

HIS STORY
TONY ARROYO
OWNER/CHEF

Los Arroyos
Mexican Restaurant & Take Out
CALIFORNIA
SANTA BARBARA | MONTECITO | GOLETA



INDIANA
CARMEL | INDIANAPOLIS

Tony Arroyo & the Los Arroyos Story



Jose Antonio “Tony” Arroyo was born the ninth of ten children in the Arroyo family. He grew up in La Piedad, Michoacan, Mexico and enjoyed spending time traveling with his father, who was a bus driver, in Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico. He immigrated from Mexico to California when he was almost 14 years old, early in the morning on Mother’s Day, with no English skills and less than \$20 in his pocket. He took a bus ride up to California with a friend and headed to Pasadena where his friend’s dad lived and worked. There they both worked with the dad as gardeners. Shortly after Tony’s arrival to California, he visited his brother Juan Manuel Arroyo and his family in Santa Barbara, California and immediately knew he wanted to move to Santa Barbara.

Tony’s first job in Santa Barbara was at Moby Dick Restaurant as a window washer. He quickly moved up the ladder at Moby Dick because of his strong work ethic, loyalty, responsibility, and passion for making a successful living. He wanted to learn everything he could about the restaurant industry. During his 9 years at Moby Dick, Tony moved up from window washer to dishwasher, cook, head cook, server, bartender, and eventually General Manager. With the money he earned, Tony supported most of his family in Mexico, including putting his younger brother through law school. After Moby Dick Restaurant, Tony spent about 2 years working with Rudy’s Mexican Restaurants and then the next five years at Carlito’s Café y Cantina and Cava. During his free time, Tony loved to sit, talk, and listen to prominent businesspeople in Santa Barbara. He learned about business and built lasting relationships with successful people. He knew he wanted to open his own business someday and saved his money while he waited for the right opportunity to arise.

In January 1999, Tony and his fiancé Maria found a small restaurant space for sublease at 18 W. Figueroa in Downtown Santa Barbara. It was only 490 square feet, but it was a perfect starter restaurant space. Tony created recipes with support from Juan Manuel Arroyo, his brother who was the advising chef from the Four Seasons Biltmore. Tony cooked with his sister Marcela and his first employee Irma (who is still cooking at Los Arroyos!) Tony’s niece Adriana worked as cashier with Maria his fiancé, and they had one dishwasher named Isais. Soon after they opened, they hired Areli who is also still working for Los Arroyos as the Catering Manager. They all worked together long days and evenings, and their small restaurant very quickly became a local’s favorite. Tony and Maria named the restaurant Los Arroyos because it was a family effort, and they welcomed employees into the restaurant as if they were family.

After 2 years of success, the neighboring business spaces became available, and Los Arroyos moved into two spaces next door to combine them to what is today’s Los Arroyos Downtown at 14 W. Figueroa (opened 2001) approximately 1600 square feet. This location is still a walk-up and order at the counter location, with a large market for take-out meals and business lunches.

In 2003, the same year that Tony’s first son Diego was born, a Montecito property owner chose Los Arroyos out of over sixty-five applicants for a restaurant location at 1280 Coast Village Road. The property owner chose Los Arroyos because she wanted a family friendly authentic restaurant, which she felt the Montecito community needed. She was so right! Los Arroyos Montecito opened August 25, 2004, and quickly became a Montecito favorite for a full-service dining experience with fresh homemade Mexican food.

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Los Arroyos opened their third location at the Promenade at the Camarillo Premium Outlets in December 2009. Tony enjoyed expanding into Ventura County and serving authentic fresh Mexican food to the outlet shoppers, tourists, and locals. That full-service location was open for ten years and eventually closed in December 2019.

While running his three Santa Barbara area restaurants, Tony wanted to expand his business further and he became involved with investors who helped him open the Arroyo Mexican Grill in Reno, Nevada in 2010. The Arroyo Mexican Grill was in the Freight House District, home of the Ace's, and enjoyed serving the Reno community and baseball fans alike. This location enjoyed six years of business before closing its doors to Nevada while Los Arroyos opened more doors in Indiana!

Tony and his investors opened Los Arroyos Mexican Restaurant and Bar in 2016 in Carmel, Indiana. It is a full-service dining experience with longtime employees who have been with the business since it opened in 2016. The California location managers and longtime staff traveled to Indiana to train the unfamiliar staff how to make the authentic Mexican recipes the same way they do at the Santa Barbara area locations.

While opening his Carmel location and running his California locations, Tony continually maintained his business relationships. He wanted to expand his business in the Santa Barbara area, and after considering many locations he finally opened a restaurant in Goleta in June of 2017, the same year his second son Samuel was born. Tony enjoys serving the Goleta community and is honored to bring his recipes to the families, tourists, and students in the area.

After months of pandemic-related construction delays, Tony and investors are finally opening Los Arroyos Mexican Restaurant and Bar in Downtown Indianapolis in February 2023. This location will offer full-service dining with a full bar and ceviche specials.

Tony hopes to open more stores in the coming future and teach his sons to operate them, keeping it in the family. He appreciates his staff and loves that many of them have worked for him for 10-20+ years. Thank you for your interest in Los Arroyos and we welcome you into the Los Arroyos Familia!



@losarroyosrestaurant