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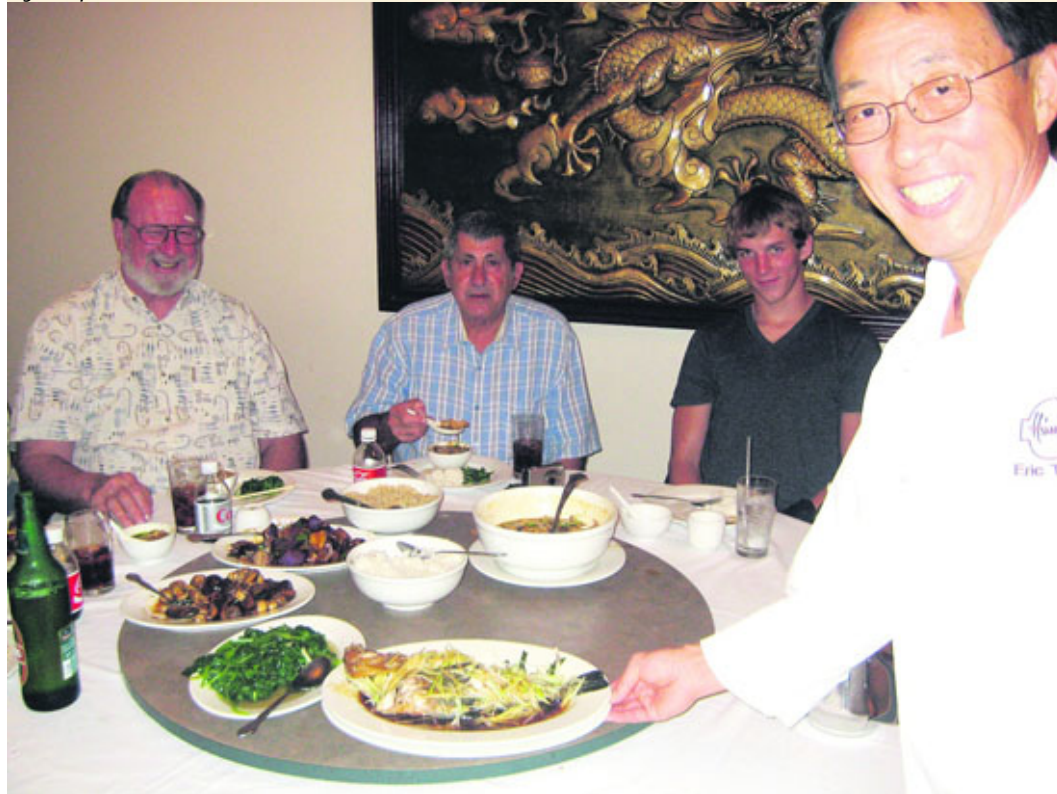
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## Fish, Eat, Party

By Sophie Braccini



At the table with guests of Jim Logsdon (left) and chef Eric (right) Photo Sophie Braccini

The Quillback Rockfish prepared with ginger and scallions that chef Eric brought to the tables of Hsiang's Restaurant on Monday evening were still swimming in the Pacific Ocean on Sunday morning. They found their way to the Orinda kitchen with the help of the rods of Orinda resident Jim Logsdon and his friends. They were partaking in a tradition of good sport and great eating that has been going on for ten years.

The two large round tables at Hsiang's were covered with many more creative and tasty dishes: Minced fish in lettuce cup, Braised Lingcod steaks in a hot, spicy sauce, Braised Cabezone steaks in a sweet and hot sauce, Olive Rockfish and Blue Rockfish fillets fried in the Salt and Pepper style with Jalapeno peppers, and Hot and Spicy Szechwan style fish stew with Chinese lip-numbing pepper corns. The chef added white and brown rice, and a variety of vegetable dishes.

"Eric and I made our arrangement about ten years ago when he first opened the restaurant and Judy and I had just started seeing each other," says Jim Logsdon, "He has cooked many memorable meals for us over the years. In fact, we thought so much of his skill that Judy and I reserved the same two tables for our Rehearsal Dinner prior to our marriage in 2000. We just told Eric to pull out all the stops and create a fabulous meal for twenty four people. It was one of the best meals I have ever eaten." Some of the dishes that Eric prepared that night are on

his menu, sometimes in a "chicken version." Others are created for the occasion, depending on the catch.

As diners ate to one's fill, stories of the Sunday outing went around the table. They left Orinda before dawn on Sunday morning for Emeryville where they had reserved a boat with Emeryville Sportfishing ([www.emeryvillesportfishing.com](http://www.emeryvillesportfishing.com)). The objective was the Farallon Islands where fishing has rarely been disappointing for them.

"I had a hard fight with a seagull," told Logsdon. Fishermen use live anchovies as bait, so the boat is surrounded by a group of seagulls that try to get the baits before they reach the fishes. "I had cast my line when that seagull dived in pursuit of the anchovy. Suddenly my line started coming back up at great velocity and I reeled in as fast as I could. The bird emerged from the ocean, flapping his wings vigorously and screaming to the top of its lungs, the hook was stuck in his neck. I tried to grab the bird by the neck, but they are incredibly fast and their long neck is flexible in all directions. It was like dealing with a snake, only one with a long, hard and very sharp beak. The bird twisted his head around and snapped my hand in his beak. One of the deck-hands came to the rescue, but the bird wouldn't let go of my hand and would contort himself so much that the man couldn't do anything. Finally, I seized the bird with my other hand just below the head, like I did with snakes when I was a kid, and the man could remove the hook. We released the bird, but he was so shocked that the captain's dog got him, we all rushed to shoo the dog away and the seagull finally made his escape." What a story that bird must have told his family that night!

Everyone came back safe and sound, as they do every time and with a nice catch. Only the men went fishing that Sunday, but sometimes the wives join too. "I go out and try to be a good sport when I'm pretty sure that the weather is going to be nice," says Judy Logsdon.

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