

Take the Minetti family cooking tradition, add a new generation of flavors and nuances, and you'll still get 'scratch.' We'd be hard-pressed to find California cuisine marinated in as much history as that of the **Far Western Tavern**, located in Guadalupe – a pastoral emergence in the rural Wild West, and now, suddenly, one of the fastest growing towns in Santa Barbara County.

**Clarence and Rosalie Minetti** purchased the legendary restaurant in 1958. As a ranch hand "pitching hay" in the 1930s, Clarence frequently bellied up for a rib steak, spaghetti and all the fixin's – for 65 cents. Rosalie's apparently socially-adept grandparents, relative pioneers to the Santa Maria Valley, hosted famous director Cecil B. DeMille at their ranch home when he was filming his epic *The Ten Commandments* at the nearby dunes – perhaps part of some divine intervention that helps to sustain their family business to this day. Some locals say it might be the ghosts, rumored to exist in the 100-plus-year-old building while others attribute the aberrations to decades of perpetually wafting barbeque smoke.

Regardless, a century later, family ties and local roots continue to abound as a new generation of restaurateurs sustain the authentic recipes and traditions of the original owners, yet have successfully added contemporary flair and fresh ideas to the concept. The offspring, key to sustaining the family's success, are Clarence and Rosalie's children, particularly Susan and Marie and their spouses and Manager Barbara Abernathy (daughter of Mary Jean Ruiz, Clarence's sister and the original restaurant manager) who have all had a hand in the restaurant's direction. You might say the family was happily *flaying* at challenge and opportunity when a celebrity chef heeded the call, possibly catapulting them into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



SUSAN RIGHETTI AND CLARENCE MINETTI

## HONOR THY FATHER AND MOTHER

Imminent southwestern grill master and NYC gourmet chef **Bobby Flay** showed up, wanted a lesson in "Santa Maria Style Barbeque," and collaborated with the Minettis on a Food Network segment of *BBQ with Bobby Flay*, which aired in the fall of 2004. So what did Bobby think? He spoke with his fork and knife – cleaned his plate. We suspect precocious daughter **Susan Minetti Righetti** was there to experience the fusion of cultures and support Bobby's epicurean epiphany.

With husband Paul's support, Susan had already taken the bull by the horns in 1981 by launching her own products, the **Suzie Q's Brand** – a perfect accompaniment to the famous *Bull's Eye Steak*, capturing the authentic flavors of Santa Maria Style Barbeque.

Today, Susan's line consists of **Santa Maria Style Seasoning**, a lively and savory all-purpose accent for virtually all preparations. Just add water to her **Bag of Pinquitos with Seasoning**; these mouthwatering little beans are indigenous to the Santa Maria Valley. Allow **Suzie Q's Brand Santa Maria**

**Style Mild Salsa**, a traditional ranch recipe popularized at the Far Western Tavern, to grace your palate. Combine fresh Santa Maria strawberries with her **Strawberry Glaze Pie Filling** to create scrumptious strawberry pies and desserts in minutes.

"I love hearing from our customers and learning about their unique uses for our products," Susan says. "It is gratifying to carry on our family culinary tradition."

Perhaps there is something to be learned from this fusion of family, tradition, and success – honoring one another.

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### SUZIE Q'S BRAND:

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