

# Capital Coffee – Fortitude, Newington

**Fortitude has been one of the leading lights of the speciality coffee scene in Edinburgh for almost a decade. Fortitude now has three cafés in Edinburgh.**

Their original café in York Place, opened in 2014, helped create their identity and reputation for excellence. In 2020 they took over the site, previously home to Ronde cycle shop and café, at 66 Hamilton Place in Stockbridge. There they have created a particularly elegant café which is consistently busy. Fortitude have now set up shop in Newington.

Those who enjoy visiting independent cafés will soon end up with a sizeable number of loyalty cards. I've recently tried to sort out my pack of them. It was poignant to discover that several of the cards were from cafés that no longer exist. It shows how fluid the specialty coffee scene is and how challenging it can be to maintain a profitable business. One card I have is for the café My Front Room, which was on Salisbury Place. After a stressful period for the owner, the business closed. A great pity as the café served particularly good coffee. This demonstrated that having a well-designed venue and serving top notch high quality coffee is no guarantee of success. Often, location is a factor.

In 2021 Fortitude set up camp just round the corner from Salisbury Place, at 72 Newington Road. Apparently things have been going "pretty well" and they have succeeded in building up "a good brand of regulars". These include people who work

at the large cultural institutions nearby, Historic Scotland and the National Library building at Causewayside. The place was never going to have massive footfall as “it’s a fairly quiet area of town”. In addition to the steady number of customers, the large kitchen area in the café means it plays a significant role in the Fortitude trio as a source of their tempting baking.



As in its other two cafés, Fortitude maintain the highest standards. Friendly service is combined with seriousness when it comes to the preparation of the coffee. This is the type of precision which leads to consistent excellence. The café itself is airy and light. Its high ceilings and cornices add a

degree of elegance, while the large metal pipes add a hint of the industrial vibe so familiar within the specialty coffee sector. The seating faces away from the street allowing you to turn your back (literally and figuratively) on the busy arterial road behind you.

This allows you to relax and focus on your conversation, book or thoughts. The four round tables provide seating for up to 16 customers. The place has a very relaxed feel with plants abound and gentle music wafting around. On sunny mornings, the light shines beautifully through the windows. The only intense thing about the place is the coffee.



Fortitude offer an extensive range in coffee, with no less than three espresso options flowing through the gleaming La Marzocco machine. Their coffees are all roasted by Fortitude at their roastery in Granton. On my last visit to the Newington branch the espressos available included an excellent Uruga from Ethiopia, with Raspberries and Mango notes and a very satisfying finish. The espresso options are complemented with pour over and batch brew.

There's plenty of variety for the regular customer. The Newington shop also stocks Fortitude's full range of retail beans. In addition to a range of baking (the Black Forest chocolate cake looks particularly good!), they offer some excellent toasties. The one with refried beans is extremely tasty but watch out for the very spicy sauce.

Fortitude 72 Newington Road, Edinburgh, EH9 1QN



**FAZENDA  
BELA VISTA**

NATURAL  
**BRAZIL**