

Storry-telling draft:

“Barista by Day, Designer by Heart: Lessons in Foam, Flow, and Form”

Hook / Introduction

“I learned more about design while steaming milk than in a classroom.”

Start with a small, vivid moment:

- The first time I made a perfect tulip in a cappuccino
- A customer who asked for “the usual” and how that moment of connection made me rethink user experience
- Or the rhythm of opening the café and how it mimics a creative ritual

“At first, I thought my café job was just a side hustle. But it turned out to be my design school in disguise. “

Atmosphere is Everything

Design insight: Good design is invisible — it’s about creating a feeling.

Café insight: People return to cafés not just for the coffee, but for how the space *feels*.

- Lighting, music, scent, texture = sensory branding
- How you arrange cups and tools for flow = UX/UI
- The emotional tone of space = brand identity
- Observing how people move, sit, scroll = user research

“In the café, I became obsessed with how space and sound shape emotion. That’s design, too.”

Rhythm, Repetition, Ritual

Design insight: Creative process is not always spontaneous. It’s about discipline and detail.

Café insight: Repetition builds skill. Flow creates freedom.

- Dialing in the perfect espresso => prototyping
- Repeating latte art => iterations
- Morning routines => systems thinking
- Flow state behind the bar => creative zone in Figma or Illustrator

“The café taught me to fall in love with repetition — the quiet power of doing one thing well, over and over.”

Human-Centered Design Happens in Real Time

Design insight: Design starts with listening, empathy, and attention.

Café insight: You learn about people by serving them. Making small stable relationships with our regulars.

- Learning regulars’ preferences => personalization
- Reading moods, body language => emotional design
- The way someone holds a cup or reads a menu = intuitive UX

“Every order is a micro-interaction. Every customer is a user. And their feedback? Instant.”

Café ↔ Design Studio

What can I bring from the café into design:

- Attention to detail
- Love for systems
- Respect for ritual and flow
- Human connection at the center

What can I bring from design into the café:

- Visual consistency (menu, posters, events)
- Brand storytelling
- Photography and content for social media

“I don’t switch off my designer brain when I clock in. And I don’t switch off my barista heart when I design.”

Ending: A Love Letter to the In-Between

“Some of my best design ideas came to me while cleaning the steam wand.”

“The café gave me a new understanding of what design *feels* like — not just what it looks like.”

Final message:

- You don’t have to choose one role in life.

- Inspiration can come from anywhere.
- Design is not a job title — it's how you pay attention to the world.

STORY-TELLING SPEECH:

"I learned more about design while steaming milk than in a classroom."

That might sound dramatic. But let me take you behind the coffee bar for a moment — because that's where my design journey really began.

I work as a barista in a small café in Prague. It started as a part-time job during my studies — a way to earn money, stay caffeinated, and feel productive. I didn't expect that behind the espresso machine, I would discover the emotional core of design.

Atmosphere is Everything

When people walk into a café, they won't remember the exact gram weight of coffee in their cappuccino.

But they remember the smell. The light. The sound of the grinder. The way the barista smiled and greeted them.

They remember how the space made them *feel*.

And that's when I realized — good design isn't always visible. It's felt.

That atmosphere, that vibe, is the same thing I try to create when I'm designing a poster, or a logo, or a menu. It's not just about visuals — it's about building emotion into space.

Rhythm, Ritual, Repetition

Every morning, we go through the same motions.

Wipe the machine. Preheat the cups. Dial in the espresso. Steam the milk.

At first, it felt mechanical. Repetitive. But slowly, something shifted.

There's a strange kind of peace in doing the same thing, again and again.

Just like in design — you sketch, you revise, you adjust. You make 10 versions before one feels *right*.

In the café, **I fell in love with process.**

Repetition. Flow. Discipline.

Design isn't just inspiration — it's a work of every emotion, intuition and skills put into one.

Human-Centered Design Happens in Real Time

One thing you learn quickly as a barista: People are weird. Especially in the morning :D.

Some want half oat half coconut milk. Some want *just* warm milk. Some want it extra hot. Some want it “not too foamy but still silky.”

But once you learn their names, their stories, their “usuals” — you realize something deeper:

Every customer is a user.

Every order is a micro-interaction.

And their feedback? Instant.

That’s what human-centered design really is — paying attention, adapting, and making people feel seen. Whether it’s through a coffee cup... or a landing page.

What the Café Taught My Designer Brain

Working in a café taught me how to observe. How to listen. How to create experiences that feel smooth and intuitive.

I started bringing that into my design practice — not just in how things look, but in how they *flow*.

I think about space differently. About rhythm. About warmth.

And in return, my design brain has started shaping the café:

— I help design the posters

— I shoot videos and photos for our Instagram

— I obsess over font choices for the new menu

Because now I see branding in the angle of a croissant, or the tone of a caption.

Ending: A Love Letter to the In-Between

There’s a strange magic in being in-between worlds — between creativity and routine, between service and strategy, between art and espresso.

And I’ve learned that you don’t have to pick one identity.

You can be a barista with a designer’s eye.

Or a designer with a barista’s heart.

Because the world doesn’t need more people fitting into one box.

It needs more people who know how to pay attention — to rhythm, to people, to emotion.

And sometimes, the best design lessons aren't in a classroom or a portfolio.

They're in the hiss of a steam wand.

The warmth of a ceramic cup.

The smile of a regular who just got their "usual."

"I build brands the same way I brew coffee: with precision, empathy, and a little bit of heart."