

The
London
Coffee
Festival

The London Coffee Festival 2016

In 2011, Jeffrey Young kicked off a project that has since become a focal point for the UK coffee industry.

The London Coffee Festival was launched by Young in 2011 and knits together coffee subcultures across the UK, bringing together thousands of small to large scale businesses spanning roasters, bean importers, coffee shops and equipment wholesalers. It's become the annual jamboree where the brightest and most enthusiastic minds in the industry swap ideas on the latest innovations, products and techniques around coffee.

What started with a respectable 7,000 attendees has rapidly mushroomed: after five years and an upcoming sixth event, numbers have swollen to 35,000. The festival continues to donate

50 per cent of ticket sales to support Project Waterfall, a charity that provides clean water and sanitation to coffee-growing areas.

Young and his LCF co-founder Ludovic Rossignol say that they've been focusing on one principle: to elevate standards across the coffee industry through education. The festival's success has since seen it branch out to New York and Amsterdam.

But back in London, LCF, as it's known, is an unmissable anchor in a fast-changing, caffeine-fuelled industry.

The London Coffee Festival takes place at the Old Truman Brewery from 7-10 April, 2016. londoncoffeefestival.com



Q&A with... Jeffrey Young

Founder of The London Coffee Festival

By setting up a specialist consultancy for the coffee industry called Allegra Strategies, Young has been part of a band of Antipodeans who have brought the idea of relaxed but stylish coffee shops and high-quality coffee and brunches to London in the past 15 years.

Why do you think Aussies and Kiwis have been at the forefront of specialist coffee around the world?

Italian heritage, especially in Australia with a big wave of immigration in the 1950s and 1960s setting a base for espresso-based coffee in the 'milkbars' that new immigrants set up when they first arrived.

As for New Zealand (and I can say this as a fellow

Australian) it is probably the Kiwis' burning desire to be better everything than Australia, be it coffee, wine or rugby. And they do things with great finesse.

Both countries are blessed with an amazing culinary culture and open-mindedness.

How do you think London's coffee scene has changed in the past 10 years, and how has the coffee festival itself changed in the five since it launched?

The timing of the launch of The Coffee Festival was perfect. Not only was the industry ready for this but the festival itself was a catalyst for a rapid acceleration in the market. It gave the industry a platform for knowledge sharing and a shot of



espresso for this last five years of electric growth.

We are seeing much greater consumer demand, awareness and desire to learn about coffee, its origin and preparation methods.

What exciting new developments – be they shop formats or new spins on coffee, food and service – do you see coming out of the coffee industry?

The impact on menus from the world of health and wellness; cold brew, iced coffee, green and root smoothies, matcha lattes and speciality teas are all on the rise; larger format stores with on-site roasteries and unique spaces that cater to working nomads; finally, the hole-in-the-wall or tiny kiosks.



SIX YEARS OF THE LONDON COFFEE FESTIVAL

2010

Idea for a coffee festival in London is conceived.

2011

The first LCF attracts 7,500 visitors.

2012

More than 11,000 people attend this year's event.

2013

The festival's new design 'district' opens.

2014

LCF launches an Amsterdam event (ACF).

2015

Introduction of the 'Coffee Masters' barista competition.

2016

A third city joins the festival calendar. This time, New York.

2016

A record 35,000 visitors expected at LCF this year.