

Unmissable Specialty Coffee Bar in Bellingham: Primer Coffee

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Since opening in November of 2016, Primer Coffee has propelled itself to a top shop for filtered and espresso coffees in Bellingham, Washington. Primer, a specialty coffee bar in Bellingham takes pride in featuring Onyx coffee at the establishment. The in-house menu includes a popular pour over filtered coffee, espresso, espresso with milk, chocolate drinks, bread and cheese, and several specialty drinks.

Edwin Martinez is a partner with Primer. He and his family created the Onyx company and the distribution of Guatemalan beans. They have an export business and cupping lab in Guatemala City. Onyx distributes in the US through warehouses in New Jersey and Arkansas for the east coast, and Oakland and Seattle for the west coast.

Angela is the manager of Primer Coffee and says their goal is not to be the best in Bellingham, but to do the best they can do with their unique offerings. They take pride in integrating local products and businesses like the [Twin Brook Creamery](#), [Carne](#) butcher shop, local farmers, and in-season products of the Bellingham area.

A popular specialty beverage is the Shuksan Arm. It's a delicious dessert-like iced coffee drink made with espresso, brown sugar, sparkling water, orange zest, and a sprinkle of nutmeg. This unique offering is a big hit with patrons. The strong flavor of a great espresso explodes in your mouth with this one.

The Sparkling Cascara is another specialty drink made with sparkling water and herb from the bean cherries. It's

served in a shot glass with a sprig of rosemary, this coffee drink is delightful and refreshing.



Shuksan Arm



Sparkling Cascara



This sampler includes pour over filter coffee, espresso, espresso with milk, and a shot of sparkling water.

In-House Coffees & Beans To Go!!

1. **La Esperanza** beans come from a farm in the Guatemalan city of El Coyegual that produces a high-quality product with a cupping score of 82.5. This process evaluates fragrance, aroma, acidity, body, flavor, balance, and after-taste. They do this every week and are constantly evaluating profiles as they age. The farmer, Francisco Morales, has been cultivating coffee since the age of 16 there on his well-manicured farm. Varietals include Caturra, Red and Yellow Bourbon, and Catuai. They're grown at an elevation of 1600-1900 meters above sea level.
2. **El Limonar** is another Guatemalan-grown product with notes of black cherry, red apple, and raisin. These attributes are derived from a pre-roast processing of the beans where some of the mucilage of the bean cherries are left on the husk throughout a fermentation-like process.
3. **Kenya AA** coffee beans are from the Chinga washing station of the Othaya farmer's cooperative society in Kenya. This blend comes from one of eighteen wet mills that date back to the 1950s in the Nyeri region of the nation. Primer coffee buyers say they were blown away with the sweetness, fresh fruit flavors, and acidity of these beans. They are purchased direct and at a higher cost which ensures they get the exact batch they want.
4. **El Gavioto** is a Castillo varietal that comes from a single estate in the El Tambo, Cauca region of Colombia. It is grown at an elevation of 1800 meters above sea level. Cauca is in the south-western part of Colombia. Its coffee is known for bright acidity and velvety body. In the 2015 "Best Cup of Cauca Event" the product placed in the top 30 out of 540 entries. With the name El Gavioto, this blend has notes of vanilla, dried citrus, and light spice.
5. **Ethiopia Kochere** beans are grown at 1900-2200 meters above sea level in the southern region of the nation. They are of the heirloom Yirgacheffe variety. After a mechanical de-pulping process is used, the beans are fermented under water for several days before being laid out on racks for drying.
6. **Primer's decaf** is processed north of Bellingham at the Swiss Water processing plant in Burnaby B.C. Swiss Water is an innovative, 100% chemical free decaffeination process removing caffeine for coffee roasters around the

world. It is becoming the “go-to” method for the endeavor and clearly, makes a huge difference in the end product as well as the appeal.

Other Notable Offerings at Primer

Bacon! You’re absolutely going to want to try the candied bacon. Sourced from a local butcher shop named [Carne](#), the bacon is then cured by Primer using a brown sugar recipe. The cured candied bacon is a home run for any bacon lover... and who isn’t?

Also available is a toast bar with a cheese plate and the Blueberry Shrub... a tart/sweet mixture made with vinegar & blueberries.

I found the coffee samplings to be extremely enjoyable having a nice balance, mostly medium body, and to have a fantastic aroma. When in the [Bellingham area](#), make sure and stop by Primer for a morning “priming”. I highly recommend the Shuksan Arm specialty iced beverage for a deliciously refreshing blast of wake-up espresso!

Primer is located at 1400 W. Holly Street Bellingham, Washington.

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Candied Bacon