



Coffee 12oz. 1	
Coffee	1.65
espresso	1.65
americano	1.90
cappuccino	2.75
red eye	2.15
cafe latte	2.75
cafe mocha	3.25
cafe au lait	2.50
hot tea	1.65
chai latte	3.25
hot chocolate	1.65

Italian Bread

Sourdough Bread

7 Grain

Whole Wheat

Homemade Olive Sourdough

Rye

Cinnamon Raisin Bread

WIFI  
ENTER  
NOW!

# HOW Sweet IT IS

If the number of sweets shops in a place is some kind of barometer of success, then the Roanoke Valley is for sure on the rise.

BY CHRISTINA NIFONG



On the Rise (Grandin)

**T**HE LAST SEVERAL YEARS have seen Roanoke and its surrounds bursting with bakeries, erupting with ice cream and flush with candy stores, cupcake cottages and dessert destinations.

Do the treat traders come and go? They do. But in this moment, there is much to tingle taste buds.

If it's cakes you're sweet on, stop by Our Daily Bread Bakery and Bistro in Roanoke, Salem or Blacksburg, for a sample of sacher torte, tiramisu or carrot cake. They're one of many storefronts stirring up magical macaroons of every shade and season.

You could try the coconut or death by chocolate cakes at On the Rise, with downtown and Grandin Village locations. Or select a slice of lemon chiffon or raspberry chocolate mousse cake at Wildflour Restaurant and Bakery in Roanoke's Old Southwest. Downtown Roanoke's BreadCraft is a top bet for pastries with a European flair.

At Willow Pond Bakery in Salem, display cases present eclairs, cheesecakes and cookies, plus red velvet and German chocolate cakes.

Not to be missed are the artistic and sometimes stunning creations by Fresh Baked Bakery's Sarah Blanchard. The Johnson & Wales-trained pastry chef stacks and spreads in her sunlit "cake studio" in Roanoke's Patrick Henry Hotel.



Blue Cow Ice Cream



BreadCraft



Duck Donuts



Kelly Cafe

Perhaps cupcakes captivate. Dig into goodies baked by Bubblecake and Viva La Cupcake in Roanoke; KupKakery Bakery in Rocky Mount and Cupcake Cottage in Daleville.

Do doughnuts do it for you? Roanoke's recently opened Duck Donuts makes their melt-in-your-mouth, made-to-order treats on-the-spot, seven days a week. For an area institution, Carol Lee Donuts in Blacksburg is worth the trek.

Maybe it's ice cream that floats your spoon. If so, you're in luck; fantastic flavors and surprising scoops await. Everything from honey lavender at Roanoke's Blue Cow Ice Cream Co. to horchata by Pycone Creamery, found in pints at Benny's pizza places across the Roanoke Valley. King of the cone is Homestead Creamery, with rich deliciousness fashioned in Franklin County and found on grocery store shelves, as well as in ice cream parlors like Pop's Ice Cream and Soda Bar and Here's the Scoop, both in Roanoke.

Kelly Cafe in Roanoke and Salem showcases nearly two dozen

flavors of gelato every day: avocado, hazelnut, piña colada and peach mango. All the gelato is made in-house, in small batches, and sold within days.

"Some of our flavors sell out so quick that people are disappointed when they come in and the flavor they wanted is gone," says owner Jacob Pham.

Gelato's texture is smoother than ice cream because of how it's made and the lower temperature it stays. Yet, Kelly's gelato is lower in fat than ice cream; their sorbet offerings are dairy-free.

If you're looking to shake things up try Thai rolled ice cream — a visual and oral delight that's as much fun to watch as to eat. Find it at North Roanoke's Bare Ice Cream and Champloo Desserts in Roanoke and Salem. These Asian-inspired stores also offer boba tea and a wealth of boundary-pushing flavors: taro, pistachio, green tea. Bare Ice Cream features the novelty treat Dragon's Breath, liquid nitrogen-infused crisps that allow eaters to breathe "smoke" after taking a bite.

Let's say you're a kid in a candy shop. The Candy Store in downtown Roanoke is a Willy Wonka-esque experience with jars of jewel-colored sweets beckoning from every corner. Roanoke's chocolatepaper offers delightful trifles and delectable truffles — complete with caramel, toffee and even chocolate-covered potato chips. Baylee's Best Chocolates in Roanoke County serves up tantalizing hand-made confections in clusters and layers and barks.

A spot to seek out is Corbin's Confections in Salem. This bakery stirs up everything from gingerbread-marshmallow cream whoopie pies to elegant wedding cakes — all made without gluten, peanuts or tree nuts. Customers drive from hours away to fill up on baked goods that are as tasty as they are safe to eat.

"There was nowhere around here where you could buy a dozen cupcakes that were nut free and gluten free," says owner Shana Brown, whose now-11-year-old son, Corbin, who suffers from peanut allergies, was the inspiration for the shop.

Inventory rotates often — vegan carrot cupcakes, chocolate cheesecake frosted with ganache, cinnamon rolls, cream puffs, cookies, even doughnuts.

"It's all preservative-free too. Everything here is made from scratch," says Brown. "I feel like that equals goodness."

So what is it about the Roanoke Valley that's so sweet?

Perhaps several factors have, as of late, combined to create a perfect recipe: two parts uptick in tourists; one part thriving



events scene; sprinkle in a healthy wedding industry. Voila! There's enough demand to keep the cake makers baking.

As goes BreadCraft's decadent, saucer-sized cookies, so goes the Roanoke Valley? Well, maybe not. But wouldn't it be nice if that were so? ■



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DINER**

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