

# Riezl BY JESS WELLAR BAKER

Service, Strategy,  
and Staying Power

“My father instilled in me a strong work ethic from an early age,” Riezl Baker reflects. “He was a builder, developer, and entrepreneur who started his days at 4 a.m.”

“Growing up, I spent my summers working in his hardware stores, showing up at 7 every morning. That experience shaped my commitment to diligence, integrity, and dedication, values that continue to drive my business daily.”

## A Natural Fit

Long before luxury real estate became her trademark, Riezl was thriving in hospitality, building memorable experiences through top-tier service with Hyatt Hotels and as Director of Sales for the Athens Convention and Visitors Bureau after earning a degree in hospitality management.

In 1997, she and her husband, Ted, relocated to Lake Oconee, a move that was supposed to be temporary.

“We had the intention of living here for six months,” Riezl explains. “I kept my job in Atlanta and would drive to work — four hours a day commute! That didn’t work.”

It didn’t take long to realize this was home. Riezl eventually joined Reynolds Lake Oconee’s resort community, transitioned into operations, and then secured her real estate license in 2000.

She then went on to build an impressive book of business in the area and quickly rose to the top of her market. In 2002, just two years into her real estate career, she sold one of the most expensive homes on the lake.

“I’ll never forget, I saw the family out a year later,” she recalls with a smile. “And the man told me, ‘Thank you for changing our lives.’”

## Boutique By Design

In January 2020, after 20 years with the development, Riezl and Ted launched their own independent brokerage,

Luxury Lake Oconee Real Estate Group: “It was time to structure things my way,” she explains. “The move allowed me to help my clients without any limitations on what I can do.”

Ted, a licensed broker with a background in commercial real estate, brought his expertise to the table.





Together, they built something special: a boutique firm with a clear focus on quality over quantity.

“We currently have eight agents — and we’re a small brokerage intentionally,” Riezl notes. “I am proud of our brokerage because we are the smallest by number but the top volume producers by sales.”

Last year alone, Riezl alone closed over \$120 million in volume across 54 transactions, with an average sales price of \$2.2 million. She was also named a RISMedia Real Estate Newsmaker & Achiever and ranked in the top 1% of agents in the Georgia MLS, which includes 52,000 members.

**Experience Is Everything**

Now with over 24 years in the Lake Oconee market, Riezl has crafted a finely tuned approach to listings that blends her unique background with storytelling and precision.

“After years in hospitality operations, I saw a real need for a more strategic and detail-oriented approach to real estate,” she offers. “That’s what led me to create LUXURY LEO — a tailored strategy designed to maximize exposure, attract the right buyers, and deliver exceptional results.”

That strategy shows up in the thoughtful, often creative, ways her listings are marketed. She’s known to tailor each marketing effort to fit the home — from sunset boat tours to a Parisian-opera-themed open house with hors d’oeuvres and a soprano singing on a balcony to accentuate the acoustics of 30-foot ceilings.

But beyond the style clients also find plenty of substance. “Understanding the nuances of the market, especially in Lake Oconee, sets my business apart,” she emphasizes. “And it allows me to make the buying and selling process as seamless as possible for my clients

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because I have my finger on the pulse with plenty of comps under my belt.”

She’s also quick to credit the support of her exceptional staff, which includes a transaction coordinator, two showing assistants, a marketing coordinator, and an operations manager.

**Anchored By Community**

For all the polish and strategizing, Riezl’s career has always been grounded in something deeper: purpose. She sees each deal as a chance to assist — not just sell.

“My business is deeply tied to my community, and I view each transaction as a privilege to serve and make a meaningful impact where I call home,” she affirms. “It has been nothing short of amazing to witness the evolution of this once-sleepy area over the years.”

Riezl has been a key figure in shaping the Lake Oconee community for nearly three decades. She co-founded the Lake Oconee Food & Wine Festival, serves as 2025 Chair of the Heart & Soul Gala (which raised over \$800,000 for St. Mary’s Hospital), and helped establish St. Mary’s Good Samaritan Hospital in 2013. She also sits on the board of the Oconee Performing Arts Society and co-founded LEAD Lake Oconee, a local leadership initiative.

“Giving back is integral to my life,” she elaborates. “This community has been great to me over the past 27 years, and I feel a responsibility to help.”

**Beyond The Brokerage**

Riezl has been happily married to Ted for 27 years, and the couple have raised two wonderful children: Stuart, a Yale grad, and Remi, currently attending NYU. The Bakers love to travel and stay connected with their global relatives — including Riezl’s siblings living in New Zealand, the Philippines, Melbourne, and Japan.

At home, she finds joy in life’s simple pleasures: “Cooking and entertaining are two of my favorite ways to unwind,”

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Riezl shares. “I love trying new recipes, exploring different cultures through food, and hosting friends and family for meaningful meals and conversation.”

Her days still start before sunrise, too.

“I am usually up by 4 a.m.,” she chuckles. “I don’t sleep much, but that’s okay because I really love my work. It’s a

blessing to wake up and look forward to what you want to do.”

And the motivation that still drives her after all these years? That answer will never change.

“My favorite mantra continues to drive me,” she offers. “Do it with excellence—or not at all.”

