



FEATURED ARTICLE

Higher ground: the 10 best coffee shops in Toronto

Jessica Lam Lonely Planet Writer

SHARE



Toronto's vibrant coffee scene is bustling with dozens of independent cafés and other places to perk up. Whether you're looking for cool places to shoot for the 'Gram or sipping your way through the city, you're bound to fall in love with several Toronto coffee shops. Here are 10 of our favorites you should check out when you need a caffeine fix.



Balzac's Coffee in Toronto's Distillery District © Jessica Lam / Lonely Planet

Curl up with a book at Balzac's Coffee

When in doubt, step into one of Balzac Coffee's many picturesque locations across the city. There's a reason it has been around since the 90s. At Balzac's, you'll find artisanal drinks made with fair trade organic coffee, sugar and cocoa, as well as organic and locally sourced milk. While all the locations are picturesque, the rustic ambiance and stunning exposed brick of the Distillery District location make it the best location to visit.



Lattes and pastries from Boxcar Social © Jessica Lam / Lonely Planet

Travel in place at Boxcar Social

Boxcar Social is so much more than just a coffee shop; it's all about taking people to places they've never been, through the best coffees, wines, craft beers and whiskeys of the world. With flavors from around the globe, it will definitely have something to your liking. They've also got some great eats. Their avocado toast is divine. A café by day and bar by night, you can hit up Boxcar Social at any time, whether you're looking for a spot to work or schmooze with some new friends.



Asian-inspired drinks from Rustle & Still Café © Jessica Lam / Lonely Planet

A taste of Asia at Rustle & Still Café

Nowhere in Toronto will you find more authentic Vietnamese coffee than at Rustle & Still Café. Located in Koreatown, the café sources its high-quality Arabica coffee beans directly from farmers in Vietnam. The menu is inspired by Vietnamese tastes and flavors and includes freshly made *banh mi* sandwiches and Asian-inspired coffees and teas. The iced coffee is strong, but condensed milk adds the right amount of sweetness. With its chic Scandinavian-inspired decor, wood furnishings and abundant plants, Rustle & Still is an excellent spot to catch up with a friend or take it easy on a busy day.



The Canadiana latte from Sorry Coffee Co © Jessica Lam / Lonely Planet

Sip and shop at Sorry Coffee Co

[Sorry Coffee Co](#) is a Pinterest dream with gorgeous marble counters and copper accents. Located behind clothing & lifestyle store Kit and Ace, this coffee shop may be tiny, but it has some rad coffee. Sorry sources its coffee beans from Toronto-based roaster de Mello Palheta, and the takeout cups feature designs by local artists. Their name is unapologetically Canadian and a tribute to being so – we all know how polite Canadians are, eh? Definitely try the Canadiana latte – you’ll thank us later.



Jimmy's Coffee's infamous yellow lids © Jessica Lam / Lonely Planet

A Toronto staple: Jimmy's Coffee

Each Jimmy's Coffee location is unique, but two things are certain: you'll always feel at home and you'll always recognize the iconic yellow takeout lids. Jimmy's is the perfect spot to wind down and get some work done, and with several locations there are lovely, cozy patios across the city. The coffee is locally roasted in the traditional Italian style and the nitro cold brew is a must-try.



Floor details at Dineen Coffee © Jessica Lam / Lonely Planet

Get fancy at Dineen Coffee Company

With its smooth marble tables, red leather banquettes and intricate tiled floors, Dineen Coffee is the perfect spot to visit if you're looking for somewhere more posh and elegant. The central downtown spot is located inside a Toronto heritage building and features a chandelier that once hung in the historic Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Talk about a taste of history. The coffee is sourced locally from Social Coffee Roasters, and it creates its own unique blends, such as the Temperance blend (named for the main location by Temperance Street).



Colourful lattes at Versus Coffee © Jessica Lam / Lonely Planet

Drink the art at Versus Coffee

Feeling colorful? Versus Coffee is your go-to place for vibrantly-hued lattes. Like Sorry Coffee Co, it sources its coffee from local roaster de Mello Palheta. Sloane teas – another local favorite – is also on the menu. Beyond coffees and teas, there's an extensive list of beers, wines and cocktails. While the space isn't big, the minimalist white interior and soaring ceilings make up for it.



Dainty drinks and eats at Forget Me Not Café © Jessica Lam / Lonely Planet

Go retro at Forget Me Not Café

You won't forget how cozy and intimate this adorable café is. Forget Me Not Café is a dainty little spot filled with pretty vintage details and neat gifts and kitchenware available for purchase. It's a café and gift shop in one. Be sure to give the Nutella latte and matcha cookie a taste.



Tandem Coffee's black sesame latte and sugar cookies © Jessica Lam / Lonely Planet

Get together at Tandem Coffee

This funky little spot is perfect for coffee dates or catching up on your latest read (especially since there isn't WiFi). Tandem's boho modern space features wood details, eclectic decor and even a lovely plant wall. It's got the classic café staples as well as unique drinks, most notably it's Asian-inspired items – including the delicious black sesame latte and a sugar cookie shaped like the Japanese waving-cat figurine, *maneki-neko*!



Patio drinks at Rooster Coffee House © Jessica Lam / Lonely Planet

It's all funky at Rooster Coffee House

If black, white and heaps of natural light is your aesthetic, Rooster Coffee House is your place. The tiled walls and floors, eccentric lighting fixtures and quirky decor make for a great spot to lounge while getting your caffeine fix. There are three locations in Toronto's east end, all within a 10-minute drive of each other – which it can get away with thanks to the incredible coffee. Give the matcha lemonade a try!

To all the coffee lovers out there: if you haven't already added café-hopping in Toronto to your list, what are you waiting for?

Get more travel inspiration, tips and exclusive offers sent straight to your inbox with our weekly newsletter.