

Published September 2nd, 2020

Restaurants and cafes turn to food trucks to expand reach

By Vera Kochan



Bridge & Tunnel Coffee Company's co-founder Greg Fulcher, left, and barista Andrew Samuelson Photo Vera Kochan

before seen in Lamorinda - a pop-up coffee café on wheels. Although its name may sound like directions on a GPS, the Bridge & Tunnel Coffee Company is making a splash wherever the neon yellow vehicle sets up shop.

Tillotson lives in Atlanta and manages the acquisition of Central American and Ethiopian coffees while Fulcher, a Lamorinda resident, drives the coffee truck around town and serves as the barista.

Fulcher comes to coffee after a 30-year career in the film industry. "I just love coffee," he replied. "It's my favorite drink, and it's the culture surrounding it that makes it better."

The coffee truck's first incarnation was as a linen truck making deliveries at the Reno-Tahoe International Airport. With only 28,000 miles on it, the yellow truck (yes, that's its original color) was put out of circulation.

When Fulcher and Tillotson purchased it they turned it over to a catering truck manufacturer who took two months to transform it into the coffee truck. However, the interior still lacked enough electrical power to support an espresso machine, a commercial Kegerator, flake ice machine, a beverage refrigerator, coffee brewer, two big coffee grinders, water heater and pumps, lights, fans and more. "We designed the power system for the truck during 2019's power-shutdowns, with the goal of full functionality without the grid," explained Fulcher. "Sparing you the technical details, our truck is capable of full off-grid operation with the help of a powerful hybrid lithium polymer battery/inverter system."

Like all good businessmen, the partners mulled over many catchy names to call their new venture. On Fulcher's way home from the San Francisco International Airport one day, a friend called his cell phone to ask if he was there yet. Fulcher replied that he was still stuck on the Bay Bridge and wouldn't be at the Caldecott Tunnel for probably another hour. Suddenly the idea light bulb went off, and a company name was born. "I immediately thought of the pejorative term 'bridge and tunnel people' used in New York for commuters," he said. "I felt that it didn't really apply, because good things happen on this side of the Bay."

Bridge & Tunnel Coffee Company sells single-estate hot coffee, espresso drinks (Panamanian roast), craft nitro cold brew, non-caffeinated drinks and small-batch whole bean coffee.

For the coffee truck's schedule visit: www.bridgetunnel.coffee or call (925) 388-6288. Having only just begun serving coffee on wheels in early August, Fulcher and Tillotson have plans to eventually open a brick and mortar coffee shop in Moraga. Fulcher stated, "Great coffee is a destination for those who love it."

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[back](#)

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