



From bean to cup Birch coffee shop brews up a storm

A love of great coffee and food inspired **Niall Munro** to establish his own coffee shop and roastery business to bring a slice of cafe culture to the Highlands

Small Business Focus
in association with
Inverness
BID
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Birch, 21 High Street,
Inverness

W: <https://birch.coffee>

**For more information
about Inverness BID:**

T: 01463 714550

E: info@invernessbid.co.uk

www.invernessbid.co.uk

Q How would you describe your business to a stranger?

A I'd describe Birch as being a business that focuses on high quality produce and simple aesthetics. We focus heavily on utilising what's around us and love to showcase that. We source coffee from all over the world and will typically have two on rotation in each shop; one for espresso and one for filter. I particularly like Colombian coffees at the moment with experimental processes post-harvest. It gives the coffee a really unique and interesting flavour profile which lots of people wouldn't necessarily associate with coffee as it's traditionally known. You can buy beans direct in store and on our website. We serve a mix of sweet and savoury food – lots of tasty pastries and cakes, as well as toasties, sandwiches and seasonal specials.

Q What inspired you to start the business?

A A love of coffee, the culture around it and good food. I've always been into food in a big way and coffee came slightly later after spending time living in Melbourne. I love the creative aspect of opening new spaces too, from choosing the furniture we use to the ceramics we serve our coffee in.

Q How has your business developed?

A It's an ever developing business with new exciting ideas coming all of the time. It's grown pretty organically over the last few years; from opening the first shop to opening the roastery and then our second store in Inverness. It's an ever evolving business, as I feel change is as important for the staff as much as it is customers.

Q What are your plans to develop your business



Owner of Birch coffee shop, Niall Munro. Picture: Callum Mackay

in the future?

A I love the idea of opening similar spaces to our existing shops in the not so distant future, but for now, we're firmly focused on our existing stores where we have some exciting developments in the pipeline that I'm unable to share at the moment. Do keep an eye on our social channels though!

Q What lessons have you learnt from your time in business?

A Running a business requires a lot of work and time but if it's been founded from a place of passion, it's time well spent! Ensuring you surround yourself with great people who share similar values and a love for coffee is also key. On the slightly duller side of business, having a good accountant is well worth it!

Q What do you love about working in Inverness city centre?

A We serve so many

wonderful customers from all over the world, and being able to create a space where people come together and share one common passion for coffee is a wonderful thing. As we're on a pedestrianised street, it's great that people can also gather outside to enjoy their coffee when we have our select few days of sun!

Q Can you tell us something interesting about yourself?

A A random fact is that I won a Channel Four cooking show called MKR back in 2017 with my good friend Clare Coghill, who owns and runs Cafe Cuil on the Isle of Skye. Outside of work, I like to play badminton, spend time with my family and focus on my other passion, Skye Live festival, which takes place next May and is not to be missed. I like to unwind from work exploring new places to eat with my girlfriend too.