

Coffee shops add *fuel* to our main streets

BELYNDA BLYTH

Coffee shops not only add to the walkability factor of an area, which in turn generates more business and revenue for local businesses. Coffee shops also foster relationships, creativity and networking.

Coffee shops give moms a place to meet other moms. Students have a handy place to meet tutors after school. Home-based business people have a neutral place to meet clients. And local residents have a local place to meet with others after work, after shopping and after attending church, mosque or temple.

Coffee shops are more than simply places to grab a quick bite and refuel. Coffee shops are where community and community groups are built face-to-face.

They're where we share dreams, talents and passions. They're where ideas first percolate among like-minded community activists. They're where we escape the daily grind and recharge. And if you don't know beans about what's going on in your area, the community bulletin board is certain to fill you in.

Over the past 5 years, Gerrard Street East has had the good fortune to be supported by a variety of unique coffee emporiums – each owned by very hands-on locals.

Can a cup of coffee change the world? Perhaps not, but many would agree that no matter whether it's Columbian, Mocha or French Roast – it's definitely a *brewtiful* thing.



THE LAZY DAISY
1515 Gerrard Street East

Where everybody knows your name.

The Lazy Daisy is a family-friendly café that exudes an eclectic country charm with an emphasis on organic cooking, straight from the farm fields to your fork. This bustling little jewel just keeps on growing, thanks in no small part to the long menu of community events they regularly host, including local music, comedy and craft shows, wine and cheese tastings. Bottom line? It's fun, happy and busy with a Thomas the Train Kids' Zone in the back and a delectable food and drink menu that keeps happy patrons coming back. Naan Pizza is their new specialty. Licenced



How does a steaming cup of Java make a difference?
By adding energy and flavour to our communities



THE FLYING PONY
1481 Gerrard Street East

Come for the art and stay for the coffee.

The Flying Pony is colourful and cheery yet so relaxing. An independent coffee house and gallery that features contemporary art from emerging and mid-career artists, this local treasure serves up an equally impressive array of organic, fair trade, locally roasted coffees, including cappuccinos and lattes. Barista's, books and fresh baked goods – made in-house daily are also celebrated here. Lay back and plug in. Tune into the great tunes. Take a book and leave a book. This café has ambiance to spare.



THE BRICKYARD GROUNDS
1289 Gerrard Street East

Did you know Greenwood Park was once a brickyard?

Brickyard Grounds is a bright, clean, friendly café that both embraces and celebrates our local history by displaying archival photography of our 'hood on its walls. Located just a brief stroll away from Greenwood Park, this hotspot has a one-of-a-kind heritage piece at its heart – a beautiful harvest table that was crafted from wood salvaged from the location's original 100-year old dwelling. Originally a grocery store and then a Native Art Gallery, this café is famous for its great coffee, fine tea, and full kitchen that serves up everything from rotisserie chicken to hearty savoury sandwiches and a fantastic weekend brunch. Licensed.

UPDATE: The Brickyard Grounds is temporarily closed due to a small fire that broke out on the premises in late February. The owners plan to rebuild and reopen sometime in the near future. Stay tuned!

Belynda Blyth is a Sales Representative with RE/MAX Hallmark Realty and specializes in East Toronto real estate, including East Leslieville, Leslieville, the Beach, East York and Riverdale. She is also the Co-Chair of Gerrard East Community Organization (GECO), Co-Chair of Friends of Greenwood Park, and the Co-Founder of the Ashdale Village Residents Assn.



SOCIAL GARDENER
1326 Gerrard Street East

Adding value to our community.

At the Social Gardener, glorious scents lure you into a charming community space that features reticent exposed brick, old wood beams, and delightfully mismatched furniture, giving the space a warm, eclectic appeal. A social enterprise effort sponsored by The Riverdale Hub, this vibrant vegan café directs all of its proceeds to the Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre, which provides resources on everything from childcare to sexual health to job hunting. A limited daily menu, featuring perennial favourites like hummus, soups, sandwiches, and Chai tea, is prepared on the premises by women enrolled in the Centre's food prep training program. After treating yourself to a bite, ask for a tour of this environmentally-sustainable building, complete with rooftop garden. It's a lovely spot to hang out, enjoy a coffee or a quick bite and get to know locals in the area.



SIDE SHOW CAFÉ
1300 Gerrard Street East

Just the ticket!

Appropriately named, the Side Show is nestled beside the Centre Of Gravity, Toronto's celebrated circus training centre and home to countless circus birthday parties. You'll be hard pressed to find a drop of drip coffee here, as all of the coffee is espresso-based. Favorites include Kawartha's Dairy ice cream, grilled cheese & soup and breakfast burritos. During the summer, you'll also find a food truck along with some picnic tables on the corner lot. A great spot to hang out and people watch. An unpretentious local gem that's famous for unbelievably tasty, fair trade organic coffee and delightful baked things.



CONTACT

Belynda@belyndablyth.com
BelyndaBlyth.com
Facebook: eastLeslieville