

# Coffee Bean Scene – Format Coffee

## Format Coffee is a mere stone's throw from the east end of the Meadows.

Just two doors down from an established part of the speciality coffee scene (Cult Espresso), Format is a relative newcomer. Previously known as Half Eight, it's change of name to Format reflects the changing times we are living through. As owner Andrew explains, "most of our morning trade was from early birds going to the university or working in the offices around here, so we opened early". The lockdown prompted a change of name and the change of emphasis. There is now far more of a focus on takeaway and creating (using an awning) a covered space outside where his customers can enjoy their coffees in the fresh air. The café has recently been reconfigured with new seating installed and a smart new interior.

Since opening, Format have experimented with a range of coffees. As Andrew explained: "I've tried dozens of roasters over the last few months...constantly looking for high-quality and interesting coffees." At present they are using beans from Elsewhere Coffee in South London, as well as renowned local roasters Williams And Johnson.

Andrew said: "We are using Elsewhere at present because of the amazing feedback from customers." The Honduran Vidal Hernandez they were using when I visited is a delicious coffee with great clarity. The coffee I had was particularly smooth with a clear but not overpowering flavour.

The coffee at Format has reached new heights in recent months

thanks to a purpose built coffee machine which allows the barista to make very subtle adjustments to pressure. This enables them to get the very best out of the beans they are brewing with.

In addition to their coffee, Format offer some tasty baking. In terms of savoury options, their filled bagels are excellent, with the salmon bagel particularly good. Over the lockdown periods the main source of custom was from locals who were desperate for a coffee fix; 'people really missed good coffee during lockdown'. In fact, Andrew was the same; 'during lockdown I was regularly popping into the café to use the machine and test out some new beans!'. By embracing the new climate, Format is in a good position to do well in this difficult time.

Despite Cult Espresso being a few doors along and a newcomer (the Greek influenced Lady and The Bear) a couple of minutes away, Format has enjoyed good custom in recent months. With restrictions eased it's now possible to sit in at Format and enjoy their fine coffee.

## **Format**

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