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COFFEE FIEND

Mid City Caffe

Finding good coffee in D.C. one cup at a time.



Guillaume Bernardeau

By Chelsea Bauch September 12, 2009

Let's be honest: Washington, D.C.'s coffee scene is mediocre at best. Despite an international population with non-stop schedules, this city is sorely lacking in anything but ubiquitous Starbucks and Caribou fuel stations. Fortunately, the newly opened [Mid City Caffe](#) is a perfect venue for anyone with a more refined coffee palate—or, really, any taste buds whatsoever—and an affinity for that classic coffee-house atmosphere.

The coffee

Not a destination for those in need of a quick caffeine fix, Mid City Caffe instead encourages a slow, coffee-appreciating experience. Made with strong [Counter Culture Coffee](#)—one of the better sustainable/fair trade/organic/baby-saving brands—each cup is ground and brewed individually when you order. The espresso has an especially bitter bite that's perfect for strong flavor-seekers, while the cappuccino and latte foam is artfully steamed and poured. Those with a little extra time to sit and savor can even order a personal French press to keep at the table. (A small serves 1-2 cups, a medium 3-4.)

The food

Like most good coffee shops, Mid City keeps its edibles to a well-selected minimum. With muffins from Hawthorne Bakery, New York-style bagels (offered with toppings like homemade Nutella), and healthy choices such as granola and yogurt, there's no shortage of satisfying morning options. Those with a heartier appetite—or just a strong sweet tooth—will also enjoy the selection of locally baked cakes displayed on old-fashioned ceramic trays, including a dense spice cake made with sweet potatoes and a coffee cake with a generous cinnamon kick.

The atmosphere

Situated on that increasingly bougie strip of 14th Street NW littered with galleries, gelato shops, and gentrified

eateries, Mid City maintains a certain rugged charm in its loft space above [Miss Pixie's](#) furniture store. The interior decor retains some of the original auto-shop aesthetic, but the atmosphere mostly veers toward airy, art deco-inspired simplicity. This retro vibe is compounded by a black-and-white checkered floor and pop art along the walls of both the main room and the cozy, vinyl-stool-lined side nook, making for optimal escapism and inviting comfort.

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