans, took over Taste Coffee House in February and the crowds followed. “Boston is still getting started compared to the West Coast,” says Howell, “but there are many places that are on the edge.” ■

Send comments to [magazine@globe.com](mailto:magazine@globe.com).



At Thinking Cup in the South End, the hazelnut latte is flavored with house-made hazelnut syrup.



## • WHERE TO SIP •

### BARISMO

169 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, 339-368-7300, [barismo.com](http://barismo.com)

#### WHAT TO TRY

Coffee roasted in-house in small batches and brewed in a suspended cloth filter (water temperature varies by bean) to minimize bitterness and maximize the fruit and floral flavors. \$2.95 for 5 ounces

### THINKING CUP

165 Tremont Street, Boston, 617-482-5555, [thinkingcup.com](http://thinkingcup.com)

#### WHAT TO TRY

Hazelnut latte with syrup (house-made from roasted and pureed hazelnuts, brown sugar, and water), two shots of Stumptown Coffee’s Hair Bender espresso, and foamed milk. \$4 for 8 ounces

### BARRINGTON COFFEE ROASTING CO.

346 Congress Street, Boston, 857-277-1914, [barringtoncoffee.com](http://barringtoncoffee.com)

#### WHAT TO TRY

An espresso brewed from

the Barrington Gold blend or a single-origin espresso. \$2.10 for 1¼ ounces

### PAVEMENT COFFEEHOUSE

1096 Boylston Street, Back Bay, 617-236-1500, and 44 Gainsborough Street, Back Bay, 617-859-7080, [pavementcoffeehouse.com](http://pavementcoffeehouse.com)

#### WHAT TO TRY

The Spanish Latte, made from espresso, steamed milk, and a little sweetened condensed milk. \$4 for 12 ounces

### RENDER COFFEE

563 Columbus Avenue, South End, 617-262-4142, [rendercoffeebar.com](http://rendercoffeebar.com)

#### WHAT TO TRY

Pour-over coffee. Choose from one of the single-origin Counter Culture Coffee selections to see this chem lab-meets-cafe in action. \$2.50 to \$5 for 12 ounces

### VOLTAGE COFFEE & ART

295 Third Street, Kendall Square, 617-714-3974, [voltagecoffee.com](http://voltagecoffee.com)

#### WHAT TO TRY

A specialty latte. Try the Atticus Finch, slightly sweetened with home-made vanilla-and-burnt-brown sugar syrup, or Beyond the Sea, with homemade caramel and sea salt. \$3.75 for 8 ounces

### SIMON’S COFFEE SHOP

1736 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, 617-497-7766, [facebook.com/Simon-sCoffeeShop](https://facebook.com/Simon-sCoffeeShop)

#### WHAT TO TRY

A Gibraltar, which is the Simon’s name for the drink known as a cortado, or two shots of espresso and an equal amount of steamed milk. Here it’s served in a rocks glass with fancy art on top. \$2.75 for 4 ounces

### CAFE FIXE

1642 Beacon Street, Brookline, 617-879-2500, [cafefixe.com](http://cafefixe.com)

#### WHAT TO TRY

Espresso from a rotating menu of guest roasters such as Novo, Stumptown, and Gimme! Coffee. \$2.57 for 1½ ounces

### RIDE STUDIO CAFE

1720 Massachusetts Avenue, Lexington, 339-970-0187, [ridestudiocafe.com](http://ridestudiocafe.com)

#### WHAT TO TRY

The cortado. Here it’s made from Stumptown espresso and milk from High Lawn Farm in the Berkshires. \$3.20 for 4 ounces

### GEORGE HOWELL COFFEE CO.

311 Walnut Street, Newtonville, 617-332-6886, [terroircoffee.com](http://terroircoffee.com)

#### WHAT TO TRY

Chemex pour-over (so you can witness the alchemy) from one of several kinds of Terroir Select coffees, which are ground on the spot. \$4 to \$5, depending on the coffee selected, for 12 ounces

### REDEYE ROASTERS

3 Otis Street, Hingham, 781-740-2545, [redeyeroasters.com](http://redeyeroasters.com)

#### WHAT TO TRY

Cold-brewed iced coffee made from house-roasted specialty beans. \$2.80 for 16 ounces