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Margy Rochlin

First Taste: LAMILL Coffee Boutique



On paper, LAMILL Coffee Boutique sounds like a send-up of Los Angeles chic as imagined by a *Saturday Night Live* sketch writer: elaborate tableside coffee service and hand-crafted specialty bean blends with *Zoolander*-ish names like Midnight Jazz and Black Onyx. The meticulously detailed list of teas promises more health and beauty benefits than a spa-services menu.

But the truth is that the vibe at this high-ceilinged Silver Lake hangout is full-on enthusiastic coffee geek—and it's catching. The servers grin their way through descriptions of a variety of coffee preparations—from French press to siphon—and point out the \$11,000 Clover machine, a high-tech, one-cup-at-a-time trophy brewer located near the front entrance. Somewhere along the way—perhaps right after your first clear, almost sparkling sip—LAMILL makes it seem as if modern chain coffeehouses are trafficking in over-the-counter buzz injections.

A first glance at the food menu—designed by chef Michael Cimarusti and pastry chef Adrian R. Vasquez, both of the acclaimed [Providence](#)—led me to think a contest had been held to see how many times coffee could be used as an ingredient. A pressed sandwich of thinly sliced chorizo, scallions, and *piquillo* pepper was held together by a flavorful Spanish cow’s milk cheese with a coffee-washed rind; balancing out the natural sweetness of a Tahitian squash soup were creamy polka dots of maple syrup, coffee, and Turkish Urfa chili *crème fraîche*.

And if all things coffee isn’t your thing? There are hand-cut Yukon gold potato chips, for starters; and the Jambon de Paris—shaved ham and Vermont butter on a crusty baguette—was so good it vanished in a puff.

Open just a few weeks, LAMILL is already inspiring debate—mostly about how pricey it is. About that I want to add that on the way out the door I bought a pound of El Milagro whole beans from El Salvador (which came in an elegant reusable tin) for \$13 plus tax. Perhaps a different debate is whether you want to leave, as I did, with everything—jacket, pants and hair—smelling gloriously of roasted coffee. (I’m in the pro column on that one.)

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Photographs by Allen Lin