

The Irrepressible Bean

Rouud, the pop-up Artisan Roast at Bruntsfield, celebrates its opening with a beer tasting today. The cafe at 138 Bruntsfield Place serves lunch as well as the usual selection of fine coffees and beverages. It's open from 8 till 8 weekdays, 10 till 10 on Saturdays and 10 till 8 on Sundays. Lovers of great coffee can now also enjoy a lunch, cooked on the premises with quality ingredients, and a selection of great coffee accompaniments such as cheesy chocolate muffins and Swedish Flat scones.

Artisan Roast are part of the coffee-drinking tradition that started in Ethiopia more than a thousand years ago. Coffee is not only seen as a drink but also as a stimulant of a progressive social environment where open and intelligent conversation sparks off new ideas and enterprises.

The quality is the result of attention paid at each stage of the coffee production process, from the use of quality estates and coops and roast consistency. Each of the roasters is trained in an apprentice manner to scent roast. Scent roasting is the oldest manner of roasting coffee, but is not very common nowadays as it can't be taught by books or video and takes a long time to get good at.

Other roasting methods use sight to roast or using computers. Sight roasting tells you only how the beans are cooked on the outside; like looking at a cake in the oven without prodding it to see if it's cooked in the middle. Computer profile roasting is very common with larger roasteries. Coffee is an organic product and the difference between a great roast and dull lifeless coffee can be as little as eight seconds.

There's another big secret that large coffee companies don't want you to know: Coffee is perishable and should be drunk

within 10-14 days after roasting for cafetiere and 3-4 weeks for espresso. If the bag doesn't tell you the roast date; it's probably stale. If the best before says drink within the next nine months, it was probably roasted three months ago.

Coffee beans release CO₂ gas after roasting. This is protective and prevents O₂ getting into the bean and oxidising the essential volatile aromatics. These compounds are what gives fresh coffee its liveliness. Most of our taste is really scent and it's in the retro-nasal cavity that the volatile aromatics jump up and switch on your olfactory bulb. As the CO₂ runs out the O₂ increasingly oxidises the aromatics leaving the coffee dull.

For espresso, the beans can be too fresh and need to be put down to settle a bit before being used in an espresso machine. The time that coffee lasts depends on the season too. Artisan Roast can supply coffee to cafes when it's ready to be used and deliver weekly so that the coffee is always fresh.

By spreading this coffee gospel and getting cafes to appreciate the importance of good quality coffee, Artisan Roast aims to raise £20 million over the next ten years to help the [C project](#), a programme to maximise youth potential in Scotland. This is being done through business and custom rather than donations, and the money earned is to be channeled into a solid future for Scottish children.

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