

# A Cartographic History of Coffee Shops in Downtown Auburn, Alabama

● eastward facing ●

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**11. UNIQ COFFEE.** Another café to spring up in the "coffeehouse wave" that overtook Auburn in the 2010s. It was located at 312 N. Gay Street, but closed its doors at the end of March 2024.

**8. ROSS HOUSE COFFEE.** In 2017, the 111-year-old house located at 150 Ross Street was expected to be demolished. Toni Holt instead founded Ross House Coffee at the location. A second location was later opened at 320 W. Magnolia Ave.

**12. BITTY & BEAU'S COFFEE.** This coffeehouse opened in the spring of 2022 at 100 N. Gay Street (in the new Auburn Bank Center).

**7. THE BEAN.** The Bean coffee shop, founded in 2015, was originally located at 169 S. Gay Street in downtown Auburn. In 2019 it moved to its present location at 140 N. Dean Road.

**10. WELL RED.** A bookstore and coffee shop that opened in 2020. The building, at 223 Opelika Road, previously had housed Dayspring health food store for decades. In 2024 the coffeehouse expanded to a second location (named **The Fox**) previously occupied by **Coffee Cat**.

**9. AUBURN OIL CO.** A bookstore and coffee shop that opened in October 2019.

**6. COFFEE CAT/THE FOX.** Located at 124 Tichenor Avenue, Coffee Cat originally started as a second **Mama Mocha's** location. Mama Mocha partners Sarah Barnett Gill and Maddie Corbeau amicably split the businesses into two separate entities in 2014. Maddie renamed her café "Coffee Cat". In early 2024 Coffee Cat officially closed its doors, but coffee still flowed as the location was filled by **Well Red's** expansion named "The Fox".

**3. CAMBRIDGE COFFEE/WAKE-UP/PREVAIL UNION.** Located a bit south of J&M Bookstore on College Street (in a location that, back in the 1980s housed a Baskin-Robbins ice cream parlor). The coffee shop was open from 2004 through 2009, and for at least a part of that time the manager was Sarah Barnett Gill who would later found **Mama Mocha Coffee Roasters**. From 2009 through 2013 a new coffeehouse occupied this retail space, first known as "Wake-Up" then "Prevail Union". Prevail Union would later establish a small presence in Foy Hall on Auburn University's campus. All of the businesses in the building on South College were expelled eventually as the building was demolished. The new Whatley Building stands on the spot today.

**2. TAYLOR'S BAKERY & GOURMET COFFEE.** Founded in 1997 this was a bakery whose owner, Jan Taylor, would bake cakes late into the night. The coffee business started as a side gig but soon was attracting a lot of students (it was really the only coffee shop in town at the time, plus Jan kept it open late... sometimes all night). The interior decor was quite noteworthy with the small wall-tables having been inherited from an earlier coffee shop in the same retail space (I believe that earlier café was call "Sista's"). Taylor's changed ownership (retaining the name) in 2009, but the coffee shop closed its doors for good in December 2011 (becoming a Gigi's Cupcakes for a while).

**1. COFFEE BANQUE.** This café existed in the early to mid-1990s. Located in the corner building that once housed Auburn Savings & Loan (in the 1980s and earlier). This prime real estate spot (101 N. College Street) became a number of bars and restaurants through the 2000s (The Vault, Bodega, Pieology, etc). Today the retail space houses a Whataburger.

**4. GNU'S ROOM/DOG & PONY/MAMA MOCHA'S/COFFEE MAFIA.** In the 1990s this storefront at 414 South Gay Street in Southside Auburn was the location of a print shop called the Gnu's Room. It's owner, Bill Sherling, eventually converted the business to a used bookstore of the same name. Sherling sold the business to Tina Tatum sometime in the 2007. Along with the books, Tina started offering coffee for sale under the café name "Dog & Pony". At some point Sarah Barnett Gill (from **Cambridge Coffee**) moved into the back of the store and began roasting coffee beans locally. This roastery was known as "Mama Mocha's" and soon took over not only the coffee sales but, by 2011, the whole retail space -- Tina moved the used bookstore to the nearby city of Opelika. A second Mama Mocha's was established in downtown Auburn in 2013 and managed by Sarah's business partner Maddie Corbeau (see **Coffee Cat**). By 2021 Sarah had moved her coffee roasting business to Opelika and sold the coffee shop business to new owners. The name of the new café was "Coffee Mafia".

**5. MAGNOLIA COFFEE & TEA CO.** This coffeehouse existed in the southeast corner of the first floor of The Brown Crest apartment building (there was also a Firehouse Subs right next to it). Many of the initial baristas here had migrated from **Taylor's Bakery** after that café changed ownership near the end of its run. This establishment remained for about a year (from late 2010 to late 2011). Today both the café space and the sandwich shop are gone (more apartments occupy the space now).

