

The Seattle Times

Monday, June 29, 2009 - Page updated at 03:42 PM

Permission to reprint or copy this article or photo, other than personal use, must be obtained from The Seattle Times. Call 206-464-3113 or e-mail resale@seattletimes.com with your request.

After 17 years of roasting, Fonté Coffee will open first retail store inside Four Seasons Hotel

Melissa Allison

Paul Odom started roasting coffee in Seattle in 1992, the day after he finished college.

His company -- Fonté Coffee Roaster -- has built a national reputation with customers including Wynn Las Vegas and the St. Regis Hotel in New York. Fonté has 25 employees and can roast up to 10,000 pounds a day at its roastery in Georgetown.

"Here in Seattle, we've been pretty low profile," Odom said.

That will change beginning in late July, when Fonté opens its first retail location just south of [Fran's Chocolates](#) in the Four Seasons Hotel in downtown Seattle.

It will offer four kinds of espresso each day: a "typical milk-drink espresso," an espresso for people who prefer shots, a single-origin espresso and a decaf.

Espresso shots will be pulled from a machine made by Belgian artist [Kees van der Westen](#), who worked with Fonté to build a mostly manual machine that slowly builds pressure at the beginning "so it doesn't shock the coffee," Odom said.

Although Fonté coffee is served at Uptown Espresso and the restaurant Crush in Seattle, it hasn't opened its own retail outlet because "we didn't want to put up a bar in some random place. We wanted to do something new that hadn't been done before," said Odom, a Seattle native whose father, Milt, founded the bottling company that first put Coca-Cola in a can.

"There are a lot of good coffee bars in Seattle," he said. "The way we're going to do it is approachable, with not a lot of attitude. The beverage will get the same price point as any other bar, but you'll get coffees that might have 16 bags in world. We'll have those on a daily basis. And we'll have coffees that are more rare than that."

It will serve beer and wine, and a limited food menu being developed with Crush chef and owner Jason Wilson.

Tysan Dutta, previously sommelier and a manager for the Herb Farm in Woodinville, will run the new coffee bar.

Copyright © 2009 The Seattle Times Company



COURTESY OF FONTE COFFEE ROASTER
Paul Odom, owner of Fonté Coffee Roaster