

Mexican grocery gets second act

By **Eli Sherman** - April 14, 2017 12:32 am



FAMILY AFFAIR: Casa Mexico, a family-owned retail store located on Atwells Avenue in Providence, specializes in Mexican grocery Jackie Sanchez, nephew Enrique Sanchez Jr., and Ivan Sanchez, co-owner. / PBN PHOTO/MICHAEL SALERNO

Ivan Sanchez was born in New York City but moved to Rhode Island when he was 1; specialty grocery store on Atwells Avenue in Providence.

Five years ago, an illness left his father unable to run the business, which eventually being unable to rent the space, Sanchez reopened the store as Casa Mexico LLC with

“You can buy a taco, shop around, and go home with new recipes and cakes,” Sanchez specialty items and drinks that you just don’t find other places, so we get a lot of fo

state.”

Indeed, the store, at 802 Atwells Ave., is multifaceted. It offers authentic Mexican p
taqueria.

“The specialty items are our niche,” Sanchez said. “But we have a little bit of everytl

Sanchez said one of the reasons he decided to reopen the store himself is because i
the building up to code. His father, who opened his store in 1988, was grandfathered
when Sanchez took over.

Sanchez decided he wanted to own the property, and eventually made a loan backer
Corp., the U.S. Small Business Administration and R.I. Commerce Corp. He started t
didn’t end up closing until December.

“It was crazy trying to get a loan through the commercial banks,” he said. “You nam
banks.”

And Sanchez is no stranger to business. He owns a complementary company called
which delivers Mexican products to supermarkets and grocery stores, including his o

“It’s funny because [Casa Mexico] is my best customer,” he said, laughing.

Sanchez also incorporated his newly purchased building as its own entity, Casa Prop
business licenses with the state.

Sanchez and his wife run the shop, and get some help from Sanchez’s brother and r

Where Sanchez’s father catered mostly to the Latino-Hispanic community, Sanchez v
clientele to include a more racially diverse group of people. He says he sees that alr
sees coming into the store each day.

"We're reaching out to the younger crowd and everybody else," he said. "It's about I to all types of folks."

Sanchez plans to renovate the space in the next couple years and, if all goes well, h in Boston.

"When I grew up with my dad owning it, back then I had to get up and work every r begrudgingly. "But now I'm eager, and I'm like, 'What's next?' "

OWNERS:Ivan and Jackie Sanchez

TYPE OF BUSINESS:Authentic Mexican grocery, deli and taqueria

LOCATION:802 Atwells Ave., Providence

EMPLOYEES:Four

YEAR ESTABLISHED: 2015

ANNUAL SALES: WND