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Last Call at Petar's

By Cathy Tyson



Moraga pals Sammy Cohen, now a student at University of Colorado, Boulder, and Jeremy Hauser, a student at UC Davis, enjoy a "Freddie" at Petar's closing night. Photo courtesy Jake Tyson

recipe \$6 "Freddie" shot, that lowered inhibitions.

Jeremy Hauser, a Campolindo class of 2009 graduate and now a senior at UC Davis, reflected on the Petar's experience. "Petar's was great for reconnecting with people you thought you would never see again. Something about a round of Freddie's and a timeless Diamond Dave classic just brings people together." Hauser noticed some troubling changes over the years. "At the end it kind of lost its charm; exorbitant covers and overly dramatic bouncers seemed very un-Petar's. Over the last few breaks the Round Up definitely took its place as the 'go to' spot for bored Lamo kids. But I don't think any of us will soon forget the wild nights we had at Petar's, acting like kids again in a supposedly adult environment."

An overflow crowd came out to be a part of the closing night of Lafayette institution Petar's on Jan. 5. After a half century of hospitality, the legendary establishment closed its doors due to a decline in restaurant patronage and a significant rent increase from new property manager Main Street Properties.

Although Mediterranean fair replaced Petar's original continental cuisine a few years ago, the place was more known for its active bar scene than for dining. After purchasing the business from original owner Petar Jakovina 13 years ago, current owner Ned Kermainejad said he'll be looking for other opportunities, and has no plans to retire.

It was a Saturday night to remember. A long line formed out front, complete with bouncers and a \$20 cover charge. Historically, Petar's was the preferred location for many Lamorinda college kids home on school breaks to enjoy an adult beverage. Closing night was no different, a festive atmosphere, music, and an easy cab ride home - if needed. The final farewell evening had college kids along with more mature folks ready to enjoy a libation or three and popular singer, musician and DJ "Diamond Dave" Hosley.

Lots of audience participation marked the evening, including a rousing rendition from the packed house of Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline," and Van Morrison's unforgettable, "Brown-Eyed Girl." Perhaps it was the brisk sales of long-time bartender's namesake drink, the secret

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