

Life in the Valley



The Cast Iron Cafe in Mount Angel, Ore. on Nov. 14. PHOTOS BY MADELEINE COOK / STATESMAN JOURNAL

CAST IRON CAFE NEW SPOT FOR BREAKFAST, LUNCH

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USA TODAY NETWORK

Rise and shine, morning people and sleepyheads alike, because Mt. Angel has a new breakfast spot. Joshua and Elisha Nightingale, owners of Silverton's Live Local Marketplace & Café, have branched out to Mt. Angel for their second act, but instead of opening a second coffee shop, they've scaled up.

Business owners ready for a new challenge

The Nightingales purchased Live Local from the previous owner three and a half years ago, after seeing a Craigslist post, said Elisha, when she was looking to buy some patio furniture.

She called Joshua, then a manager at Safeway, who was as ready to jump into entrepreneurship as she was.

The couple had long dreamed of having a business. One big investment and three months later, Joshua had left his job and Elisha had worked non-stop to reopen Live Local as their own.

After gaining experience, three years later, they began looking in Molalla, Stayton, and Mt. Angel to open a second spot.

At Live Local, said Joshua, "our kitchen is so limited." It was important they find a second space that could not only handle its own volume but also house a bakery for both.

Plus, Elisha added, "we didn't want to compete against ourselves."

They opened Cast Iron Café, located at 415 S Main Street Mt. Angel, in early November. The restaurant offers breakfast all day and lunch from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m., along with a variety of coffee and tea beverages.

On the menu at Cast Iron Cafe

An enormous skillet hangs on the front wall at the Nightingale's new business. Windows flanking the front door and along one wall fill the space with natural light and the walls are decorated with prints of photos from their travels.

It was a trip to Portugal that inspired them to add a machine that squeezes fresh orange juice to the café counter. There, they were so taken with the sweet-sour vibrancy of fresh-made juice, said Joshua, they had to find a way to get the same experience at home.

In deciding what the café would serve the Nightingales wanted to offer dishes with a coziness to them, but avoid repeating the same options one could have anywhere. They strive to offer a balance of hearty comfort food dishes and those with a fresh, modern take as well, including options for those avoiding gluten, meat, or dairy.

The name they selected for Cast Iron ended up offering inspiration. Much of the breakfast menu and several of the lunch dishes as well arrive in miniature



Freshly squeezed orange juice at the Cast Iron Cafe on Nov. 14 in Mount Angel, Ore.

If you go

Where: 415 S Main Street Mt. Angel

Phone: 503-845-2300

When: 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays (except Wednesday), 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekends, closed on Wednesdays

Information: Cast Iron Cafe (Facebook)

cast-iron dishes.

The Farmers Feast Skillet (\$12) combines ham, bacon, eggs and herbed potatoes with bourbon cheese sauce. The menu includes both classic buttermilk biscuits with sausage gravy (\$8) and a vegetarian version made with mushroom gravy (\$8).

At lunchtime, the Avocado Bowl (\$9), one of the café's several vegetarian options, is also served skillet-style. A combination of roasted potatoes and sweet potatoes, it's topped with black bean pico de gallo, half an avocado and chipotle sour cream.

Chili with sweet jalapeno cornbread, seasonal skillet pot pies, beef stroganoff with mashed potatoes, and even a massive cinnamon roll designed to share all arrive in cast iron.

Executed by cook Michael Guerrero, the menu also includes sandwiches, a daily soup, and weekend specials. The Chicken Cordon Bleu sandwich (\$11) is



The chicken cordon bleu sandwich at the Cast Iron Cafe on Nov. 14 in Mount Angel.



The Bananas Foster waffle at the Cast Iron Cafe on Nov. 14 in Mount Angel, Ore.

inspired by the classic dish, a grilled chicken breast with ham, dill, mustard and Swiss cheese on a house-baked roll.

Pastry chef Cassi Leland handles the café's daily baking, which includes all of the buns for sandwiches, pastries, muffins, scones, and croissants.

The Nightingales plan to add some grab-and-go options for those having breakfast or lunch on the run, and Cast Iron has a drive-through for picking up

specialty coffee beverages or Metolius tea.

Even if Mt. Angel is out of your way, the Cast Iron Café could make getting up early worth it.

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