

FEATURED

Business booms at Irregardless Biscuit Co.

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Richer

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Irregardless **Biscuit Co.** brings a taste of North Carolina to Rhode Island. A popular accompaniment to the biscuits is the home-made hot honey.
Breeze photo by SOFIA BARR

PROVIDENCE – When Pawtucket’s Erin Richer enrolled in William M. Davies Jr. Career and Technical High School in 2002, she said she never imagined she’d one day be the head baker for Rhode Island’s trendiest new eatery: Irregardless Biscuit Co.

Growing up in a Portuguese household, Richer said her grandparents and mother ignited her love for cooking and baking at an early age.

This passion for being in the kitchen led her to the Davies culinary program, where she received intensive training in all things cooking, baking and kitchen standards.

“All the instructors were absolutely incredible; they were so supportive and genuinely cared. They even taught us skills like how to stay calm under pressure,” said Richer. “It was a lot of hard work, and they really put us through the ringer, but I felt so prepared and well-rounded when I graduated.”

In 2021, after several years of being a nutritionist and then traveling the country working in the mental health field, Richer came across an Instagram post about a place called Irregardless Biscuit Co. looking for a line cook.

Irregardless began as a pop-up in 2020, when founder James Dean wanted to bring a taste of his home state of North Carolina to Rhode Island. Using his grandmother’s recipe and a special flour milled in North Carolina, Dean and the business quickly found success.

Enter Richer, who started on the line, but soon became a valued cook, baker, and member of the Irregardless team. Working at Irregardless was her first foray back into the culinary scene, and her weekend job snowballed into a full-time position.

The pop-up grew in popularity, and soon, Dean was partnering with his friend, former celebrity private chef and restaurateur Joe Hafner. Together, with the help of Richer, the two decided to open a permanent location.

Last month, Irregardless officially opened the doors of its highly anticipated storefront at 94 Carpenter St. in Providence.

Before the clock struck 9 a.m. on opening day, dozens of northerner patrons were lined up to get an authentic southern biscuit.

Six weeks later, Hafner said the chaos continues, describing weekends as “bananas.”

Each Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Richer wakes up at 4 a.m. to bake between 1,300 and 1,700 fluffy, buttery, oversized biscuits, and they’re sold out by around noon daily.

“Seeing people line up to get our food is jaw-dropping,” she said. “We knew we’d have a decent amount of people come in because we had a loyal customer base as a pop-up, but none of us ever expected to blow up like this.”

Richer and Hafner attribute the overwhelmingly positive response to all menu items being homemade and high quality.

“Absolutely everything from the hot honey to the sausages are made in-house, and we don’t add anything to the menu that we haven’t perfected,” Hafner noted.

Some of their perfected menu includes: a biscuit with bacon, egg and cheese; a biscuit with sausage gravy and fried chicken; a biscuit with fried green tomatoes, smoke tomato aioli, arugula, pickles and cheddar; and of course, a plain buttered biscuit for all of the purists out there, to name a few.

Though the biscuits are the main attraction, accompaniments such as coffee, hibiscus tea and toffee chocolate cookies are also big hits, they said.



While the biscuits are owner James Dean's grandmother's recipe, the recipe for the toffee chocolate chunk cookies was created by baker Erin Richer. Breeze photo by SOFIA BARR

Aside from spreading happiness through food, Richer said her favorite part of the job is working with and learning from Dean and Hafner.

"They both have so much knowledge and experience, that I'm just trying to soak it all in," she said. "The fact that they put so much trust in me is really humbling."

Richer explained that the "trust" is both on the business end and on the creative side, when she gets to play around in the kitchen, recipe develop, and give her opinion on potential new menu items.

“We wouldn’t be able to keep up without Erin,” Hafner said. He described Richer as “the glue of Irregardless,” saying that in addition to being a talented baker and cook, Richer is consistent, organized and reliable.

The three work so well together that soon, they hope to extend business hours and venture into dinner territory. Until then, they invite readers to wake up early and try the biscuits that are taking the state by storm.

To view the menu or to see if biscuits have been sold out for the day, visit [@irregardlessbiscuit](#) on Instagram.

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