

# [Gourmet coffee bars: a caffeine-fueled comparison](https://assignbuster.com/gourmet-coffee-bars-a-caffeine-fueled-comparison/)

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Whether a big chain or a tiny kiosk, great gourmet coffee shops get java drinkers juiced. A shop's success isn't determined by one specific factor; rather, it's a combo of the right atmosphere, culture, philosophyand--of course--coffee.

Stumptown Coffee Roasters

First opened: 1999 in Portland, Ore.   
Type of shop: Coffee bars (and tasting annexes)   
Locations: Nine, with 11 by the end of the year, in Portland, Seattle and New York; scouting for a Chicago spot   
Customers: Creative types: musicians, artists, grungers   
Biz philosophy: Founder Duane Sorenson's M. O. is to provide great coffee, educate consumers about it and treat employees well--no matter the cost   
Price of a cappuccino:$3 for 5 1/2 oz.   
Order this: A cup of Costa Rica Helsar Reserva coffee--a blend of molasses and cherry jam with notes of raspberry, strawberry and lavender   
The coffee cherry on top: Employee benefits includehealthcare, a 401(k) and an on-duty massage therapist

Peet's Coffee & Tea

First opened: 1966 in Berkeley, Calif.

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Type of shop: Typicalcoffee shop: tables and booths, often frequented by seekers of free Wi-Fi   
Locations: 193 in California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, Oregon and Washington   
Customers: Early-stage and hard-core do-gooders   
Biz philosophy: Quality and freshness (each type of coffee is individually deep-roasted in single-batch roasters), along with partnerships with global nonprofits to better coffee-growing communities   
Price of a cappuccino:$3 for 12 oz.   
Order this: Dark chocolate mocha Freddo (their signature ice-blended drink) or a handmade three-berry scone   
The coffee cherry on top: Twice-monthly guided coffee and tea tastings at local stores

Abraço

First opened: 2007 in New York City   
Type of shop: Stand-up espresso bar   
Locations: Just one   
Customers: East Villagers (aka hipsters)   
Biz philosophy: Hole-in-the-wall space, minimal menu and eclectic design put the focus on aroma and taste and create a micro-community. Owner Jamie McCormick greets locals by name   
Price of a cappuccino:$3 for 8 oz.   
Order this: The olive oil cake is a customer favorite among Abraço's seasonal, homemade sweets, savories and small bites   
The coffee cherry on top: Uses Counter Culture Coffee beans andfooditems are sourced from the local farmers market

Intelligentsia Coffee & Tea

First opened: 1995 in Chicago   
Type of shop: Coffee bars, and one café in Pasadena, Calif.   
Locations: Six in Chicago and Los Angeles (along with roasting facilities) and a New York City training lab   
Customers: Art-school grads and people who only own Apple products   
Biz philosophy: Providing the complete coffee experience--excellent brew, skilled baristas, coffeeeducationand sourcing the best green coffee--in a sleek, minimalist-design atmosphere   
Price of a cappuccino:$3. 50 for 6 oz.   
Order this: A Black Cat Classic Espresso (part of " Black Cat Project" to create the perfect espresso)   
The coffee cherry on top: Staff trained to be " the most knowledgeable and skilled in the coffee industry," offering public tasting and education classes at each retail location

Blue Bottle Coffee

First opened: 2002 in Oakland, Calif.   
Type of shop: Varies by location: espresso bar, cafés, espresso carts and a coffee kiosk   
Locations: Seven in Oakland, San Francisco and Brooklyn, N. Y., two roasteries and three Northern California farmers market espresso carts   
Customers: Unpretentious hippies   
Biz philosophy: Founders tired of the " grande eggnog latte and the double-skim pumpkin-pie macchiato" and opened Blue Bottle for those interested in the distinct taste of freshly roasted coffee   
Price of a cappuccino:$3. 25 for 6 oz.   
Order this: New Orleans-style iced coffee with a saffron and vanilla bean Snickerdoodle   
The coffee cherry on top: Coffee roasted in vintage roasters, ground and brewed one cup at a time and served in compostable cups; one location has a pricey Japanese siphon bar (see this article)