

A new coffee shop and grocer is coming to Mid City

By Dillon Lowe



[Las Brujas](#), an online coffee seller launched in 2018, is preparing to open its first brick-and-mortar in Mid City early next year.

Owner David Villa tells *Daily Report* that he's setting up shop at 3101 Government St., in the space formerly occupied by DIY Disco between Elsie's Plate & Pie and Radio Bar.

Villa, who grew up in Baton Rouge and recently moved back after six years in New Orleans, says the concept will combine a full espresso bar with a small-format grocery offering goods sourced from local producers.

"I'll offer everything I already offer online plus more," Villa says, noting the menu will include cold brew, chai, matcha and other beverages, all "made from scratch as organic, as raw and as local as possible."

On the grocery side, Villa says he plans to work with area farmers and purveyors to stock meat, cheese, produce, eggs, milk, plants and even artwork. The shop will also sell baked goods and other premade items from local vendors, as well as natural wines and beer for off-premises consumption.

According to Villa, prospective patrons can expect an atmosphere that's "rustic and warm," complete with "a lot of woodwork and incandescent lighting." He says the 1,600-square-foot space requires some build-out, but not much.

"It's a perfect spot right in the heart of Mid City," Villa says. "It's clean, it's ready and it's zoned accordingly."

"Las brujas" is a Spanish term that translates to "the witches." Villa chose the name for his business as a nod to the moss that hangs from the trees around Envigado, Colombia, where he was born. That moss, he says, "looks like silver witches' hair."

Though Villa has operated Las Brujas primarily as an online business thus far, he has hosted pop-ups around Baton Rouge at retailers like Iverstine Butcher and Red Stick Spice. The roasting itself is handled by Slidell roaster Ed Kuhlman, who Villa describes as a "master" of his craft.

In contrast to traditional drum roasting, Kuhlman exclusively air roasts his beans. Air roasting is a method by which beans are suspended and roasted in a fluid bed of hot air rather than through direct contact with a hot surface like in a traditional drum roaster. The result is coffee that tastes cleaner, less acidic and less bitter.

"It brings out the inherent sweetness of the coffee, which is a fruit to begin with, so it shouldn't taste bitter," Villa says.

Las Brujas is targeting a February opening.

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