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## Secrets: Peace & A Cup of Joe, Baltimore, Maryland

By Stephenie Overman



Peace & A Cup of Joe is located at the intersection of students, doctors, nurses, office workers, sports fans, railroad buffs and west Baltimore residents.

The coffee shop is across the street from the campus and hospital of the University of Maryland, Baltimore. It's a few blocks from Oriole Park at Camden Yards and the Ravens' football stadium. Babe Ruth's birthplace and museum is nearby and the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Museum is just down the street.

The name, explains owner Themar Long, is a twist on a song by New Orleans R&B artist Ledisi about not being able to find peace in a cup of coffee. When he opened the shop almost five years ago his goal was to prove those lyrics wrong by providing a peaceful atmosphere where people from different walks of life "could all co-mingle... When you walk through the door we want to you feel at home, like you can kick your shoes off."

"It's worked out great," Long says of the eclectic clientele. "A community association meets here every Monday. Doctors transition through for morning coffee and lunch. Students come before and after class. People stop on their way to work. The community has embraced it."

The two-story shop is open seven days a week for breakfast and light lunch and Long plans to expand food service into the evening. The shop seats about 150, with a fireplace upstairs surrounded by overstuffed sofas and chairs. Works by local artists decorate the walls. There's live music every week on "Acoustic Thursday" and the first Monday of every month is "Verbatim Monday," with spoken word performances.

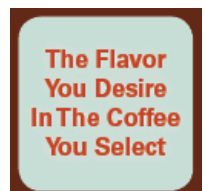
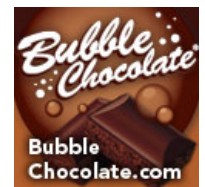
Peace & A Cup of Joe serves specialty coffee from a local roaster, Zeke's Coffee of Baltimore, as well as teas, blended drinks, and fresh shooters made from locally grown organic vegetables. For wine and beer its BYOB. "We don't have alcohol license. We just charge a small corkage fee," says Long.

Long plays up the location with special discounts on "Nurse Friday" and "Day of the Student." He works with the front desk and concierge at a new hotel down the street to attract tourists looking for a cup of Joe with atmosphere.

One big plan for the future is working with the city and university to convert an abandoned building next door into a green space for gardening and relaxation.

Long spent years as a technical manager at UPS and tech people "drink a lot of coffee," he says. His personal favorite is a quad espresso with steamed half and half.

He's also traveled a lot over the years, an experience that taught him that a local coffee shop, with its laid-back atmosphere, "is one of best places to find out what is going on and to meet people...We have that kind of community here."



### Fact Box

ROASTER: Zeke's Coffee

YEAR FOUNDED: 2005

*Peace & A Cup of Joe*

*713 W. Pratt St.*

*Baltimore, MD 21201*

*Hours: Mon- Fri 7 am- 5 pm*

*Sat 9 am - 3 pm*

*Sun 10 am - 3 pm*



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