

City Beat

There are eight million stories in my albums. This is one of them...

Keystone Coffee Company is a San Jose, California based gourmet coffee roaster since 1867. It has a long and historical background. Originating in 1867 as Eagle Coffee and Spice, s a wholesale grocery firm, was officially founded by Conrad Renzel in 1885. Conrad's son Ernest Renzel Sr. took over operations in 1898, incorporating as Keystone Company in 1905. In 1915, Keystone absorbed a coffee and spice company that had been founded as Barrett, Caswell, & Hunt in 1867 (later known as Eagle Coffee & Spice Mills). [<https://www.sjpl.org/blog/looking-back-keystone-company-san-jose/>]

The business subsequently joined with Keystone Wholesale Grocery. This allowed sales to expand into most of Northern and Central California. During the 1940's, the decision was made to separate the coffee business from the other operations.

At this time, a large warehouse and coffee roasting facility were built in downtown San Jose. The company's reputation continued to grow as a roasting facility known for producing fresh, gourmet coffee. In addition, the company always had a record of selling to two distinct groups: wholesale customers and retail customers. [<https://www.keystonecoffee.com/history>]

By 1956, the company had three divisions; coffee, groceries, and food service equipment. In 1989, Keystone Company's divisions separated. Keystone Grocery was sold to BiRite Foods, and Keystone Coffee was sold to Tim Wright and currently operates at 2230 Will Wool Dr. in San Jose. Keystone Restaurant Supply continued operations on San Carlos Street until going out of business in 2018..

