

7 Providence, Rhode Island, establishments that honor moms and maternal love

This New England city loves its mamas

By Wendy O'Dea | May 7, 2024



While it may not be quite the same as returning home to your mom, hotel guests at The Beatrice can still arrive to a mother's welcome — in the form of an oversized mosaic portrait of its namesake, Beatrice Temkin, the owner's mom, displayed in the hotel lobby.

This boutique hotel in Providence, Rhode Island, is one of several locations around town that pays tribute to maternal love. Read on for more about The Beatrice and other stops in this New England city where you'll feel right at home.

The Beatrice



At the bottom of College Hill (home to Rhode Island School of Design and Brown University) and near the shores of the Providence River, [The Beatrice](#) opened to much fanfare in 2021. Owner Joseph Paolino Jr., one of the city's former mayors, named the property after his mother, a prominent community advocate and philanthropist in the 1970s.

Located in what was originally the 1887 Exchange Building, the 47-room hotel is designed to reflect Beatrice's elegance, and it's now considered by many to be the most sophisticated hotel in Providence. Locals and visitors flock to the hotel's rooftop club for drinks or to its upscale Italian restaurant, Bellini, Ignazio Cipriani's first location in New England.

Dolores

Though the restaurant [Dolores](#) honors owner Joaquin Meza's paternal grandmother, it's his mother, Maria Meza, who garners praise for her recent nomination as a James Beard Foundation Award finalist for best chef in the Northeast.

The Mezas, who emigrated from Mexico in 1992, opened Dolores in 2019 in the Fox Point neighborhood with a menu highlighting the cuisine of the Mixteca region in Oaxaca. Most notable are Maria's highly praised mole dishes (especially the mole poblano), tacos and enchiladas using handmade tortillas, ceviche, and grilled seafood.

The venture is a true family affair with Joaquin and Maria in the kitchen and Joaquin's brother, Marco, running the bar program.

Clementine cocktail bar



Reserve early to sit at this chic cocktail and tapas bar in downtown Providence. The owner is the well-known former mayor and former U.S. Congressman David Cicilline, who named the establishment after his great-grandmother, Clementina. (Yes, there's a slight difference in the name.)

Located next to the city's famed Trinity Repertory Company, [Clementine](#)'s menu is seasonally inspired and created by a rotating list of guest mixologists and pop-up chefs. The intimate, design-forward space features a U-shaped bar, contemporary art, and a dramatic golden dandelion chandelier. Mother (grandmother and great-grandmother) would approve.

Vanda Cucina

"The main reason we opened Vanda was to keep my mother's memory alive," says Dino Passaretta, owner and founder of [Vanda Cucina](#), located in Warwick, a suburb of Providence. "It replicates how I was brought up at the dinner table — where food was made from the heart, with love."

Passaretta named the restaurant after his late mother, Teresa "Vanda" Passaretta, who emigrated from the Campania region of Italy. Vanda's recipes inspire the restaurant's

decor, which includes items from her kitchen. Menu items include arancini, olive oil cake, and polenta with sausage ragout, among a long list of other Italian favorites.

Angelo's Civita Farnese



You'll find [Angelo's Civita Farnese](#) in the [Federal Hill neighborhood](#), where most Italian immigrants settled in Providence in the 19th century. Known for its meatball and French fries combo, Angelo's has remained in the family, and the fourth-generation Antignano family now operates it. However, mom, Lee Antignano, takes centerstage and is applauded for her memorable pastries and desserts, including rice pie, ricotta pie, limoncello cheesecake, and triple chocolate brownies à la mode.

Irregardless Biscuit

Co-owner James Dean paid homage to his mee-maw (that's grandma for you Northerners) when he brought her biscuit recipe from North Carolina to Providence's West End and co-founded [Irregardless Biscuit](#), an extremely popular biscuit pop-up during the pandemic.

To meet demand (good luck), Dean and his partner opened a storefront in early 2024 with a menu featuring Southern-inspired biscuit sandwiches — like fried chicken and hot honey — and they still can't keep up. They generally sell out within hours of opening, so, as they say in the South, you best get to steppin' early!

Ellie's



Ellen Slattery is at the heart of this [Parisian-style café](#) named after her mom, Ellie Gracyalny. "My mom continues to inspire me to live life meaningfully, and I'm beyond grateful to have her by my side as a compass," Slattery says. "Ellie's was born in honor of her warmth and care for others through service and bringing people together."

Sourcing seasonal ingredients from growers and makers throughout Rhode Island, Slattery prioritizes creating a space where neighbors and visitors can rest and relax — kind of like home.