



# Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

Hearing Date: June 26, 2023

## SIMPLE PLEASURES CAFÉ

*Application No.:* LBR-2020-21-025  
*Business Name:* Simple Pleasures Café  
*Business Address:* 3434 Balboa St.  
*District:* District 1  
*Applicant:* Ahmed Riad, Owner  
*Nomination Date:* December 7, 2020  
*Nominated By:* Mayor London Breed  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

### BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Simple Pleasures Cafe is a traditional bohemian style coffeehouse that has been operating in the Richmond district since its opening by Sandy Gold in 1978. After growing the business to become a staple in the Richmond community as a gathering space and destination for old world style coffees, Gold retired from the business in 1994 and transferred ownership to Ahmed Riad, the current owner. Riad, who is an immigrant from Egypt, met his wife Diana Riggo at the coffeshop and has followed Sandy's passion for bringing community members together through quality coffee, food, and surroundings. Moreover, Riad also carried his passion for serving coffee as he worked for a roaster in Trieste before taking ownership of Simple Pleasures Cafe.

Ahmed and Diana also have a roastery next door at 3422 Balboa Street that was opened in 2006. They roast their coffee old world style in small batches. They procure most of their beans from small farms and women cooperatives. Their beans are mostly organic when available.

### CRITERION 1

**Has the applicant operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?**

Yes, Simple Pleasures Café has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years:

3434 Balboa Street from 1978 to Present (45 years)

### CRITERION 2

**Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?**

Yes, Simple Pleasures Café has contributed to the history and identity of the Outer Richmond neighborhood and San Francisco.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- The business is associated with traditional coffee roasting techniques.

#### Legacy Business Program

Office of Small Business  
City Hall Room 140  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 554-6680  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org  
[www.legacybusiness.org](http://www.legacybusiness.org)





- The Balboa Street property is located within the Neighborhood Commercial Corridors Survey (unadopted) and received the following survey rating: “Appears significant as a contributor to an identified cluster.” The building was constructed in 1924 and exhibits elements of the Mediterranean Revival style.
- There have been a number of features and articles on Simple Pleasures Café. “Eater San Francisco” mentioned the business in the article “25 Quintessential San Francisco Coffee Shops.” “Music in SF” included the business in “SF Music Venue Showcase: Simple Pleasures Cafe.” Simple Pleasures has also been included in “The Bold Italic” and the “Richmond District Blog.”
- Simple Pleasures Café is an immigrant-, minority- and woman-owned business. It's one of a few Egyptian owned businesses along the Balboa Street corridor. The business is community-oriented and offers space for local artists to showcase their work while also being a gathering location for members of the surrounding neighborhood. The business also relies on coffee beans produced by small-scale farms, many of which are women owned.

### CRITERION 3

**Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?**

Yes, Simple Pleasures Café is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

### HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Simple Pleasures Café qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Interior wall murals.
- Old-world, bohemian style roasted coffee.
- A free venue for new and local artists, musicians, and talent.
- An inclusive neighborhood space that welcomes all.

### CORE PHYSICAL FEATURE OR TRADITION THAT DEFINES THE BUSINESS

Following is the core physical feature or tradition that defines the business that would be required for maintenance of the business on the Legacy Business Registry.

- Coffee shop.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Simple Pleasures Café currently located at 3434 Balboa St. in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
Legacy Business Program

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# Small Business Commission

Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_

June 26, 2023

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legacybusiness@sfgov.org

### **Adopting findings approving the Legacy Business Registry application for Simple Pleasures Café, currently located at 3434 Balboa St.**

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, has had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included on the Registry, faces a significant risk of displacement; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

**WHEREAS**, at a duly noticed public hearing held on June 26, 2023, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Simple Pleasures Café in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

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**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Simple Pleasures Café.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Interior wall murals.
- Old-world, bohemian style roasted coffee.
- A free venue for new and local artists, musicians, and talent.
- An inclusive neighborhood space that welcomes all.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Small Business Commission requires maintenance of the below listed core physical feature or tradition to maintain Simple Pleasures Café on the Legacy Business Registry:

- Coffee shop.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on June 26, 2023.

---

Katy Tang  
Director

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Ayes –  
Nays –  
Abstained –  
Absent –

**Legacy Business Program**  
Office of Small Business  
City Hall Room 140  
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San Francisco, CA 94102  
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# Legacy Business Registry

# Application Review Sheet

*Application No.:* LBR-2020-21-025  
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*District:* District 1  
*Applicant:* Ahmed Riad, Owner  
*Nomination Date:* December 7, 2020  
*Nominated By:* Mayor London Breed

**CRITERION 1:** Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years?  
 Yes  No

3434 Balboa Street from 1978 to Present (45 years)

**CRITERION 2:** Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?  
 Yes  No

**CRITERION 3:** Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?  
 Yes  No

**NOTES:** NA

**DELIVERY DATE TO HPC:** April 19, 2023

Richard Kurylo and Michelle Reynolds  
Legacy Business Program

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Office of Small Business  
City Hall Room 140  
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San Francisco, CA 94102  
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December 7, 2020

Director Regina Dick-Endrizzi  
San Francisco Office of Small Business  
City Hall, Room 110  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Director Regina Dick-Endrizzi,

I am writing to nominate Simple Pleasures Cafe for inclusion on the Legacy Business Registry.

The purpose of the City's Legacy Business Registry is to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City. Per ordinance, a business must be nominated by the Mayor or a member of the Board of Supervisors to be reviewed, processed and approved by the Small Business Commission as a Legacy Business at a public hearing if it meets the criteria set forth.

Since opening in 1978, Simple Pleasures Cafe has provided the Richmond District with fresh-roasted coffee and acted as a communal hub for local residents. As a Bohemian coffeehouse, and one of the oldest coffeehouses in the Richmond, Simple Pleasures employs traditional old-world coffee roasting and serving to create a delicious and comforting experience for customers. Additionally, by hosting open mic nights and free live performances by local musicians, Simple Pleasures creates a welcoming community gathering space, bringing neighbors together to eat, drink and celebrate. Simple Pleasures Cafe has contributed to the history and identity of our City and fostered civic engagement and pride.

It is an honor to recognize the legacy and contributions of Simple Pleasures Cafe to our great City of San Francisco.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "London N. Breed".

London N. Breed  
Mayor



# Legacy Business Registry Application



## Business Information

Business name: Simple Pleasures Cafe

Business owner name(s): Ahmed Riad and Diana Riggio Riad

*Identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business*

Current business address: 3434 Balboa St

Telephone: (415) 387 - 4022

Email: simplepleasurescafe@gmail.com

Mailing address (if different than above):

Website:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Simple-Pleasures-C/> Twitter:

7-digit San Francisco Business Account Number (BAN): 0 3 9 6 0 0 4

Do any of these describe your business? (select all that apply)

*Requires at least 51% of the business be owned, operated, and controlled by the business designation below.*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Immigrant-Owned Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Owned by Person with a Disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQ+-Owned Business               | <input type="checkbox"/> Veteran-Owned Business            |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minority-Owned Business* | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Woman-Owned Business   |

*\*Minority is defined as on or more of the following racial or ethnic groups: American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Hispanic or Latino; Middle Eastern or North African; Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander*

## Contact Person Information

Contact person name: Ahmed Riad

Contact person title: owner

Contact telephone:

Contact email: simplepleasurescafe@gmail.com

### Business Location(s)

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business.

If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address.

Original San Francisco address: 3434 Balboa Street Zip Code: 94121

Is this location the founding location of the business? (Y/N):  Y

Dates at this location: From: 1978 To: present

Other address (if applicable): Zip Code:

Dates at this location: From: To:

Other address (if applicable): Zip Code:

Dates at this location: From: To:

Other address (if applicable): Zip Code:

Dates at this location: From: To:

Other Address (if applicable): Zip Code:

Dates at this location: From: To:

Other address (if applicable): Zip Code:

Dates at this location: From: To:



## Applicant Disclosures

### San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified. A business deemed not current with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for grants through the Legacy Business Program.

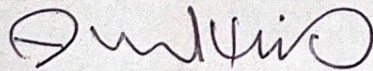
In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Name: Ahmed Riad

Signature:



Date: 04/06/2023

# **SIMPLE PLEASURES CAFÉ**

## **Written Historical Narrative**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **a. Describe the business. What does it sell or provide?**

Simple Pleasures Café is the oldest coffeehouse in San Francisco's Richmond District, opened in 1978. It is a traditional bohemian style cafe with old-world coffee roasting. The café also offers a robust food menu with everything from small bites to a full meal and is known for their stuffed bagel sandwiches.

As a business that has been in the neighborhood for many decades, Simple Pleasures Café also serves as an important community hub for neighbors and residents to gather. They host open mic nights and free music performances, and create opportunities for locals to come together and celebrate arts and culture. The walls of the café are adorned with a beautiful historic mural alongside photographs that help you to understand the rich history associated with the café and the community it serves.

#### **b. Describe whom the business serves.**

The business serves community members of all walks of life and predominantly people from the neighborhood. The Richmond is an eclectic and diverse district and the cafe's hours and location cater to the unique needs of community members. From an early morning worker who wants to grab a coffee and bagel before heading to the office downtown to a retired neighborhood person who wants to sit down with a hot drink and do the crossword, Simple Pleasures Café serves them all.

#### **c. In about 2-5 words (15-30 characters), describe what the business is known for.**

Bohemian style, old-world cafe with art.

### **CRITERION 1: The business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years**

#### **a. Provide a short history of the business, including locations and owners.**

Located at 3434 Balboa Street, Simple Pleasures Café was opened in 1978 by Sandy Gold. Sandy retired in 1994. He moved to Reno to help his elderly parents. He passed away a year later.

The current owner Ahmed Riad met his wife Diana Riggio at the Cafe. As an Egyptian immigrant, he had immigrated to America and started his career in the food industry through busing

tables. He met the owner Sandy and heard of Sandy's dream to serve coffee to his community and friends. Ahmed felt the same passion for this since he worked as a roaster for Caffe Trieste. Like Sandy, Ahmed also wanted a place where he could go with his cycling friends after a long ride and be able to serve them and his community coffee. He saw the potential in that café and the tight-knit community it held. And so, Ahmed purchased the café from Sandy in 1994.

Ahmed and Diana also have a roastery next door at 3422 Balboa St. that they opened in 2006. They roast their coffee old world style in small batches. They procure most of their beans from small farms and women cooperatives. Their beans are mostly organic when available.

When the City and County of San Francisco started the parklet program, Simple Pleasures Café applied for it and was one of the very first parklets in the city and the first in the Outer Richmond.

**b. Provide the ownership history of the business in a consolidated year-to-year format.**

1978 to 1994:           Sandy Gold  
1994 to Present:       Ahmed Riad

**c. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for any significant length of time.**

Simple Pleasures Cafe has never been closed a single day since 1978 with the exception of Christmas Day.

**CRITERION 2: The business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community**

**a. Describe the business' contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community, business sector, or San Francisco as a whole.**

Simple Pleasures Café is the oldest cafe in the Richmond District and is an important hub for the neighborhood and community. People gather there organically as it's a known destination, serves excellent coffee, and has delicious food. Furthermore, the café emphasizes local art and culture. The walls of café bear a historically significant and objectively beautiful mural as well as photographs that highlight the Richmond community. The café features and open mic night as well as free musical performances. Simple Pleasures Café plays heavily into its reputation as a community hub and its name, a place to enjoy the simple pleasures of life.

**b. Is the business associated with significant people or events, either now or in the past?**

Multiple supervisors and other local politicians as well as Mayor London Breed have recognized Simple Pleasures Café as an important part of the Richmond Community. Certificates from political representatives are on display at the café.

In the wake of the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, Simple Pleasures Café stayed open and was a gathering point for residents seeking community and refuge. Police Department and Fire Department representatives in Richmond stopped by the café to provide updates on the disaster to the community since so many people gathered there.

**c. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?**

Simple Pleasures Café serves as an entry level platform for local artists, creatives, and musicians to explore their talent. It provides a free venue for artists with open mic night and allows uninhibited creativity to blossom in the community.

**d. Has the business ever been referenced in the media, business trade publication, and/or historical documents?**

Simple Pleasures Café has been referenced in the media. Some key articles are as follows:

- **Eater San Francisco**  
“25 Quintessential San Francisco Coffee Shops”  
By Paolo Bicchieri and Lauren Saria  
November 10, 2022  
<https://sf.eater.com/maps/best-coffee-shops-san-francisco>
- **Music in SF**  
“SF Music Venue Showcase: Simple Pleasures Café”  
By Christine Simms  
June 9, 2021  
<https://www.musicinsf.com/come-as-you-are-simple-pleasures-cafe/>
- **The Bold Italic**  
“To Balboa Street With Love”  
By Robin Galante  
September 5, 2019  
<https://thebolditalic.com/to-balboa-street-with-love-cb3050258761>
- **Richmond District Blog**  
“New parklet opens outside Simple Pleasures on outer Balboa”  
By Sarah B.  
April 21, 2014  
<https://richmondsfblog.com/2014/04/21/new-parklet-opens-outside-simple-pleasures-on-outer-balboa/>

**e. Has the business ever received any awards, recognition, or political commendations?**

Simple Pleasures Café has received several awards and political commendations:

- Best Café from Best of the Bay, 2017
- Best Café from Best of the Bay, 2019
- Certificate of Honor from Mayor London N. Breed, January 31, 2019
- Certificate of Honor from the Board of Supervisors, April 16, 2016

**f. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?**

If Simple Pleasures Café were to shut down, the community would suffer a significant loss in culture, art, and history. Its location and importance as a significant local gathering spot would be a devastating loss to the area as there isn't an easy replacement. Locals meet there; retirees hang out there; and during times of stress like the 1989 earthquake, it remains an important place to seek community. Furthermore, local artists and musicians would lose a significant resource to help develop their talent through Simple Pleasure Café's free shows and venue.

**CRITERION 3: The business is committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business**

**a. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building, structure, object, signage, mural, architectural detail, neon sign, or any other special physical feature that defines the business?**

There is a beautiful and historically significant mural on one of the walls which highlights the local community.

**b. In a few words, describe the main business activity you commit to maintaining.**

Serving great coffee, delicious food and remaining a place to gather and support local art.

**c. What challenges is the business facing today?**

As with all small businesses, recovering from years of revenue loss from the COVID-19 pandemic is a significant challenge.

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**Legacy Business Program staff will add the following details:**

**a. Features or traditions that define the business and should be maintained for the business to remain on the Legacy Business Registry.**

Simple Pleasure Café recommends safeguarding the following features and traditions of the business:

- Old-world, bohemian style roasted coffee.
- A free venue for new and local artists, musicians, and talent.
- An inclusive neighborhood space that welcomes all.

**b. Other special features of the business location, such as if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.**

The Planning Department Historic Resource Status of the building at 3432-3434 Balboa Street is "B - Unknown / Age Eligible."







# SIMPLE PLEASURES CAFE









1lb Coffee Beans

FRESHLY ROASTED \$11.95

Simple  
Pleasures  
Cafe

Hand-Roasted Coffee  
since 1978

House Blend

Simple  
Pleasures  
Cafe



REST ROOM

WiFi Password:  
simple78

Guatemalan  
Antigua

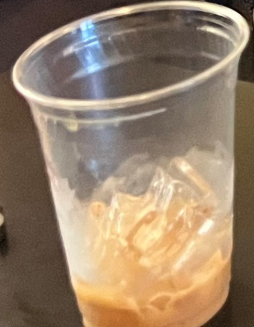
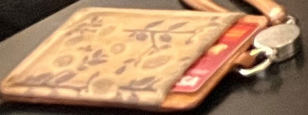
Kexar  
San Francisco

2017  
STAY

DEER CROSSING  
LUIS MARTINEZ  
CALE

LUIS MARTINEZ

Green 26



# Simple Pleasures Café

## Media

“What Can You Eat and Drink at Simple Pleasures Cafe in San Francisco, CA?”

SFGATE

By SF Insider

<https://sfinsider.sfgate.com/what-can-you-eat-and-drink-at-simple-pleasures-cafe-in-san-francisco-ca/>

“25 Quintessential San Francisco Coffee Shops”

Eater San Francisco

By Paolo Bicchieri and Lauren Saria

November 10, 2022

<https://sf.eater.com/maps/best-coffee-shops-san-francisco>

“Simple Pleasures Coffee Roastery Transformed into Local Artists Pop-Up Shop”

Richmond Review / Sunset Beacon

December 28, 2021

By Beth Lederer

<https://sfrichmondreview.com/2021/12/28/simple-pleasures-coffee-roastery-transformed-into-local-artists-pop-up-shop/>

“SF Music Venue Showcase: Simple Pleasures Café”

Music In SF

June 9, 2021

<https://www.musicinsf.com/come-as-you-are-simple-pleasures-cafe/>

“New parklet opens outside Simple Pleasures on outer Balboa”

richmondsfblog.com

By Ned Reifenstein

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/san-francisco-parklets-google-search--415527503098194667/>

“To Balboa Street With Love”

The Bold Italic

By Robin Galante

September 5, 2019

<https://thebolditalic.com/to-balboa-street-with-love-cb3050258761>

# Cafe life draws a crowd

They come for the  
caffeine, stay to chat

By Marianne Costantinou  
OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

For some, it is not a bad life. As the weekday world battles traffic jams and the weary monotony of work, a growing number of folks are slipping into something more comfortable: a table at the local cafe.

The regulars at Simple Pleasures on Balboa Street in the Richmond District are such a fixture that a frequent group picture has become a tradition, said Emily Powers, who works the counter.

"A lot of people know everybody here," said Powers, who added that 75 percent of the business was from customers who came several times a week. "It's like a family thing."







THE AUTHORITY ON THE SAN FRANCISCO MUSIC  
SCENE

# SF Music Venue Showcase: Simple Pleasures Cafe

*Published on June 9, 2021 in Music News by Christine Simms*

If places could have a theme song, Simple Pleasures' would be Nirvana's 'Come As You Are.' You know that outfit you wear not to impress, but the one that you feel most comfortable in? That well-worn-out t-shirt so thin you barely realize it's there. And those jeans that hold your body's mold after you take them off? Yeah, that's what you need to wear here. Get comfortable, it's time to relax.

Simple Pleasures, recognized as the oldest coffee house in the Richmond, sits on the western edge of town somewhere out in the fog where you can cool off and think. Where the Jazz is loud, but so what? These cats can play. Put your bag down and take a load off. It's time to unwind and get yourself a draft or maybe a glass of vino and something to nibble on.

Wood tables and comfortable lighting welcome you in, but do the chairs match? Nope, and they don't have to. There's just enough of them to seat the group of regulars that make it out here religiously on a daily basis. Patrons flock to this place to zone out and listen to free music by musicians who *could* charge you too much. Why they don't is anyone's guess. Must be the love of the craft.

What's this place about? It's a genuine neighborhood spot to read, play board games, write and just take five. Sandwiches are grilled panini-style, draft beers such as Old Rasputin and Drake's Pils on tap are on display. Hand-painted walls and artisan lamps add a cozy human touch to the bohemian atmosphere. Wooden booth seats allow you to gaze out to their outdoor seating patio on Balboa Street that lights up ever so elegantly at night. This is a place where you might have found Jim Morrison reading poetry to Janis Joplin on a warm autumn night. A place to be human or just be.



TAGS: [MUSIC VENUES](#) [SAN FRANCISCO MUSIC VENUES](#) [SIMPLE PLEASURES](#)

# Certificate of Honor

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
City and County of San Francisco

*The Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco hereby issues, and authorizes the execution of, this Certificate of Honor in appreciative public recognition of distinction and merit for outstanding service to a significant portion of the people of the City and County of San Francisco by:*

## Simple Pleasures

Congratulations on hosting the first Playland on Balboa Street Music and Arts Festival, for your commitment to serving house-roasted coffee and providing unmatched bohemian atmosphere since 1978, for your dedication to hosting frequent live music jam sessions for the community, and for your enthusiasm for keeping the Outer Richmond's art and music culture alive, the Board of Supervisors extends its highest commendation and appreciation.

*ERIC MAR*

Supervisor Eric Mar, District 1  
April 16, 2016



*Scott Wiener*  
*Maria Cohen*  
*David Chiu*

*Norman Yee*  
*John S. Lee*  
*Christina Chang*

**SF**  
WEEKLY

**BEST** **OF**  
**SAN FRANCISCO**

**BEST NEIGHBORHOOD  
COFFEE SHOP**

SIMPLE PLEASURES CAFE





**2017**  
**BEST**  
of the  
**BAY**

**BEST CAFE**  
**SIMPLE PLEASURES**



# LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**HEARING DATE: May 17, 2023**

*Filing Date:* April 19, 2023  
*Case No.:* **2023-003663LBR**  
*Business Name:* Simple Pleasures Cafe  
*Business Address:* 3434 Balboa Street  
*Zoning:* NCD (OUTER BALBOA STREET NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT) Zoning District  
40-X Height and Bulk District  
*Cultural District:* Not Applicable  
*Block/Lot:* 1578/014C  
*Applicant:* Ahmed Riad  
3434 Balboa Street  
San Francisco, CA 94121  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Connie Chan  
*Located In:* District 1  
*Staff Contact:* Branden Gunn – (628) 652-7367  
Branden.Gunn@sfgov.org

**Recommendation:** Adopt a Resolution to Recommend Approval

## Business Description

Simple Pleasures Cafe is a traditional bohemian style coffeehouse that has been operating in the Richmond district since it's opening by Sandy Gold in 1978. After growing the business to become a staple in the Richmond community as a gathering space and destination for old world style coffees, Gold retired from the business in 1994 and transferred ownership to Ahmed Riad, the current owner. Riad, who is an immigrant from Egypt, met his wife Diana Riggo at the coffeeshop and has followed Sandy's passion for bringing community members together through quality coffee, food, and surroundings. Moreover, Riad also carried his passion for serving coffee as he worked for a roaster in Trieste before taking ownership of Simple Pleasures Cafe.

Ahmed and Diana also have a roastery next door at 3422 Balboa Street that was opened in 2006. They roast their coffee old world style in small batches. They procure most of their beans from small farms and women cooperatives. Their beans are mostly organic when available.

The business's primary location at 3434 Balboa Street is a Category B (Unknown / Age Eligible) building on the north side of Balboa Street between 36<sup>th</sup> and 35<sup>th</sup> Avenues in the Outer Richmond neighborhood. It is within the Outer Balboa Street Neighborhood Commercial District (NCD) Zoning District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District.

## Staff Analysis

### Review Criteria

**1. *When was business founded?***

The business was founded in 1978.

**2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?***

Yes. Simple Pleasures Cafe qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- a. Simple Pleasures Cafe has operated continuously in San Francisco for 45 years.
- b. Simple Pleasures Cafe has contributed to the history and identity of the Outer Richmond neighborhood and San Francisco.
- c. Simple Pleasures Cafe is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

**3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art / craft / cuisine / tradition?***

Yes. The business is associated with traditional coffee roasting techniques.

**4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and / or architecture?***

Yes. The Balboa Street property is located within the Neighborhood Commercial Corridors Survey (Unadopted) and received the following survey rating: "Appears significant as a contributor to an identified cluster." The building was constructed in 1924 and exhibits elements of the Mediterranean Revival style.

**5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?***

No.

***Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?***

No, not as of the date of this Executive Summary.

**6. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?***

Yes. There have been a number of features and articles on Simple Pleasures Café. "Eater San Francisco" mentioned the business in the article "25 Quintessential San Francisco Coffee Shops." "Music in SF" included the business in "SF Music Venue Showcase: Simple Pleasures Cafe." Simple Pleasures has also been included in "The Bold Italic" and the "Richmond District Blog."

## Racial and Social Equity Analysis

On July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 the San Francisco Historic Preservation Commission adopted [Resolution No. 1127](#) centering Preservation Planning on racial and social equity. Understanding the benefits, burdens, and opportunities to advance racial and social equity that proposed Preservation Planning documents provide is part of the Department's Racial and Social Equity Initiative. This is also consistent with the Mayor's Citywide Strategic Initiatives for equity and accountability and with the Office of Racial Equity, which required all Departments to conduct this analysis.

The Legacy Business Program is deeply intertwined with these goals. One of the primary purposes of the Legacy Business Program is to maintain San Francisco's cultural fabric and to foster civic engagement and pride by assisting long-operating businesses remain in the city. The Legacy Business Registry was established to recognize longstanding, community-serving businesses that are valuable cultural assets of the city. These businesses, ranging from restaurants to art galleries to tire shops to community shelters, are key to sustaining the racial and social diversity in San Francisco and adding to the identity and character of our city and the many communities within it.

Simple Pleasures Café is an immigrant-, minority- and woman-owned business. It's one of a few Egyptian owned businesses along the Balboa Street corridor. The business is community-oriented and offers space for local artists to showcase their work while also being a gathering location for members of the surrounding neighborhood. The business also relies on coffee beans produced by small-scale farms, many of which are women owned.

## Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

### Location(s) associated with the business:

Current Locations:

- 3434 Balboa Street (1978 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

- None

### Recommended by Applicant

- Interior wall murals
- Old-world, bohemian style roasted coffee
- A free venue for new and local artists, musicians, and talent
- An inclusive neighborhood space that welcomes all

### Additional Recommended by Staff

- None

## Basis for Recommendation



The Department recommends the Historic Preservation Commission adopt a resolution recommending the business listed above be adopted by the Small Business Commission to the Legacy Business Registry.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Draft Resolution

Legacy Business Registry Application:

- Application Review Sheet
- Section 1 – Business / Applicant Information
- Section 2 – Business Location(s)
- Section 3 – Disclosure Statement
- Section 4 – Written Historical Narrative
  - Criterion 1 – History and Description of Business
  - Criterion 2 – Contribution to Local History
  - Criterion 3 – Business Characteristics
- Contextual Photographs and Background Documentation



# HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 1327

**HEARING DATE: MAY 17, 2023**

*Case No.:* **2023-003663LBR**  
*Business Name:* Simple Pleasures Cafe  
*Business Address:* 3434 Balboa Street  
*Zoning:* NCD (OUTER BALBOA STREET NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT) Zoning District  
40-X Height and Bulk District  
*Cultural District:* Not Applicable  
*Block/Lot:* 1578/014C  
*Applicant:* Ahmed Riad  
3434 Balboa Street  
San Francisco, CA 94121  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor Connie Chan  
*Located In:* District 1  
*Staff Contact:* Branden Gunn – (628) 652-7367  
[Branden.Gunn@sfgov.org](mailto:Branden.Gunn@sfgov.org)

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR SIMPLE PLEASURES CAFE CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 3434 BALBOA ST BLOCK/LOT 1578/014C.

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has contributed to the City's history and identity; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business is committed to maintaining the traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on May 17, 2023, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends that Simple Pleasures Café qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for Simple Pleasures Cafe.

*Location(s):*

Current Locations:

- 3434 Balboa Street (1978 – Present)

Previous (No Longer Extant) Locations:

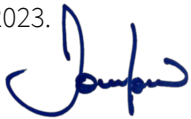
- None

*Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:*

- Interior wall murals
- Old-world, bohemian style roasted coffee
- A free venue for new and local artists, musicians, and talent
- An inclusive neighborhood space that welcomes all

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission’s findings and recommendations are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file to the Office of Small Business on May 17, 2023.



Jonas P. Ionin  
*Commission Secretary*

AYES: Wright, Foley, Nageswaran, Matsuda

NOES: None

ABSENT: Johns, So

ADOPTED: May 17, 2023