

# food & home

Santa Barbara Fish Market owner Brian Colgate offers up some live local rock crab. Photo by Eliot Crowley.



## FISH TALES!!

25 LOCAL FAVORITES FROM THE DEEP BLUE

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ON THE COVER



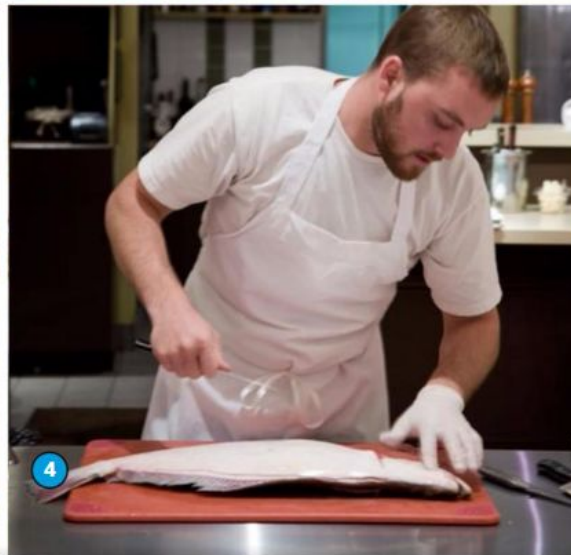
I often joke that I am on a seafood diet. I see food, I eat it—especially if it's fish. Leaving what I refer to as "the holy cow" in the dust (I gave up beef years ago), seafood—wild Alaska salmon or locally caught black cod in particular—is my omega-3 of choice. We've come a long way from the fish sticks of my youth.

Santa Barbara boasts a bounty of treasures from the sea, whether you select from an array on display at many markets, or from delectable entrees served at our fine-dining establishments.

Does your heart go pitter-pat over a bowl of steaming mussels or clams? Do you salivate at the sight of Hope Ranch oysters on the half shell, lobster from Maine or spiny lobster from our shore? Whether you savor fresh sea urchin (*uni*), sashimi, hearty fish stews or just a fine piece of grilled swordfish or a whole steamed snapper, there are as many ways to prepare seafood, as there are species. Delve into Asian-style entrees or fish tacos; French bouillabaisse or Italian inspired cioppino, or a just a simply grilled or broiled piece of fish served with lemon, butter and a sprig of parsley. All satisfy.

The "buy local, sustainable food" movement is alive and well in our very own Santa Barbara Harbor. With over 1,100 boats, the marina has always been home to a working commercial fishing fleet. On any given day, sea bass, swordfish, sea urchin, shark, crab, and lobster are swung from decks of boats into trucks for delivery to local chefs. Some are even flown halfway around the globe. Brian Colgate, of Santa Barbara Fish Market has been selling sea-to-table fish from our waters in his cozy retail space near the waterfront docks for 12 years. The fish market's smoked black cod is a favorite. Ask nicely for a sample of any of the smoked fishes they sell and I guarantee you will add a chunk to your purchase.

"We have a really unique, small harbor and a very tight knit fishing community that is respectful of the resources and practices sustainable fishing. There is a strong awareness of how important it is to maintain our fish population for the future," notes Brian. The market provides a direct outlet to the public for commercial fisherman and whatever local fish is caught, from spot prawns to halibut, comes right through their doors. The list of choices is long and includes fish from other waters as well. I counted eight types of salmon –



All photos by Ashley Beane



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from Alaskan Wild Coho to Scottish, scallops, calamari and even shark jerky!

Did you know that you can pick out a piece of fresh local or imported fish, such as branzino from Greece, at the seafood counter at Whole Foods Market (they buy from SB Fishmarket) that catches your eye and they will grill, sauté or steam it for you with a choice of seasonings or marinades, free of charge? They will also shuck your oysters on the spot and peel and de-vein shrimp.

Decades ago, an annual Fishermen's Festival featured a "Blessing of the Fleet" and a parade of fishing boats covered in flowers and streamers. Eventually, this tradition was replaced by an annual fundraising Harbor Festival that benefited a home for unwed mothers. The festival fell on hard times in the late 1990s and was absent from the waterfront for two years until it was reinvented in 2002. The festivities were moved from spring to fall and altered to celebrate local fisheries. Today, the annual Harbor and Seafood Festival, held on the second Saturday in October, draws thousands of people to the waterfront to enjoy succulent seafood like fresh lobsters and barbecued albacore, plus a host of other seafood treats and marine-related information and demonstrations. Lucky for us, Santa Barbara is like a year round seafood festival – whether you throw a line off of Stearns Wharf and catch your own dinner, buy a piece of fish and barbecue it at home or dig in at a restaurant.

Traditions should be expanded upon, don't you think? The following is the short list of what's available to savor, explore and enjoy!



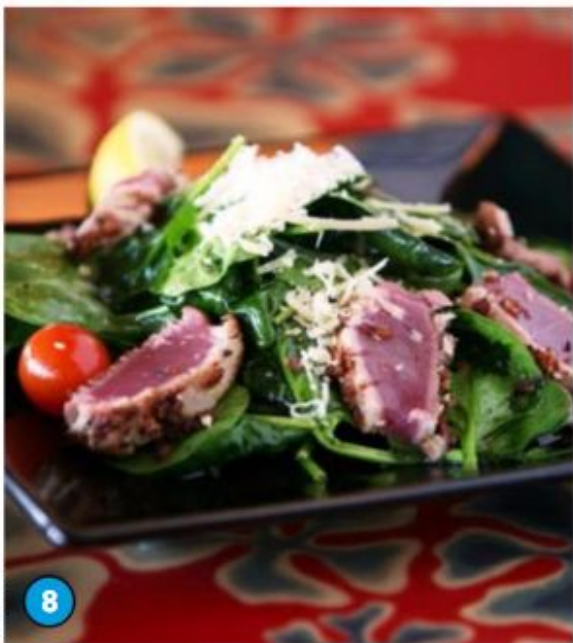
Shelly Vinson

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Shelly Benson

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Scott Gilborn

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Elliot Crowley

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Ashley Benson

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Michael Brown

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