



## Two-Week Internship at Neighborhood Espresso, Carlow, Ireland by Tim Breiner

During my two-week internship at Neighborhood Espresso in Carlow, Ireland, I gained valuable hands-on experience in a local coffee shop known for its cozy atmosphere and quality brews. This internship allowed me to not only learn about coffee preparation but also interact with the welcoming community that frequents the café.

The first few days were focused on getting familiar with the workspace, observing the baristas, and assisting with basic tasks. I learned how to grind coffee beans, prepare espresso shots, and create various drinks like cappuccinos, lattes, and flat whites. One of my favorite tasks was learning the art of latte art, which was both challenging and fun. I spent time refining my technique, and though I wasn't perfect, I could see steady improvement. The staff at Neighborhood Espresso was very helpful and patient, teaching me the nuances of coffee brewing and the importance of customer service.

Throughout the internship, I had the chance to work during different shifts, which gave me a deeper understanding of how the café operates at various times of day. I enjoyed assisting with both opening and closing procedures, including setting up the machines and cleaning up at the end of the day. One of the most rewarding parts of the experience was interacting with customers—regulars and newcomers alike. I learned to recommend drinks based on preferences, answer questions about the coffee menu, and make sure everyone felt welcome.

In the evenings, I would often meet friends in a nearby park. After a day of work, we would relax, chat, and enjoy the cool Irish air. These moments allowed me to reflect on the day's events and connect with people in a relaxed setting, which was a nice contrast to the busier atmosphere at the café.

Looking back, my two-week experience at Neighborhood Espresso was overwhelmingly positive. The team was friendly and supportive, which made it easy to feel at home despite being new to the café environment. I gained practical skills in coffee making and customer service, which I believe will serve me well in the future. The work was fast-paced at times, especially during the busy morning and afternoon hours, but the team helped me manage these moments, teaching me how to stay organized and calm under pressure.



There were a few challenges, particularly when it came to keeping up with the demand during peak times. Sometimes I felt a bit overwhelmed by the volume of orders, but the staff were always there to help, and this experience taught me how to handle pressure in a professional environment.

Overall, my internship was an enriching experience that taught me much more than just how to make coffee. I learned about teamwork, the importance of communication, and the value of a friendly, welcoming environment for customers. It was a great opportunity to immerse myself in Irish culture and community while gaining practical skills that I will carry with me in the future.