

# Anaheim Hills

NEIGHBORS

**MEET JENN CAO:**  
BREWING COMMUNITY  
ONE CUP AT A TIME!

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COVER PHOTO BY **CHRISTINA MARIE PHOTOGRAPHY**

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FROM NEIGHBORHOOD ROOTS TO GLOBAL FLAVORS:

# Jenn Cao's Coffee-Fueled Journey

BY ADAM ROSENBLUM | PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA MARIE PHOTOGRAPHY

For Jenn Cao, opening Kaffeine Alley wasn't just about serving great coffee, it was about coming home. Located just steps from the schools she once attended, the neighborhood café reflects Jenn's deep roots in the community and her passion for bringing people together. Since opening in 2019, Kaffeine Alley has grown into more than a coffee shop. It's become a place where neighbors connect, stories are shared, and familiar faces feel like family.

"I wanted to open in the neighborhood I grew up in," she says. "I wanted to bring new flavors to the community and create a space where everyone feels welcome and truly part of something."

That intention is baked into everything at Kaffeine Alley, from the thoughtfully crafted menu to the way Jenn greets regulars by name.

## A Passion Rooted in Food, Hospitality, and Education

Jenn's love for community didn't start with coffee. In university, she discovered a deep passion for food, hospitality, and the way shared meals can bring people together. That passion eventually became Kaffeine Alley, followed by a second location, Humanity Coffee in Newport Beach, which opened in 2024.

Behind the scenes, Jenn brings an impressive depth of experience beyond the café walls. She is an educational leader with more than 15 years of experience supporting TK-12 schools across California. Her work focuses on culturally responsive teaching, professional development for educators, and science pedagogy, particularly environmental and climate literacy. She has served as a classroom teacher, curriculum developer, and professional

development facilitator, and she holds a doctorate in educational leadership.

It's a background that quietly informs how she runs her business. Education, like hospitality, is about listening, adapting, and creating environments where people feel seen and supported. Whether it's a classroom or a coffee shop, Jenn's goal is the same: build meaningful connections.

## A Neighborhood That Feels Like Family

Ask Jenn what she loves most about the neighborhood, and her answer comes easily.

"It feels like an extension of my own family," she says.

Over the years, she's watched kids grow taller, families expand, and regulars weave Kaffeine Alley into their daily routines. She celebrates

promotions, birthdays, new babies, and even the quieter victories like surviving a tough week. Sometimes it's a quick hello. Sometimes it's a longer conversation over coffee. All of it matters.

"There's something really special about recognizing familiar faces and seeing neighbors support one another," Jenn says. "That kind of connection is one of the greatest gifts of being here."

### Coffee With a Cultural Twist

Kaffeine Alley is known for its organic coffee, but what truly sets it apart are the globally inspired flavors. Jenn's love of travel and adventure has taken her around the world, and those experiences often find their way into the menu.

She's eaten street food in Vietnam, toured ancient ruins by motorbike in Myanmar, trekked overnight up Acatenango Volcano in Guatemala, and gone scuba diving in the Philippines. Along the way, she's collected flavors, techniques, and inspiration.

Her Coconut Latte and Pandan Latte were inspired by time spent living in Vietnam, where she made it her mission to find the best local coffee shops, often visiting several in a single day. The La Mexicana Latte draws from a trip to Mexico, inspired by a cup of hot chocolate with just a hint of cayenne that left a lasting impression.

And then there's the customer favorite Vietnamese coffee, affectionately nicknamed "Viet Crack," which has become a signature staple and a daily ritual for many locals.

### Caffeinating the Community, One Morning at a Time

Jenn jokes that her main neighborhood activity is "caffeinating the community every day," but there's truth behind the humor. Kaffeine Alley is more than a business. It's a place where mornings begin, afternoons reset, and friendships form organically over cups of coffee.

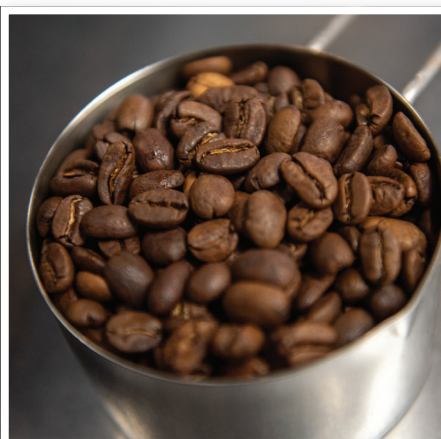


Her goal is simple but powerful: create a space where people feel energized, welcomed, and valued exactly as they are.

"Whether someone is celebrating a big win or just needs a familiar face, I love being part of those small daily moments," she says.

### Life Beyond the Coffee Bar

When she's not behind the counter, Jenn loves being outdoors. Hiking, biking, and camping help her recharge. Travel continues to be a major source of inspiration, allowing her to



discover new cultures and cuisines that influence both her cooking and her outlook on life.

Each adventure, she says, reminds her that while the world is vast and diverse, the sense of connection people seek is universal. That belief is at the heart of everything she does at Kaffeine Alley.

### A Message to the Neighborhood

Jenn's gratitude for the community is genuine and constant.

"Thank you for welcoming our little coffee shop into the neighborhood," she says. "To those who stop by regularly, your smiles, stories, and support mean more than you know. You've truly become part of our family."

And for neighbors she hasn't met yet, the invitation is open.

"Whether you're looking for a new favorite drink, a cozy place to unwind, or just a friendly hello, our doors are always open. We're grateful to be here and can't wait to caffeinate your day."

In a world that often feels rushed, Kaffeine Alley stands as a reminder that sometimes the most meaningful connections begin with a simple cup of coffee and a genuine welcome.