



PHOTOS THIS PAGE: ROSS CHANDLER

Thump Coffee

Bend, Ore.

Kent and Hazel Chapple, owners

Thump may not be an obvious name for a coffeehouse—it could have any number of meanings without signaling a particular identity. But ambiguity is exactly what led Thump owners Kent and Hazel Chapple to choose it. “We all had different interpretations of what it means,” Kent says. “We realized that the word ‘thump’ resonates with a lot of people on a lot of different levels.” So, too, is the coffeehouse resonating with customers—located in downtown Bend, Thump has been serving up specialty coffee to the city’s growing population for the last two years.

Q: What is Thump’s “origin” story?

Hazel: We lived in Seattle for 10 years, and we were very fortunate to have a great roaster in our neighborhood, Lighthouse Coffee Roasters. They were a model for us of what great coffee should be. During that time we visited Bend a bunch, and we were thinking we’d love to bring great coffee to Bend. We eventually moved here and decided we wanted to dive into this. We spent about two and a half years researching the industry, going to tons of trade shows and trainings to learn as much as we could, as well as doing a lot of research about what people like here. We ended up opening in January of 2007; 10 days later we had a baby, so both our baby and our shop are almost two years old.

Q: Do you roast your own coffee?

Kent: When we started researching the idea, we were committed to serving the highest-quality coffee we could find, and our model of that in our heads was an in-shop roaster. We actually purchased a commercial roaster and started roasting out

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of our garage ... and for two years we were delivering coffee around town. When we finally found this location downtown, we knew it was great for a retail shop, but it wasn't going to work for roasting at all. So we put the roasting on the back burner; it's still a passion for us, but it's on the sidelines at the moment. And when we made that decision to leave the roasting out of our business model, we knew that one of the only roasters in the country we were interested in working with was Stumptown [Coffee Roasters in Portland]. That's how we came to that relationship.

Q: How did you find that “great location”?

Hazel: It took quite a while to find a suitable location because in addition to outstanding coffee, we also wanted to create a place where people felt like they were part of a community. We wanted to find a place that had its own soul. And when we first walked in it was a teddy bear shop that had ancient grey carpeting and Easter Bunny wallpaper, but it had this really cool brick wall. And after we peeled away these layers of yellow and grey, we were really fortunate to have a handful of artisans work with us in creating our space. We had a sculptor who's also a welder do custom metal work on the face of our bar. Our bar is poured concrete that has a foam core, so it's ambient temperature to the touch.

Q: How did you incorporate art into the shop?

Hazel: We wanted people to have something a little bit different to look at every time they came in, but we weren't sure how we would manage that or what it would look like. An artist came to us early on and saw that our ceiling has wood exposed beams and said, “I've been looking for a ceiling to do a public art installation, and I have these wood planks that are from a door framing shop. I'd love for people to write a wish, something they wish to do or have happen.” And so it's this ongoing, interactive experience for our customers. They can come in and write a wish, and then we hang them from the ceiling. And the artist continues to come in and rotate them out.

Q: Did you plan this sort of collaborative effort from the start?

Kent: One of the surprises for me in all this is how big of a hand our customers and other associates have had in the creation of our shop, from the wishes to the artwork to the feel of the music. Everything has been this huge collaborative effort that we haven't had complete control over—nor do we want it, because it's really turning into a great community experience. Honestly, if I had designed the whole thing myself, it would have ended up looking a lot like my garage. And so it's been really cool to have all this interaction from a number of different people and have it turn out as well as it has. ☺



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