

A breath of Italian air

Like a breath of fresh Italian air, the stylish new b espresso bar has brought its unique charm to downtown Toronto.

Not your run-of-the-mill espresso bar, this little piece of the Eternal City serves the most delicious and authentic Italian coffee.

Coffee is king at b espresso bar. Forget that bitter, acidic beverage you've been thinking is the real thing. Here, the professional "barristas" behind the counter are ready, willing and able to "pull" you the perfect espresso, macchiato, cappuccino or latte all made with authentic Italian Illy Coffee for the same price you'd pay at your corner chain. Rich and creamy without a hint of bitterness, anyone else's coffee pales in comparison. And if you haven't been converted into a coffee lover, have no fear – come in and enjoy freshly squeezed orange juice, fantastic Revolution teas, or even a cocktail from their fully stocked bar.

To go along with all the wonderful drinks, Chef Sergio Onorati has made sure all the food is just as wonderful. At breakfast, customers can choose from a selection of fresh bagels, croissants, muffins and fruit, but our hands-down favourite is Sergio's frittata – a perfectly cooked omelette on a freshly baked cheddar scone. A few seconds under the pannini-press and you'll never be satisfied with a bowl of cereal again.

At lunch, breakfast items are replaced and the counter is filled with a variety of light lunches – panninis, wraps, salads, personal pizzas, and a different homemade soup everyday.

For those with a sweet tooth, they bring in only the finest cakes, pastry, and cookies from the most exclusive bakers. Unique treats include a rich chocolate zucchini cake, individual carrot cakes, marbled Tuscan brownies and the most delicate all-butter shortbread cookies flecked with tiny leaves of Earl Grey tea.

So don't settle for anything less than the real thing. With the arrival of b espresso bar, Torontonians can take a trip to Italy for the price of a cup of caffè.

Elise Burton