

# The Ruby Slipper

A downtown destination



Leslie Klipsch

*Each month in The Gold Standard, Leslie Klipsch, a freelance writer and editor based in Davenport, will shine a spotlight on the gems of the Quad-Cities area — the unique people, businesses and trends — for Gold Book readers. She enjoys reading, cooking, spending time with her husband and their three young children, and exploring all that the Quad-Cities has to offer.*

BY LESLIE KLIPSCH

Christine Reyhons has always loved fashion, and since November, she's been sharing her passion with style-seeking locals at her darling downtown Davenport boutique, The Ruby Slipper.

"I began looking at catalogs when I was 5 and never stopped. First J.C. Penney's and eventually Vogue," she told me recently as she floated around her shop, straightening piles of well-made denim and inspecting colorful, comfortable footwear.

"Quad-City women know what's going on. They know fashion, and they know that age-appropriate clothing does not mean fuddy-duddy," said the well-accessorized Ms. Reyhons.

The Main Street storefront that now houses The Ruby Slipper sat empty for 17 years before Ms. Reyhons opened her doors in 2011. The walls have

been painted in soft purple and warm gray hues, and the space has been filled with a carefully curated collection of high-quality, stylish shoes, denim, clothing and accessories. Bright, enormous centerpiece light fixtures hang from a high ceiling, and industrial tables and chic shelving sit atop hardwood floors, all creating a big-city vibe.

The boutique offers an easy mix of comfort, fashion and labels like Frye, Miz Mooz and the American-made Three Dots.

Along with the latest trends, downtown Davenport fires Ms. Reyhon's passions. "People are coming back in from the outskirts. Apartments are being built and



rehabbed, and singles and young professionals are moving downtown," says Ms. Reyhons, who loves the architecture in the area.

"People are embracing downtown, but there are just not a lot of places to shop. That's where we come in," she said with a smile.

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Every other Thursday evening, the boutique is filled with circles of stylistas out for an evening of fashion and fun. Ruby Slipper Shoe Parties, which began as a way to get the word out about the shop, have become a popular feature of the store. “If a gal wants a shoe party, she just gives us a jingle and then invites a dozen or so of her best friends. We do the rest,” Mr. Reyhons said of the events, which are booked through October.

For a Ruby Slipper Shoe Party, Ms. Reyhons provides festive drinks and food — often turning to her downtown neighbors for supplies. Red velvet cupcakes with rich cream cheese frosting from Cupcakes and More at 207 W. 4th St. and homemade hummus from the Downtown Central Perk at 226 W. 3rd St. are crowd pleasers from just around the corner.

Ms. Reyhons said The Ruby Slipper



Christine Reyhons is the owner of The Ruby Slipper, a downtown Davenport boutique focusing on labels and styles more often found in bigger cities.

offers labels and styles that women might expect to have to drive out of town to find. “Our customers love to shop in Chicago. They go to the boutiques in Wicker Park and Lincoln Park — places like City Soles and Akira. They shop at Nordstrom. But our target customer doesn’t have a place to shop in the Quad-Cities,” she said.

“When a woman needs something for the weekend, she knows she can come into The Ruby Slipper and find something fun.”



It's a pleasure to travel, but it's nice to enjoy local destinations as well. Which might be why The Ruby Slipper is gaining traction here in the Quad-Cities. There is, after all, no place like home.

### My favorites

After admiring the funky, bright-cherry, high-water leopard-print Joe's Jeans, I tried on a slightly more sensible pair of skinny DL1961s. After noting their near-perfect fit and no-stretch promise, I may never look at an average pair of jeans the same way again. I also look forward to fall, when Ms. Reyhons will welcome the arrival of dozens of styles of TOMS footwear, and the holidays, when she expects TOMS eyewear. TOMS operates on a one-for-one model — with each pair of shoes you purchase, TOMS will give a new pair to a child in need. Pick

up a pair of stylish sunglasses, and the company will provide prescription eyeglasses, surgery or other necessary medical treatment to an under-resourced individual. The Ruby Slipper is the only boutique licensed in Iowa to sell the full line of TOMS merchandise.

### Ruby Slipper favorites

Ms. Reyhons is anxious to bring out the cutting-edge colors that we'll see this fall: eggplant, navy and gray. She's also excited to stock Emu, a new line of boots that the store will shelve. "They're like Uggs," she promised, "only much cooler."

### Why you should go

Let's say you have a party to go to, and your closet has let you down. Let's say the party is tomorrow. You're looking for something unique, high-quality, and up-to-the-minute, but you realize not even Amazon Prime can save you from showing up in something drab. Pop downtown, and you'll find an attention-grabbing pair of shoes and maybe even an entire outfit. The Ruby Slipper will rescue the style maven in distress every time.

### When you should go

Stop by The Ruby Slipper, 312 Main St., between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays or Saturdays, or between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Thursdays. Call (563) 424-2004 to set up a private Ruby Slipper Shoe Party.

