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Grounds for Thought is a favorite of college kids at Mesa Community College.

Samantha Poulos

Breakfast Beat: An On-The-Move Breakfast Fueled by Quirky Coffee

SAMANTHA POULS | JANUARY 27, 2018 | 7:00AM

20 **The Spot:** Grounds for Thought
1833 West Southern Avenue, Mesa
480-461-7772

The Scene: Grounds for Thought on Mesa Community College's campus serves unique coffee drinks inspired by a barista's favorite movies.

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Grounds has come a long way from its humble beginning almost 23 years ago. "We started as just a little sidewalk cart inside the Student Union," says founder and co-owner Rick Hanson. The cart provided fuel to college for ten years until Hanson and his wife moved to a brick and mortar storefront. Fast forward to 2018, and Grounds is operating on three different Arizona campuses with a total of four shops.

Hanson uses Coda coffee beans to create the brews. He aims to maintain a different atmosphere than your typical chain coffee shop. Most of his staff have been serving and creating coffee concoctions for upward of five years. Hanson refers to his baristas as family, and the vibe is definitely felt throughout the shop. Baristas sport smile. Customers linger and chat.

The Goods: Grounds for Thought features drinks with a twist. The shop has your typical drip coffee and lattes. Movie-based creations offer something new.

Espresso Patronum is the most popular of the specialty drinks and will surely satisfy fans of Harry Potter. It's made with white

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chocolate, coconut, two shots of espresso, and whole milk. Bianca Mihalcescu, creator of the drink, says it can be served hot, cold or blended. Mihalcescu has been working at Grounds for seven years, and credits her creations to her art background. Her drinks often start as specials, and, as they gain popularity, they often become permanent special offerings. Bianca's work has gained such a following that she now has her own permanent menu on the board – Bianca's Menu.

Grounds for Thought also has delicious baked goods to soak up the caffeine. The Arizona based company, Sweet Addiction, supplies pastries for the coffee shop. They do not disappoint. Try the moist Supreme Banana Bread with chocolate chips for a delicious and filling light breakfast or mid-day refuel. The bread is thick and sweet with just the right amount of banana and chocolate.

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There are also several smoothies featuring classic fruit like bananas, strawberries,

and blueberries. You can supplement them with whey and other additions. A few more traditional breakfast offerings round out the menu, including a breakfast burrito, fruit parfait, fruit plate, and order of hard-boiled eggs.



Grounds for Thought also serves regular drip coffee and delicious baked goods.

Samantha Pouls

The Bottom Line: People might think to avoid Grounds for Thought because of its college campus location, but it's worth a visit if you're in the area. The local shop has 20-year roots and serves unique drinks that you won't find anywhere else.

Special Something: Try the Sedona for an alternative-milk coffee specialty drink. Made with honey, hazelnut, cinnamon, and either soy, coconut, or almond milk, the drink is a local favorite.

Hours: Monday to Thursday 6:30

a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Friday 6:30 a.m.
to 3 p.m.; Saturday 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Price: \$

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