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The New Southampton Coffee Experience at Hampton Coffee



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The third and newest addition to the Hampton Coffee Company is open for business in Southampton! The family owned java business set up shop inside what was previously a car dealership, so there was plenty of room to create a unique space for this urban-style coffee hangout. The décor is retro-industrial with an urban, modern ambience, all black walls with stainless steel accents, earthy touches like the custom-made wooden tables, and a large projection of the company logo as the focal point of the space.

There's a whole world of coffee to discover inside, and whether you're a coffee fanatic or an occasional drinker, store manager and java genius Richard Cummins welcomes everyone to visit and try out the new coffee experience in Southampton.

The new location has its own enormous coffee-roasting machine on display. Besides the heavenly aroma of freshly roasting coffee wafting through the air, it's pretty cool to see the process done right in front of you. Raw coffee beans come in different shades of green, and as Cummins explained each bean is different—the same concept that applies to wine grapes. A bean grown in Indonesia will have different qualities from a bean grown in Tanzania. It will have differing qualities of taste, smell, acidity, etc. We watched as a batch of beans went from a soft green to a bold brown within minutes, and Cummins explained that roasting the beans is a tricky process as they can be over-roasted quickly.

The Southampton Coffee Experience is an opportunity to have a real foodie experience in your local coffee shop. For only \$6.95 per person, grab a seat at the coffee bar and a specially-trained barista will give you a coffee education. There are two ways you can enjoy this experience. Option number 1—choose one coffee bean, and the barrister will brew it two ways: the pour-over brew and the siphon brew. The pour over brew is what it sounds like—the freshly ground coffee (weighed out by your barista) is put into a funnel-like vessel lined with a filter, sitting over another vessel which the coffee will flow into. The barista slowly pours the water—at 205°, the perfect brewing temperature— into the coffee funnel, pouring carefully so you end up with liquid that is “cleaner” than most brewing methods. The siphon brewing method is like something out of science class, with a Benson burner and all! The water is in a circular beaker, and is heated up by a Benson burner. The fresh coffee grounds are put into a cylindrical vessel that attaches to the circular one. Once the water begins to boil, science takes over and the water is sucked up into the vessel with the coffee. Then the barista shuts off the heat and the fresh coffee slowly drains through the filter into the circular beaker, and *voila!* another perfect cup of java. If you choose option number 2, you select one brewing method and two different types of coffee and compare.

We chose option 1, with the Sumatra blend from Indonesia. It's amazing how you can taste the difference in the two brewing methods. I preferred the pour-over brew. I found it to make a much “cleaner” tasting cup of coffee, while the siphon brew, while still tasty, was much heavier with more acidity to it. It was an enlightening and fun experience, and the knowledgeable staff make it the “Experience” it is.

The new Southampton location will soon be offering classes for coffee-minded patrons, one being a general Coffee 101 tasting class where knowledgeable baristas will lead you through the different kinds of coffee from all around the globe, and how to taste them and what to look for. The other will be a home brewing class, where you can learn how to make your perfect cup of coffee—with Hampton Coffee's freshly roasted beans. They also plan to stay open late in the summer with extended hours, and some nights they'll have live music and entertainment for you to enjoy along with your java.

Visit the Hampton Coffee Company in Southampton at 749 County Road 39A and on the web at hamptoncoffeecompany.com.