



## **PRESS RELEASE—FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Benji's Coffee Bar Brews Up Soda to Fund TV show Pilot Episode**

**Belleville, Ont., June 9, 2025** – When Benjamin Batelaan opened Benji's Coffee Bar in Downtown Belleville two years ago, he never imagined his next big idea would involve crafting two house-made sodas—all to raise funds for a pilot episode of a comedy TV series set in his own café.

Batelaan partnered up with the County Bounty Artisanal Soda to co-pack two Benji's branded soda beverages, Raspberry Mint and Mango Peach, based off of his two most popular refresher drink flavours. By May 14, 2025, Batelaan had two pallets of cans in hand.

The sodas are currently available to buy for \$4.40 per can and bulk orders can be made at a discounted rate. Every purchase of the Benji's Original Iced Biscoff-ee also goes towards the funding of the episode, with all profits of the soda and Biscoff-ee (approximately \$1,000 raised so far, after costs) going straight into his TV pilot budget.

“The coffee industry is often an industry that gets overlooked. (Yet) it's a place where people come to connect and visit with each other,” Batelaan said. To shed light on the industry, he thought of a show that would “capture the chaotic day-to-day grind of the hospitality industry”.

He envisions the show to be about everyday café life, quirky customers, and baristas navigating small-town dynamics.

His ultimate goal is to raise \$15,000 by fall 2025. With that budget, he can film a single pilot episode—enough to submit to TV networks or streaming platforms and potentially secure further funding for additional episodes.

Batelaan hopes that viewers of the TV show will help Belleville become a mini fan destination. “I want people to enjoy it, and say, ‘oh my gosh, this show is filmed here’”.



Batelaan will be holding auditions soon and hopes to cast local talents from major lead roles to background extras. “I want the local people to feel like they’re part of it, that there’s something really cool happening down here, (and that) they are part of this process.”

Benji’s Coffee Bar started as a vendor at Pop-Ups on the Bay at Zwick’s Park from 2021 to 2023. On October 26, 2023, the cafe opened at its current location at 29 Market St. as the first tenant of the renovated Memorial Market Place.

“The Pop-ups were my launching pad,” he explained, recalling how the support of customers and fellow vendors gave him the confidence to think bigger.

With soda sales underway, Batelaan will be reaching out to local businesses to seek product placement or sponsorship.

It’s a fizzy sip of small-town ambition—three summers of Pop-Ups, a year and a half of café life, and now, a full-blown TV dream, one can at a time.

Visit <http://benjiscoffeebar.ca/tvshow> for more information.

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