



Kristy Cross,
owner of **The Rusty Cup** in
Astoria.
Lissa Brewer.

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“We spent practically every summer in Seaview when I was a kid,” Cross said, “I thought I could live there and find a job, but full time jobs were hard to come by.” Back in Seattle, she spotted an advertisement for a downtown Astoria coffee shop for sale. She had been a barista during her college days and thought “I could do that.”

“I bought the place without ever seeing it,” Cross said, laughing. “I don’t know what possessed me. I couldn’t do that now. But when you’re young, you do some crazy things.”

Crazy or not, The Rusty Cup has proven a wise decision. “Not only was it serendipity that I got the place, but I ended up marrying Greg (Cross, of NW Lending Group), the realty mortgage guy next door,” Cross adds, seeming not to quite believe the luck herself.

Still hands on at her shop, Cross works side by side with a part-time staff of three, making and serving coffee as well as breakfast and lunch items. “It’s fun working together, baking, and dreaming up new breakfast burritos and sandwiches, like our gourmet grilled cheese with avocado,” Cross said. “We kind of all do everything. But my favorite thing still is making dry cappuccinos.”

A dry cappuccino is a rich espresso drink with steamed milk and a smooth layer of foamed milk on top. “I think you can’t really mess up the foam, the appearance of that marshmallow fluff. But I like getting a really good micro foam just right,” Cross said. “It’s hard to explain. And a hard technique to teach. I care about it especially when it’s so smooth without any big bubbles. I guess it’s a skill I’ve acquired. Sort of what happens after doing it for almost 20 years.”

“I definitely have days when I’m tired and think I might give it up ... But I still love it, and honestly, I don’t feel like I’ve gotten any older. Most days I’m still like that enthusiastic, first-time owner. It’s funny, but this last year has been our busiest ever,” Cross said.

“Someday, I suppose, I’ll retire,” Cross said. “And one day I’d better pass on the barista crown, but no time soon.” It’s Cross’ grin and warm laughter that get you in this downtown coffee spot. No wonder Cross is a crowd favorite.