

Issue 01, January 2026

COFFEE BREAK

Featuring

La Cachette

Kivu Noir

Casa Center

SŌOKO Xperiences

Katina's Kafe

Good Mood Resort

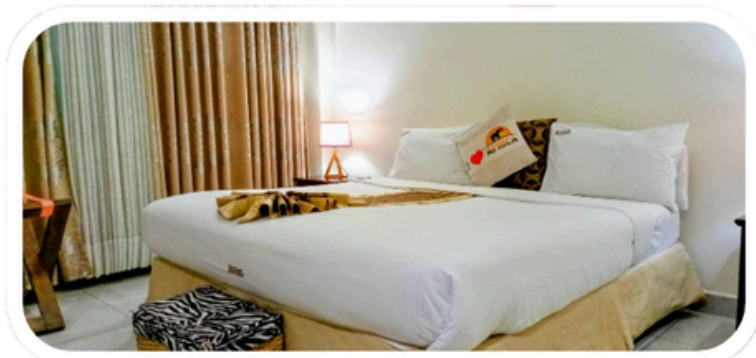
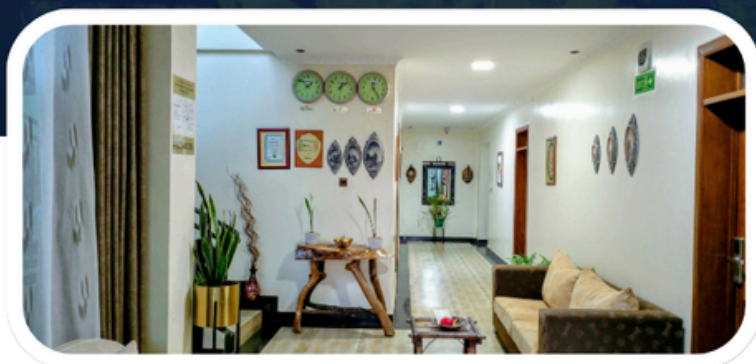
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Editor's Note

Welcome to the Land of 1,000 Cups



This year marks a decade since I began exploring Rwanda and sharing those journeys through short stories and books. It has been ten years of movement, discovery, and reflection—measured not only in distance covered, but in moments paused and observed.

Along the way, coffee shops have become constant companions. Scattered across the country, they have offered more than caffeine: they've been quiet workspaces, brief shelters from the road, and places where stories took shape. Many of the pages in this issue were written at small tables, with a cup nearby and the journey waiting outside.

Coffee Break Magazine grows out of those moments. In a country known as the Land of 1,000 Hills, this first issue invites you to experience Rwanda as the Land of 1,000 Cups—one pause, one place, one story at a time.

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Lost in Mundi Center, Found at La Cachette



I was running errands in Kigali. It was one of those days spent crisscrossing major highways and slipping into the city's quieter corners. Somewhere along KN 3 Road, a quick stop to pick up a parcel introduced me to a place I hadn't visited before: Mundi Center.

Minutes later, I noticed La Cachette tucked quietly inside the complex. I sat down and ordered my favorite aromatic cup, letting it do what it always does—soften the edges of a busy day. For a while, the errands loosened their grip.

Mundi Center brings together commerce, leisure, and the arts in a way that feels open and inviting. Whether you come to shop, enjoy a meal, or catch a performance, it's a space designed for lingering—one that turns a simple errand into a moment worth remembering.



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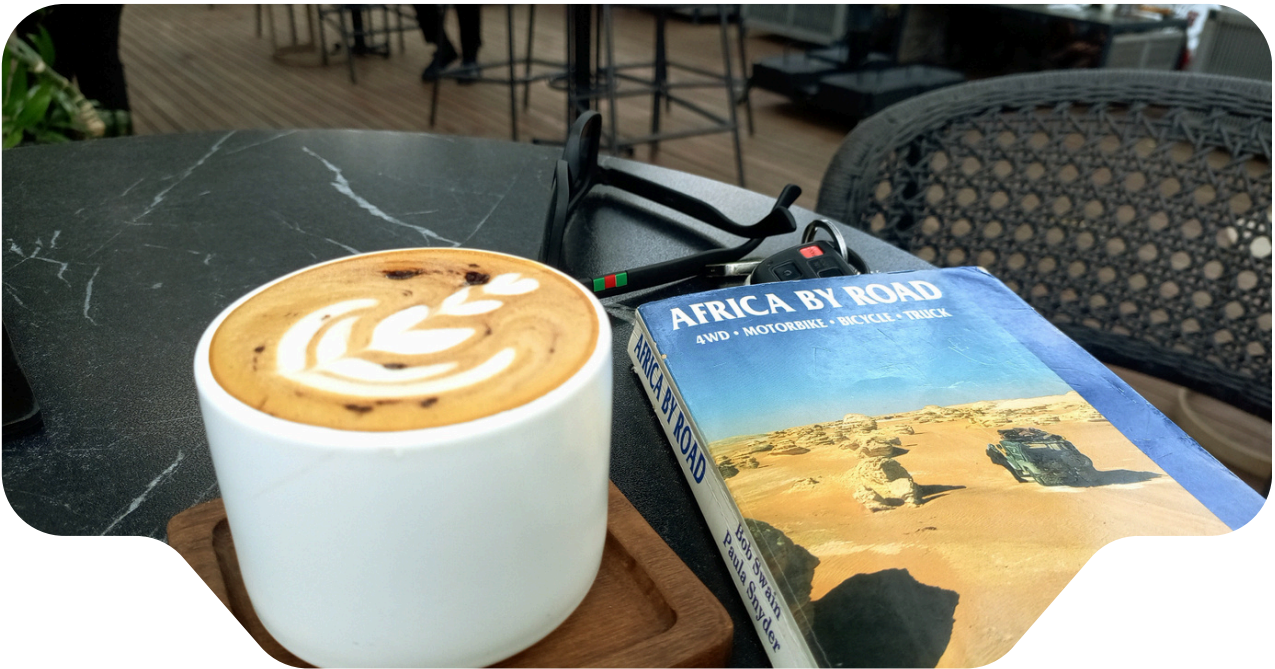
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A Journey Through Time at Kivu Noir



I walked into Kivu Noir and slipped into my favorite corner. A moment later, the barista set a menu down on my table. I didn't touch it. I already knew what I wanted—a cappuccino. Nothing more, nothing less.

From my bag, I opened a book titled *Africa by Road*. I hadn't noticed its age at first. Thirty years old. Long enough, I assumed, to have been overtaken by time. But a few pages in, that assumption unraveled. This was not a book concerned with destinations or arrival. It was about movement itself: buses rumbling across long roads, ferries easing between shores, borders crossed with patience and a quiet, practiced awareness. The author remained almost invisible, allowing the road to speak in its own voice.

I sipped my coffee slowly, and the contrast softened rather than clashed. The book carried me into a slower, dustier era, while the warmth of the cup anchored me firmly in the now. In that small, unremarkable corner, time folded in on itself—past and present sharing a table, unbothered.

A Coffee Interlude at Casa Center

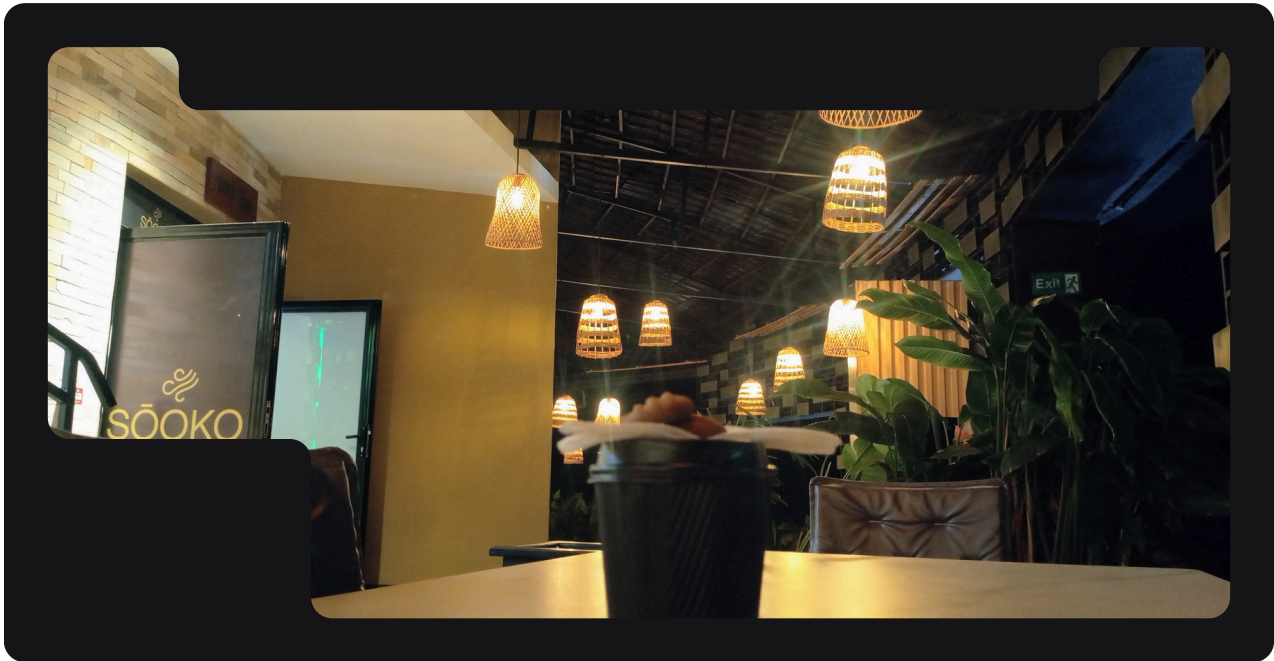


Mist and light rain clung to the hills as I rode toward Rusumo with a fellow biker from Kenya, the Eastern Province unfolding slowly around us. He was heading deeper into East Africa, and I had the chance to escort him as far as the Tanzanian border. After seeing him off, I turned back toward Kigali.

Somewhere along the Rwamagana bypass, caffeine shifted from a want to a necessity. A quick flash of signage caught my eye, and instinct did the rest. I pulled over, followed curiosity inside, and was met with an easy welcome that immediately softened the fatigue of the ride. The timing felt deliberate, as though the road itself had placed this stop exactly where it was needed.

With a cup warming my hands, I felt ready for the final stretch. By the last sip, it was clear this stop was more than a coffee break. It was one of those quiet intervals that give journeys their shape—a reminder that travel isn't only about where we're headed, but about the pauses that make movement meaningful.

An Evening Pause at SŌOKO Xperiences



Twilight found me easing along the Kigali–Musanze highway, carrying the pleasant fatigue that follows an eventful weekend in Rubavu. It was the kind of tired that feels deserved—earned through movement, discovery, and days that asked for full attention. With about fifty kilometers still to cover, the road felt familiar, but my body knew it needed a small assist to stay alert for the final stretch home.

The glow of SŌOKO Xperiences answered that call. Inside, the smell of freshly ground coffee and the low hum of music created an immediate sense of ease. I ordered a cappuccino, not in a rush, but with intention—coffee as a companion rather than a break. Each sip brought clarity, a gentle stimulant settling in as darkness wrapped the surrounding hills.

I stayed a little longer than planned, hands wrapped around the cup, letting the weekend slowly exhale. These coffee stops are never just about caffeine; they're quiet moments of recalibration, where the journey checks in with itself. When I finally sat back behind the wheel, I felt recharged—reminded that sometimes what carries you home isn't speed, but a well-timed cup along the way.

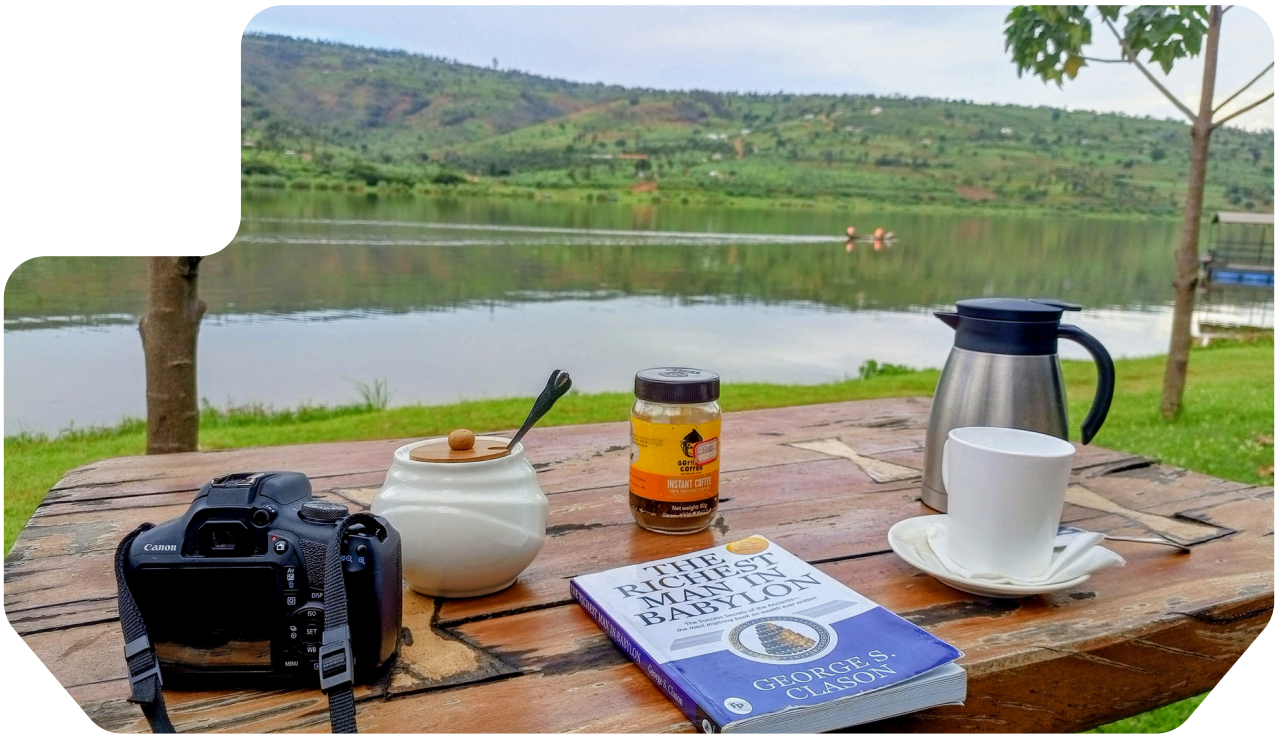
Juggling Business and Leisure at Katina's Kafe



When I popped into Katina's Kafe, I sensed I had stepped into a space gently holding two worlds at once. On one side, laptops glowed and conversations gravitated toward deadlines and deliverables—the quiet urgency of a city still in motion. In another corner, music hummed softly, loosening the edges of the day, inviting pause rather than progress. Business and leisure didn't compete here; they flowed side by side, forming a rhythm that felt unmistakably Kigali.

As I sat longer, it became clear that the café carried more than atmosphere. Beneath the surface was a quiet purpose: empowering the deaf community through training and employment. What might have been routine exchanges elsewhere became thoughtful moments here. Gestures replaced words, and communication slowed just enough to feel deliberate and human. In that unhurried space, I found myself listening more closely—not just with my ears, but with attention.

Moments of Reflection at Good Mood Resort



I was riding along a narrow trail that hugs Lake Muhazi intimately, a path that quietly asks you to slow down. Along the way, I stumbled upon Good Mood Resort.

After exploring the property, I settled into the resort's lakeside garden and placed my order. By the time the coffee arrived, the lake had already claimed my attention—waves brushing softly against the shore, birds gliding freely from one side of the narrow water to the other.

With a cup in hand, I opened *The Richest Man in Babylon* and let its timeless lessons emerge gently, page by page, in quiet conversation with the stillness around me.

When I finally closed the book, the moment lingered. Ducks wandered nearby, birdsong drifted through the air, and wooden canoes traced slow, unhurried lines across the lake. It felt like a gentle reunion with nature.

Urban Pause at T-Stone Apartment Hotel



It was 7:30 p.m. Too late for coffee? Not when a five-kilometer run still waited before calling it a day. I was on my way to the running track around Kigali Golf Resort and Villas when, halfway there, my energy dipped in a familiar way—the moment when the body asks for patience before performance. So I listened, changed direction, and followed the quieter call of coffee instead.

A short detour drew me away from the street and into the parking lot of T-Stone Apartment Hotel. Upon arrival, I stepped into the elevator and was lifted to the top floor, where the bar is tucked away. From a quiet corner near the counter, I let the evening settle. The coffee arrived—warm, timely—and with it, focus returned slowly.

As the last sip faded, the rhythm returned. Legs loosened, thoughts aligned, motivation restored. The run still waited — and now it felt earned. Sometimes, the best preparation isn't pushing through, but pausing just long enough to reset. In a city that never quite clocks out, even a late-evening coffee can become the difference between forcing the night and flowing with it.

Fuel for Body and Machine at Gisa's Coffee



Leaving Kigali, the road eased me out of the city's grip. Crossing the Nyabarongo River felt like a gentle threshold, and soon I was rolling into Bugesera District—close enough to the capital to feel familiar, yet open enough to signal a change. The destination was clear: Lake Mirayi. As I approached La Palisse Hotel, two signposts attracted my attention: Engen and Gisa's Coffee. One spoke to the motorcycle, the other to the rider. Needing fuel for both machine and body, the decision made itself. I pulled in without hesitation.

After refilling my bike's tank, I followed the quieter ritual inside. The café offered a brief escape from the highway's momentum—a space where traffic continued outside, but time softened within. The coffee arrived warm and steady, doing what it does best: restoring focus, easing the body back into balance.

Back on the road, the ride toward Lake Mirayi felt settled. That shared stop—practical, unpretentious, and well-timed—had done its work. For motorists heading this way, it's the kind of place that understands the journey: sometimes all you need is a full tank, a good cup, and the road opening up ahead.

Setting the Tone at Kindi's Coffee Shop



Before setting out to explore Nyanza in earnest, I made a brief but essential stop at Kindi's Coffee Shop. It felt like the right place to pause, gather my thoughts, and fuel up for the day ahead.

With a cup of coffee in hand, the town seemed to slow down just enough to allow for planning and anticipation. This was a caffeine boost before taking to the streets of a remarkable town layered with history, culture, and modern transformation.

Kindi's Coffee Shop offered exactly what that moment required—a calm, welcoming space to recharge before the day unfolded. Refreshed and focused, I stepped back onto the streets, ready to begin discovering Nyanza one stop at a time.



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