

Northwest University's Student Magazine

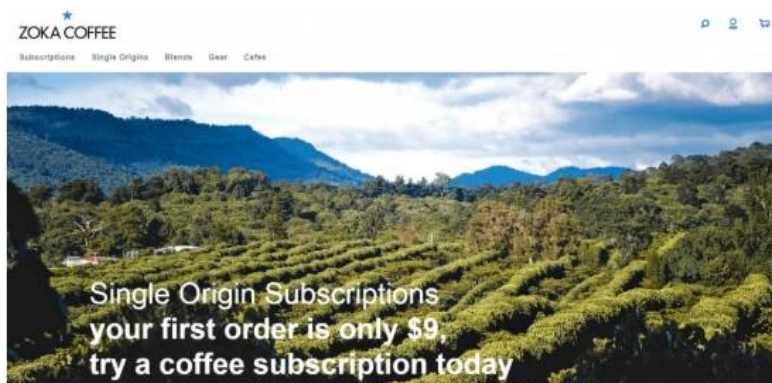
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HOME ABOUT US THE SCREECH PODCAST CAMPUS LIFE OUTSIDE THE BUBBLE ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT OPINION AUDIO/VISUAL

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REVIEW: ZOKA COFFEE



Screenshot of Zoka Coffee's website.

By Danielle Nye

It is no surprise there are an abundance of coffee shops in Kirkland, being so close to one of the coffee capitals of the world in Seattle. Zoka Coffee is a Seattle-based chain with a location in downtown Kirkland, one of several coffee shops in that area. Zoka is frequented by NU students and adults alike, a spot for meeting, studying or socializing. There are many aspects to consider for a coffee shop, particularly the atmosphere, coffee quality, variety and pricing.

Zoka's café is immediately pleasing to the eye, with its sleek marble tables and counters, complimenting the modern-rustic look with a large community table that looks like the cross-section of a tree. Zoka's choice of using mainly windows for walls provides a large amount of natural lighting for those trying to study inside. The walls of the coffee shop are decorated with a rotation of different artists' work featuring one artist at a time, sometimes an artist who works in the café all of which are black and white paintings, generally of people or animals. This adds to the artistic flair of the café, providing creative inspiration for customers. There is usually an acoustic playlist being played softly through the speakers, just loud enough to be heard, but not loud enough to quiet conversations going on. The calming melodies provide a pleasant backdrop for a study session or intimate conversation.

Zoka's coffee itself is quite impressive, as they roast their own fair-trade coffee that can also be purchased in bags in their stores. One could be satisfied with their house drip, but customers are encouraged to try Zoka's signature drinks such as the Gibraltar or the spicy Aztec Mocha. They also provide the standard coffee drinks, with variations of dairy-free milk and a selection of flavored syrups to add. Additionally, Zoka has a quality tea collection for those who prefer an alternative to coffee, as well as a comforting Spiced Chai Cider. They do not offer frozen beverages, which gives the café the air of an environment for "real coffee drinkers." Clearly, the menu is built around the flavor of their coffee and to highlight the quality of their beans. They provide a wide variety of pastries, including bagels and sandwiches, which are displayed in the glass casing on the marble counter-top.

The prices at Zoka are less than attractive, as they charge \$3.60 for an eight-ounce latte, and adding flavor would cost another 75 cents, as would substituting milk for dairy-free options. The prices do not increase tremendously between sizes – so ordering a larger size may prove more economical – noting that a tip is to be considered in the final price. For example, a 12-ounce vanilla latte from Zoka would cost a little over \$5, which is somewhat steep compared to competing stores. However, at Zoka the customer is paying for the high quality as well as the accommodating atmosphere and comforting environment. The price reflects the quality of the experience received at the coffee shop, and the benefit is worth the cost.

Zoka Coffee stands out among the crowd of coffee shops taking Seattle and Kirkland by storm.

Editor's Note: Zoka Coffee's Kirkland cafe can be found at the corner of Central Way and Lake Street in downtown Kirkland. For more information, visit [their homepage](#).

