

ROASTED ROUTE

to Texas' Gourmet Coffee

Story | KATHRYN HUNTER

Wine, microbrews and even olive oil have become big business in Texas. But here's something of a state secret: Texas microroasters are crafting some of the best beans around. With these five coffee experiences, take a caffeinated route through the Lone Star state to explore the magic of roasting and brewing.

AVOCA COFFEE

FORT WORTH

Its namesake an old Gaelic word meaning “great mouth,” AVOCA is an independent roastery and espresso lounge in Fort Worth’s distinctive Near Southside district. Local owners Garold LaRue and Jimmy Story, friends since grade school, opened the business together in 2011.

A variety of single-origin coffees and specialty espressos from around the world are roasted on-site. Stop by AVOCA any Saturday at 8:30 a.m. for a coffee cupping (\$10); on the third Saturday of each month, see a roasting demonstration at 1 p.m. (\$35). AVOCA also offers private classes, including a two-day course covering the basics of roasting (\$300). avocacoffee.com

FORT BEND COFFEE ROASTERS

FULSHEAR

Fascinated with the art of coffee (and hooked on Starbucks), Bryan Hibbard roasted his first batch of coffee in a popcorn popper. Four years later, he is turning out some of the best beans in Fort Bend County—on much larger equipment, of course. Fort Bend Coffee Roasters recently opened a roastery in Fulshear, where they’re offering tours, roasting demonstrations and coffee cuppings.

Not to worry, if you’re not ready to head out to the country. You can find them crafting individual cups of coffee each Saturday at the Imperial Farmer’s Market in Sugar Land—and the bags of coffee you’ll find for purchase are roasted no more than 48 hours prior. Now that is freshness guaranteed! fortbendcoffee.com

JAVA PURA

HOUSTON

Houston-based Java Pura is raising the bar in the local coffee scene. Drop by to tour their roasting facility at Gulfton and Royalton Streets, where photographs from faraway places adorn the walls, telling the story of the coffee from seed to cup. Cuppings are available by reservation for small groups.

Co-owner Richard Colt says what they put in the roaster is what makes the difference. Many of their beans are direct trade. All seven of Java Pura’s coffees are typically in the top 10 sellers at Central Market in Houston, with the famous “Costa Rican Don Teofilo” filling the No. 1 slot. javapura.com



Participants study the layers of espresso in a Cuvée Lab.



CUVÉE COFFEE

AUSTIN

Cuvée Coffee, located just west of Austin, is an innovative pioneer among craft coffee makers. Their newly minted “Black & Blue,” a nitrogenated coffee served cold on tap, has created quite a stir.

Cuvée Labs, classes taught by highly qualified coffee professionals, offer hands-on exploration of specific topics and skills. Options range from basic extraction theory in “Coffee Brewing Fundamentals” to free pour latte art designs in the advanced course “Milk Science.” Class size is limited to four.

Monthly roastery tours (\$15) feature a facility tour, tasting and 12 oz. bag of coffee, along with the chance to chat with a truly coffee-obsessed crowd. cuveecoffee.com

TEXAS COFFEE SCHOOL

ARLINGTON

A state-of-the-art facility dedicated to coffee education, Texas Coffee School in Arlington offers classes for coffee professionals, businesspeople and home enthusiasts.

Entrepreneurs travel from all over the world to attend the three-day business class (\$1,495), which provides instruction on the process of opening a coffee business, such as how to source coffee, select and use equipment and train employees. The two-day barista training class (\$649) is a comprehensive, hands-on experience in coffee and espresso preparation, and even the most casual coffee drinker will enjoy the school’s coffee cupping events (\$16), learning how to taste and evaluate coffees in a fun and approachable way. texascoffeeschool.com



A tasting at the Texas Coffee School

STOPPING POINTS ALONG THE WAY

- **Brown Coffee Company**,
San Antonio
browncoffeeco.com
- **Buon Giorno**, Grapevine
buongiornocoffee.net
- **Cultivar Coffee**, Dallas
cultivarcoffee.com
- **Flat Track Coffee**, Austin
flattrackcoffee.com
- **Fredericksburg Gourmet
Coffee & Tea**,
Fredericksburg
fredericksburg-coffee.com
- **Greenway Coffee**, Houston
greenwaycoffee.com
- **Java Jack's Coffee
House**, Nacogdoches
javajacks.com
- **Roasters**, Amarillo
roasters.biz
- **Summermoon Woodfired
Coffee**, Austin
woodfiredcoffee.com
- **Texas Coffee Traders**,
Austin
texascoffeetraders.com



Custom-crafted
coffee from Fort Bend
Coffee Roasters