



## **Domenico's on the Wharf** **Owners Dominic Mercurio and Sam & Angeli Mercurio**

Monterey's Fishermen's Wharf is like home to the Mercurios. Since 1968, they've spent most of their time there. Their Uncle John Pisto was the original owner of the Captian's Gig on the Wharf. "A bunch of us used to come down to the wharf every day in the summer time," Dominic recalls. "We were 10 or 11 years old, and would leave home in the morning and not go back until dark. We'd be fishing every day, catching little smelts or mackerel."

Some years later, Dominic opened Domenico's on the Wharf in 1981 with his Uncle, John Pisto. Dominic had gone into the restaurant business, and his brother, Sam, had become successful in commercial fishing. Today, the two brothers operate the restaurant together with Sam's wife, Angeli. "When the guys from the local fish company eat out," he remarks, "this is where they come. When you work in the fishing industry, you know what truly fresh fish is."

The Mercurios are part of the living legacy of an industry that once was the backbone of Monterey's livelihood, one that enticed the imaginations of a unique breed of people from all around the world who were drawn here to make their living from the sea. The fishermen who settled on the shore of the Monterey Bay followed a harvest that would begin locally with sardines, then ventured north to Alaska for salmon and later headed for South America for tuna, seasons that are still observed today.

Sam still has his fishing boats in Alaska, and spends two months out of the year fishing wild Salmon. Their father, Jean, is now retired, but still helps out on Sam's fishing nets. Jean was born in a French province of North Africa, one of a group of Sicilians who went there to fish the sardines and was kicked out during the French Revolution in the '50s. So he and his five brothers came to Monterey for the sardines.



The wild salmon Sam catches and their demand for only the highest quality seafood, which they know well, are what diners can expect at Domenico's.

The Mercurio's environmental consciousness has placed Domenico's on the Wharf on the Monterey Bay Aquarium's coveted Seafood Watch List, which includes only restaurants that are truly dedicated to sustainable fishing practices.

Regardless of their entrepreneurial opportunities and passion for the sea, the Mercurios remain committed to their local community, donating on a regular basis to a number of organizations in the Monterey area.

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