

Jeff Around Town - February 25, 2025

Jeff: Time now for another edition of Jeff Around Town.

If you go out for coffee, how often have you exchanged basic chit-chat with the barista? You know, how's it going? How's the weather treating you? Big plans for the weekend? And you know, that's all fine, that's all good. But let's say you find yourself at the coffee shop at the Omaha Conservatory of Music, Myrtle and Cypress. It's one of their two locations.

So, you go up to the barista and you place your order. And then your barista, Corin Andrews, asks you a question you've never been asked before. At first blush, it sounds like a pretty basic question. The barista asks, what's the best coffee you've ever had?

And because you've had lots of great coffee, you know, start going through your catalog of great coffee experiences. But it brings you such joy to imagine and remember all those past cups of coffee.

Now you've had plenty of amazing coffee, both in Omaha and elsewhere. But the one above all has to be the coffee at Cafe Nero in London. It's a British-based chain with an Italian name.

This wasn't your everyday Americano. It was more like two shots of espresso with just a little added hot water, just right. There you were in London on a rainy spring morning and you're sitting in the window. And in that moment, the coffee is the best you've ever had. So now every time you order this drink, you ask for an espresso with added hot water in the hopes that it'll be just as good.

And the truth is you actually have had better coffee, including at many coffee shops in Omaha. But it was in that moment, in that window, on that rainy day in London, that you most remember. And more than anything, you think, how wonderful that Corin, the barista, asked this simple but joyful question. Questions lead to connections, and so can coffee.

So, here's a question for you. What's the best coffee you've ever had? And maybe it wasn't even the quote-unquote best coffee you've ever had, but maybe it was because of the circumstances, who you were with, where you were in that moment. Maybe you were feeling kind of down that day, but the coffee lifted your spirits. Were you celebrating something? Were you on holiday?

I would love to hear from you.

Corin, the barista, asked me, and now I'm asking you. I'd love to hear about your best coffee ever.

You can reach out, jkoterba@unomaha.edu. Again jkoterba@unomaha.edu. And that's another Jeff Around Town.