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Fish House

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# FISHERMEN SERVE UP BEST IN TOWN

BY SUE DEROU-BRENES

411

They loved to fish together and they loved to hang out together, so when it came to opening a business, cousins Steve Kubota and Tony DiGirolamo decided to open the Salinas Valley Fish House.

DiGirolamo had once been a commercial fisherman, and Kubota had the skills of an executive chef and the love of fishing. Inspired by their cousins who own the popular Monterey Fish House in Monterey, they opened this restaurant five years ago.

They opened in the former Crayons restaurant building downtown and kept Crayons' chef, Jeff Kersch, Kubota said.

"I used to cook over at the Monterey Fish House, so Tony and I knew what we wanted to present in food choices, and we wanted to do it here in Salinas," he said. "This first block of Oldtown is getting exciting."

The high "turn-of-the-century" ceiling is painted forest green and the celadon-sage walls give the restaurant a classy but peaceful look. This was quite a change from the bright primary colors of the previous



SCOTT MACDONALD | 411

Crayons. A 238-pound Ahi tuna adorns the wall, a donation from customer Frank Harbin.

Three huge, lazy ceiling fans look down on the crisp, white linen tablecloths and fresh flower settings.

Kubota said the oak barbecue oysters (\$8.95) are superb and noted the restaurant uses the "big, fresh, Pacific ones."

While best known for fish and seafood, the restaurant serves as much rib-eye and New York steak, chicken, pork chops and

Salinas Valley Fish House co-owners Steve Kubota, left, and Tony DiGirolamo.

nightly specials including not-on-the-menu rack of lamb.

Deaths by Chocolate and Crème Brûlée (both \$3.50), along with other desserts, are on the menu, and the full bar features Salinas Valley wines and Carmel Wheat ale (\$3.50).

## THE 411

DETAILS, DETAILS

- **What:** Salinas Valley Fish House
- **Where:** 172 Main St., Salinas
- **Phone:** 775-0175
- **Owners:** Tony DiGirolamo and Steve Kubota
- **Seats:** 113
- **Hours:** Dinner 5 to 9 p.m. every day, lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday-Friday
- **House specialties:** Oak-barbecued fish and oysters, cappuccino
- **Prices:** Dinners \$9.95-\$26.95, oak-grilled sword fish with vegetables and pasta \$16.95
- **Reservations:** Not required; recommended on Friday and Saturday nights

