

# THE YEAR *of* THE

# *cat* *cafe*

## THE LUSH LIST

### San Francisco caters to felines with cat-friendly coffee shops

by LYDIA O'CONNOR

You want some kitten with that coffee?

The San Francisco Bay Area is getting the United States' first and second cat cafes, a feline phenomenon by way of Japan that reimagines cafes as oases where patrons can kick back with a hot drink and a resident cat. Because who hasn't felt their earl grey would go great with some ambient purring?

The two spots, KitTea in San Francisco and Cat

Town Cafe in Oakland, are both in the planning stages but will function slightly differently. Health codes allowing, the two cafes are hoping for 2014 openings.

KitTea will be a halfway home for adoptable cats and has partnered with two shelters to populate the cafe. Its founders haven't nailed down a location yet but aim to provide a relaxing alternative to bustling coffee shops and bring the stress-relieving properties

of pet ownership — and catnip-infused tea — to visitors.

"What really drew me to the concept was the idea of a space that was relaxing and didn't have a high frenetic energy like coffee houses do," Courtney Hatt, one of the founders, said. "If this can be successful, I think there will definitely be people who follow suit ... It's going to be pretty big."

Cat Town Cafe will be  
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Japan has nearly 150 cafes that house anywhere from 12 to 24 cats. PHOTO BY DANI SAMUELSON