

THE
SANTA BARBARA
SEA FOOD LITERACY PROJECT

THE BLOWN

2026 SPRING
VOL. 1

Dear seafood lovers of Santa Barbara County,

We are so excited to unveil our first issue of The Bight! This project has been a privilege to work on! We partnered with fishermen, local schools, businesses, and scholars to tell you the full story of salmon in California. The Bight is the broad, gradual curve along our Southern California coastline that makes our part of the ocean one of the most productive in the world... and also represents a delicious mouthful of something from the sea.

The Bight was made to highlight the wonderful fishermen in our community, and encourage people like you to support the local economy. The Saturday Fishermen's Market was created to bring Santa Barbara together over the shared goal of eating local seafood. The market is a place of neighborly interactions, where fishermen remember and appreciate their customers, and customers know exactly who to thank for the food on their table. Many fishermen share the sentiment that feeding those in their community is one of the most virtuous and rewarding aspects of their job.

We hope to continue making zines like this one, highlighting different species and different fishers. Please keep an eye out! If you enjoy this zine, let us know by sending us an email: thebightsb@gmail.com. We would love to include more ocean poems, fishy drawings, and buoyant ballads from our community in future iterations.

It is our sincere hope that this zine inspires you to come see the jewel of Santa Barbara, the Saturday Fishermen's Market, and show your support for our fishermen by buying locally.

Best fishes,

Dan O'Shea & Lauren Puffer



Salmon

by Hannah N. - local student



To me, salmon is

Weeknights, sometimes in the car
between practices

Always juicy, flavorful, tender

Always Old Bay seasoning

Always served with Yaya's rice, chopped
up carrots and celery, the taste of
nostalgia

The best rice isn't the only thing Yaya
passed down

She also taught my father to never
settle for the salmon in the display

Instead, ask for the fresh caught stuff in
the back

To me, salmon is the best kind of sushi

Buttery, melt in your mouth, smooth,
sweet and mild,

I can never understand people who say
they don't like raw fish

Salmon, my mother says, was the smell
stuck in my hair

As a toddler who ate with her hands

Strong, fishy oils clung to me

At that time, salmon was even the color
of my favorite sweater

The one I see myself wearing in every
photo

Though back then, I couldn't pronounce
it

"Amon!" I shouted excitedly as I saw my
dad cooking dinner

Salmon, as I recently learned, is part of
Daisy's dog treats

The only thing that can get her to come
when she's called

Salmon is breakfast, smoked and added
to a bagel with cream cheese

Our family tradition on Christmas
mornings

Even my nature loving Grandpa Bob
volunteers in salmon research.

That's because we need to protect these
poor fish,

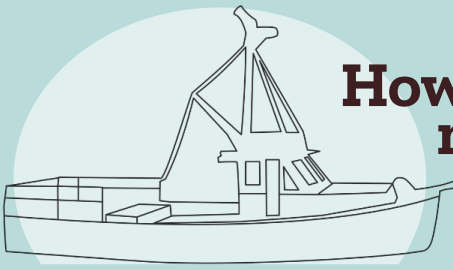
Whose habitats are being harmed

Their journey is harrowing enough

Dodging predators, conquering
waterfalls

These fish are brave, inspiring,
important to ecosystems,

Important to me and my family,
important to everyone.



How does California manage it's King Salmon?

For the last three years, commercial fishing for California King Salmon has been shut down, the longest closure in the state's history. This shutdown was due to myriad of factors including water and drought issues. While fishing was a factor, it is not the sole reason why closures were enacted. This year, strong fall-run forecasts have justified reopening the fishery.

How was this decision made?

Agency Collab

NOAA and the Pacific Fishery Management Council take scientific advice from the Salmon Technical Team, a working group of state, Federal, tribal and NGO biologists and economists who produce annual salmon documents. These reports inform a closure, an opening, and how many fish can be harvested!

Harvest Calculations

1. Count returning Jacks, male salmon that arrive after 2 ocean years rather than the normal 3. This year's count is the highest since 2011!
2. Models predict the full run. In 2026, 400,000 are expected to make it back to the Sacramento River
3. Federal law determines maximum salmon harvest with the guidance of the STT.
4. Limiting impact on endangered populations of King Salmon lowers harvest guidelines
5. Final number is divided amongst commercial, ocean recreation, and tribal fisheries. Leaving our May-August season with 83,000 fish!

Who Gets to Fish?

In 2019, there were 1,100 active commercial salmon vessel permits issued by CDFW. The number is likely lower today after three years of closure. Each vessel can land up to 160 fish per open period. Open periods are spread throughout the summer to avoid a "derby-style" fishing scenario. Once the harvest is hit, the season is over!

Santa Barbara fisherman, selling local salmon

Written by Lauren Puffer, Co-Editor



Joe Garrigan has been coming to the Saturday Fishermen's Market for over 8 years with his wife, Melissa. This year, they will be going to Morro Bay to fish for King salmon to bring back to us, Santa Barbarans. Joe started his fishing career on Paul Teall's crabbing boat, another local legend in the Santa Barbara fishing community. "We had this wooden plank boat. We would go to San Miguel (Island) for 4 days a week. It was slow." Joe describes a boat that was built in the 1920s: "It was, like, a seven-knot boat. It took us six hours to get out there. We fished for four days and came home, and then he (Paul) did the Saturday market."

When Joe got his own license to fish for salmon 16 years ago, his situation was less than glamorous. "I got a salmon permit for like \$12,000... My wife and I were just dating, and we went and lived on the boat in Bodega Bay." The couple got to know one another in the marina, renting a slip for the boat Joe had just bought for his first salmon season. The skilled fisherman touts that season as his best season, "...everything was new and exciting. But the headline on the San Francisco Chronicle said, 'Worst Salmon Season in 20 Years!'. Despite there being no easy days or "home runs" in fishing, he recalls this time with appreciation for all the learning he did. Despite decades, Joe has yet to experience a "banner year" for salmon, as many senior fishermen have.

The California salmon fishery opened this year after three years of closure. "It's a big deal. Because for me, it's the most fun fishery. And...I mean, I want to eat salmon," says Joe, with excitement for the reopening. "I miss it with excitement for the family and me. I put a bunch in the freezer just for myself. So not have that, it's a sad thing." Joe looks forward to delivering sustainable, high-quality Salmon to the people of Santa Barbara for the first time in years.

"It's one of the fisheries that should last through the ages as long as there's a fish population to work from."

California salmon fishermen are proud to work in this clean fishery, which uses no nets and catches its fish with hook-and-line methods. Joe wants people to know that this is not an Alaskan Sockeye fishery with nets. "We're catching them one by one, trolling hooks through the water. We're just picking a few fish out of the school." Fishermen in Santa Barbara know that their clientele cares about ecological impact and ethical sourcing. "It [the fishing process] is minimally invasive to the fish and to the environment..There's no trash. There are no ghost nets associated with it."

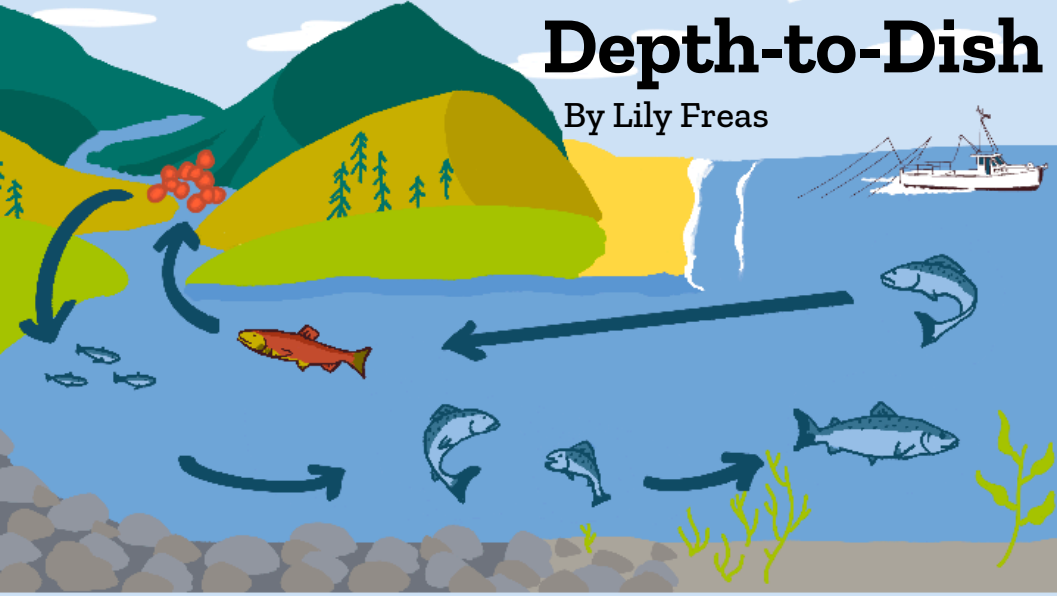
Any fish you purchase from Joe was processed one at a time, being gilled, gutted, and put on ice within minutes of being caught.

If you are fortunate enough to buy a King salmon caught right here in California, Joe recommends barbecued cross cuts or "salmon candy." Salmon candy takes more effort, but is worth the work in his opinion. "You take the filet and smoke it with the brown sugar and everything. I mean, that's just, like, lights out."

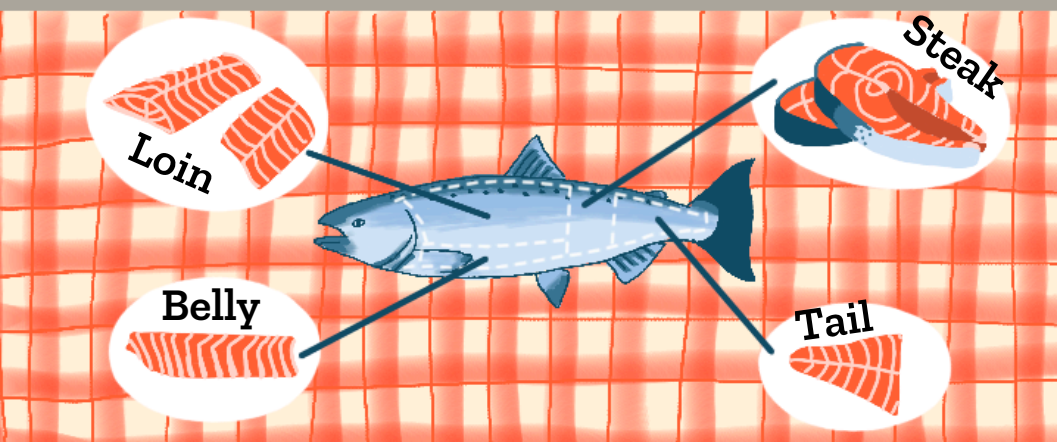
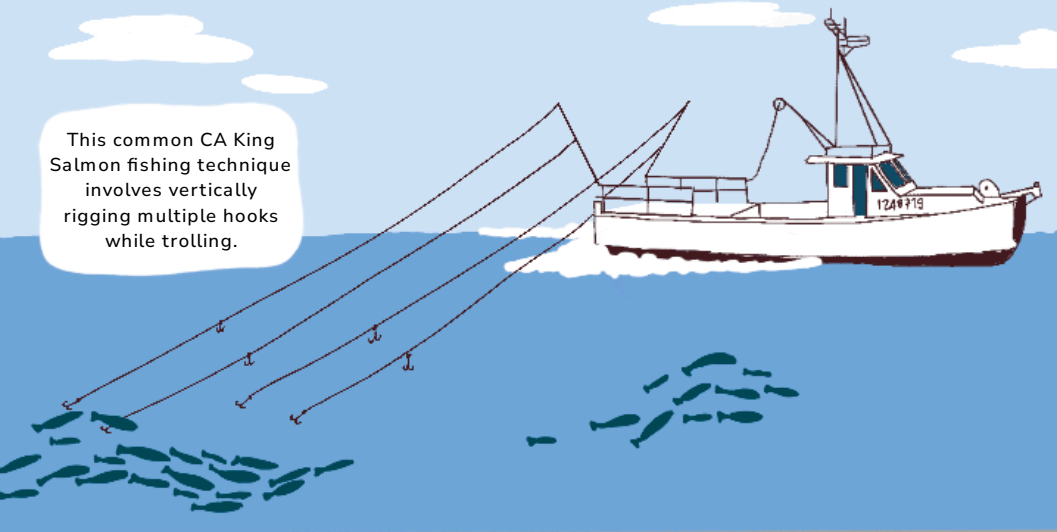
The King salmon is a very special fish for so many people and our local ecosystems. The story of California salmon is a call to action: "It's one of the fisheries that should last through the ages," says Joe, "as long as there's a fish population to work from."

Depth-to-Dish

By Lily Freas



This common CA King Salmon fishing technique involves vertically rigging multiple hooks while trolling.



Citrus-Snap Pea Salad with Wild-Caught CA King Salmon

By Isa Bourbon, Founder & Chef of Bite Club SB



Spring in Santa Barbara is full of incredible produce, from berries, snap peas, asparagus, and a wide array of some of the best citrus in the world. This year, we are fortunate to have California King Salmon back on the menu. I feel incredibly fortunate to have made this recipe with the best salmon I have ever tasted. Santa Barbara is truly the gift that keeps on giving. When you walk the farmers market, or the fish market, shop by what looks exciting that day, not by what your recipe tells you. Flexibility is how we learn about new ingredients.



Recipe: 2 portions

For the Salad:

1 blood orange - peel sliced off and cut into thin rounds

1 red or white grapefruit - peel sliced off and cut into thin rounds

2 cara cara oranges - peel sliced off and cut into thin rounds

10 snap peas - ends cut off and sliced in half

1 cup - arugula

1/4 cup - pickled red onion

1 watermelon radish - thinly sliced and julienned

2 Tbs each - dill, parsley - leaves picked
1/4 cup toasted slivered almonds

For the Green Goddess:

1/4 cup each - cilantro, scallions, basil,

parsley, almonds, olive oil, lemon juice

3 cloves - garlic

2 tbs apple cider vinegar

1 tbs honey

1 tsp salt, pinch pepper

Optional: 1 tsp chili flakes or Calabrian chili

Directions: food process until pulverized but not all the way smooth - think chimichurri. Just like fish, choose whatever herbs look best to you on the day. No herbs are wrong for this sauce - whatever you love, go for it.

For the Salmon:

1/2 Lb Local California King Salmon

Directions:

1. Put cold water in a glass container with 3 tbs sugar and 1 tbs salt. Whisk until mixed in.

2. Soak the salmon in the brine solution in the fridge for 20 minutes.

3. Pat dry. Season with a little salt and pepper. Heat a cast-iron pan on medium-high heat and add 2 Tbs olive oil or butter. Once the oil is fully melted but not smoking, lay the fish in the pan skin side down.

4. Once the skin looks light brown and crispy, flip the fish and cook for another 2-3 minutes, turning the heat down slightly so as not to burn the fish.

5. Turn off the heat and allow to rest in the pan until just cooked through. About 3 minutes.

6. On a platter, spread a layer of the green goddess. Top with citrus rounds, snap peas, watermelon radish, arugula, and pickled onions. Lightly drizzle olive oil, lemon juice, and salt over the arugula before placing it on top.

7. Lay the fish over everything and then sprinkle the herbs and almonds.

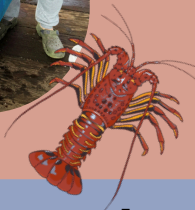
8. Lastly, enjoy every bite with someone you care about :)

People of The Market

Dave Siordia - 805 Seafood



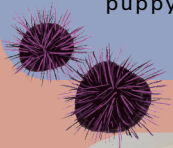
I'll be honest - the reason why I got into this again, round two, is because I'm a foodie. I love food, and I love restaurants, and I love that experience. I felt like there was a lack of local fish in local restaurants. When I joined Connor with 805 (Seafood) a couple years ago, that was my main goal. It wasn't about making money, it wasn't about catching the prized big fish. It was about getting more seafood in local restaurants, and that's what we did. It's been fun seeing that. Seeing fish that locals catch, served in local restaurants by local chefs, which then the locals get to enjoy, makes this all worth it.



Harry Liquornik - Urchin Diver



Craziest thing I've seen in or on the water? Came up [from a dive], the deckhands pulling me back to the boat. And it's kind of windy, and he's yelling, "gray whale!" I can't hear the whale part. I just heard him say gray. So I'm thinking, "Oh, ****... great white." I get up alongside the boat, and I go, "Where's the shark?" He goes, "No! there's a gray whale here, a little baby gray whale!" So I go back down and he was kind of following me around like a little puppy dog for a while. It's kind of a trip!



Jean Debetteignes - Fileter



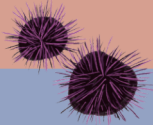
One of the reasons I started working here was because I knew what all the fish were, but they were all cut up. I thought, "You don't even know anything about the fish! You don't know what they look like whole. You don't know where they swim in the ocean." When I looked at the water, I saw blue, but it was like looking at the forest without knowing the trees. Now, as I come here, I know where the fish live as I drive along the freeway I can say, "Oh! This is probably where these are, and these are. These fish stay by the rocks. These fish follow the minnows." I came here because I live here, and the water is more than just blue.



Mike Johnson - Santa Barbara Uni



I've been diving for sea urchins for almost 30 years and I've seen a lot of crazy things underwater. It's very adventurous. One of the better things I like about it is that it creates anxiety until you get into the water. Driving out there, I start thinking about, "What am I going to see? How's it going to be? What are the conditions like?" Sometimes we're in deeper water than I might be comfortable with, but once you get in the wetsuit, that kind of goes away as soon as I hit the water. I kind of feel like an astronaut just descending down on it. Being a little nervous or scared about things, like a shark or something, just kind of adds to the fun, in my opinion.



Randy Hughes Island Quality Seafood



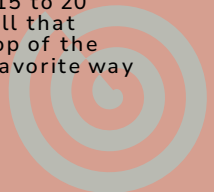
A couple of months ago, we had, like, 400 pounds of sea bass on the boat in like an hour and a half. Rod and reel. Wow, it was pretty wild. My back was murdered from it, because then you are gilling and gutting and all that the whole time, you know, my back was fried!



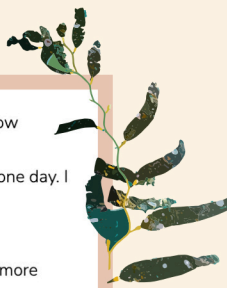
Mary Swartzel Swartzel Fish Company



I like to cook our mackerel in a Chardonnay vinaigrette brine. I usually do, like, a Chardonnay vinaigrette with some red onions, some Dijon mustard, and some capers. The dijon mustard separates the oil, and I usually keep it in there for, like, 30 minutes to six hours, depending on when you want to cook it. And then I do it in a wood-fired oven for about 15 to 20 minutes. I take the onions and all that brine sauce and put them on top of the mackerel. That's probably my favorite way to cook it!



MAD LIB by Jean the Filleter



"One thing that really cracked me up... So we love all our customers because they know their fish. They like it, they love it, they want it. But there was a _____ who came one day. I was _____ his fish, I was gutting it and he kept _____. He kept saying "_____." I kept looking at him and shaking my _____ and he got more _____ and more pointed, "_____!" Because there was this little _____ there. But they weren't _____ because it wasn't a _____. I kept thinking, "How am I going to get out of this?" So I stepped off and I came kind of close to him and I said, "_____." and he said, "_____." And this kept going on! I finally had to get a little closer and I said, "Not _____." His eyes got big as _____, and his spine _____. He was like, "Ooooh!" His wife was _____, I'm not making fun of him so much because he knew what he wanted. It was a _____ thing because he wasn't the only _____ here at the booth! I say it in great _____ and love, but it was fun."

Noun

Verb ending in "ing"

Verb ending in "ing"

Plural noun

Same Plural Noun

Noun

Same Plural Noun

Same Plural Noun

Plural Noun

Noun

Same Plural Noun

Same Plural Noun

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Same Plural Noun

Noun

Plural Noun

Verb (past tense)

Adjective

Adjective

Noun

Emotion



Saturday Market Crossword!

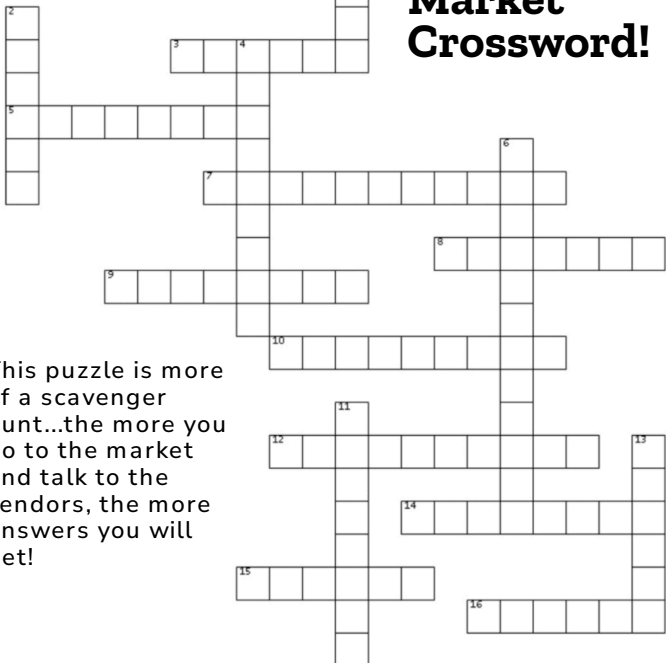
Across:

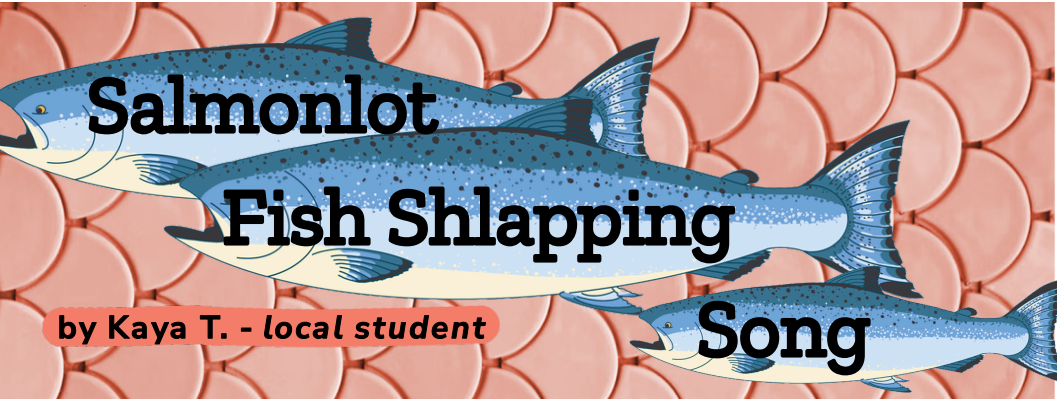
3. Every Saturday!
5. Best with miso
7. Ocean vegetable
8. Door mat
9. Kiddie pool crustacean
10. Very simple name
12. Black cod bycatch
14. Holy _____
15. Eggs on roe

Down:

1. Clean _____
2. Home to many boats
4. Rhodesian
6. Also found in crab traps
11. Pretty old for a fish!
13. What this zine is about

This puzzle is more of a scavenger hunt...the more you go to the market and talk to the vendors, the more answers you will get!





Salmonlot

Fish Shlapping

Song

by Kaya T. - local student

Fish land fish land fish land. That's the market for me!

Fish land is the market where we fish,

Fish land is the market where we play

Here in Fish land, every fish is caught right from the bay

in the freshest, most delicious coastal way

Shlip shlap shlip and shlap away

Now go get the catch of the day

Shlip shlap you simply can't go wrong

At Saturday fish market all day long

Hook, line, sinker come and play

Best in the business, or so the locals say

Hook, line you simply can't go wrong

At the market where we all belong!

Fish land fish land fish land

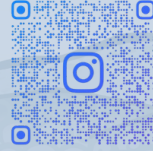
The market where I quite want to be

For shrimp boils or sushi, or a feast by the sea!

Fish land fish land fish land



FACEBOOK



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INSTAGRAM

COME GET THE FRESHEST LOCAL CATCH IN SANTA BARBARA

EVERY SATURDAY 6-11AM - SANTA BARBARA HARBOR

FOLLOW WHAT'S FRESH WITH OUR NEWSLETTER

www.cfsb.info/sat

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this first edition of the zine. It has been amazing to work with you all and we look forward to future iterations with all of you amazing people!

Ava Schulenberg - Editing & Advising
Isabelle Doerschlag - Front Cover
Joe and Melissa Garrigan - Fishermen
Hannah N. and Kaya T. - Local Students
Patty Jo Carmean - Local Teacher
Michelle Lotze - Local Teacher
Isa Bourbon - Chef Extraordinaire
Alex Phillips & Emma Rigatti - Advisors
Lily Freas - Graphic Design
Dave Siordia - Fisherman
Mike Johnson - Fisherman
Harry Liqournik - Fisherman
Randy Hughes - Fisherman
Mary Swartzel - Fisherman
Jean Debetteignes - Filet Master



THE BIGHT

Santa Barbara Seafood Quarterly Zine