

Urban Explorer  
@assemblyroast's Top Coffee Shop Recommendations in London

"In the UK, I took notice of the level of professionalism within the coffee industry, and that the standard doses and recipes have shifted immensely. Here in the UK, it is much more about the sourcing element and people here have a greater understanding and knowledge base of where the coffee comes from."

Michael's recommended coffee shops, starting east and ending west:

1. 46b Espresso Hut (Homerton)

Dom and Eva are legends and I don't think there is a cafe that is as strict about every shot anywhere. It is everything you want a neighbourhood cafe to be.

2. Footnote (London Fields)

Amir and Nastassia know coffee and hospitality inside and out. The brunch is insanely good quality and value.



3. Lanark Coffee (Hackney Road)

Greg and Dom have created an institution in East London. You won't get the same experience and chats anywhere else, and I think Greg still pulls lever shots so you need to taste one!

4. Association (Crechurch Lane)

The first 'favourite' cafe I found in London. Everything is slick, from the fit out to the service to the way they run the business. Sam and Christian are such experts and Association has been the benchmark for quality for almost a decade.

5. Crispin (Spitafields)

Dom and Oli push the boundaries of coffee but also wine but also dining. Day or night or special occasion it's one of very few places that could honestly say they do all of them well simultaneously.

6. Prufrock (Chancery Lane)

For their role in London coffee history, this was the first place demanding that coffee be the destination and was the focal point of specialisation when I first moved to London.

7. Lundenwic (The Strand)

Pre-Crispin - This is the team's coffee-led, fast service, central London location. You're literally across the road from Somerset House with exceptional coffee and food, which is pretty mad.

8. Omotesando (Fitzrovia/ Oxford Circus)

If coffee was Formula One! It's restrained and comfortable as a guest but there's no comparison for the thought and effort gone into refining and perfecting every element of the experience. It's hardcore!

9. Page Common (Trafalgar Square)

This would be here even if we didn't work together. The location is unparalleled in London. The space is stunning, the equipment is industry leading and the coffee service is exceptional. I can't think of another major city off the top of my head where you can have that level of coffee experience in an equivalent location.

10. 26 Grains (Neal's Yard Covent Garden)

Neal's Yard has a reputation for the 'Best of British', which is strongly driven by the reputation of 26 Grains. They more or less re-branded the national perception of porridge into a fine-food and serve great coffee in the 'yard.' It's one of those 'if you only had 24 hours in London' kind of places.

11. Over Under (Earl's Court)

Ed, Monwar and the team are the leaders of the new-guard of coffee shop operators in London. Their perspective and offerings are rooted in the perspective of the customer and puts interaction, fun and smiles at the forefront of everything they do. If you're looking to ever start a stand-alone coffee business, this is the modern reference point.

To Nick, all the shops display a unique sense of identity and focus on hospitality, also spanning a diverse geographical exploration of London:

- 1. 7 oZ Coffee (Clapham North)
- 2. Over Under (Wandsworth Town)
- 3. Omotesando (Tottenham Court Road)
- 4. Three Wheels (London Bridge)
- 5. FARE Bar and Canteen (Old Street)
- 6. Crispin (Spitafields)
- 7. Story Coffee (both locations)
- 8. I Will Kill Again (Ponsford Street)
- 9. Stoney Street by 26 Grains (Borough Market)
- 10. Milk (Balham)

