

SANTA BARBARA

LIFE & STYLE

MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 2015

**FALL
FLAVORS**
A TASTING AT
Bella Vista

*SAND
STILLNESS &
STYLE*

*SHARP &
SOPHISTICATED*
MENSWEAR

*Born to be
WILD &
FREE*

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“There is something magical that happens when people gather around a table to share a meal.”



Sally LaPointe White Silk Chiffon Skirt & Top
 Allora By Laura Private Label Chocolate Brown Cashmere Poncho
 Rosemary Peck Gold Wire Wrapped Necklace with Smokey Quartz

Photographed by Shannon Irvine
 Location: The Center for Urban Agriculture at Fairview Gardens

Morton Capital Management Celebrates SANTA BARBARA WOMEN MAKING WAVES

Farm [to Foodbank] to Table
 Sherry Villanueva's Mission to Nourish Our Bodies and Souls Through Meals That Bring Us Together

Written by Caroline Harrah



Caroline Harrah is a wealth advisor at Morton Capital Management, a mother of two and a passionate volunteer serving on multiple non-profit boards and committees in Santa Barbara. Morton Capital Management is a financial advisory and wealth management firm established in 1983 that works with individuals, families, foundations, and businesses to create personalized, goal-driven strategies to empower their vision of the future. At Morton Capital Management, *Your Journey Matters*. Caroline can be reached at 805-259-9379 or CHarrah@MortonCapital.com.

The Journey Matters

Walk into Santa Barbara restaurant and reigning hot spot The Lark most any night of the week and you'll feel as though you've been invited to *the* party of the year. Even if you don't know a single soul situated around the large communal table or the radiant hearth, you'll soon become engrossed in conversation with a neighboring diner. Such was the intent of The Lark's mastermind, retail marketing guru turned food trend specialist and activist, Sherry Villanueva. A self-described "army brat," Sherry's childhood was a nomadic existence, moving every few years with her father's military transfers. When she and her own family decided to reside in Santa Barbara, she was determined to create what she long sought as a child: community. Her vision is evident at The Lark, with its intimate dining space and small plates of food—meant to be shared, of course. Adorned on either side by sister hotspots Lucky Penny, Les Marchands Wine Bar & Merchant, Santa Barbara Wine Collective, and Helena Avenue Bakery, Sherry has created the de facto hub from which the now effervescent energy of the neighborhood emanates. A far cry from not so long ago when the neighborhood—The Funk Zone—was widely dismissed.

Innovation Through Ideation

The ultimate success of Sherry's vision might have surprised some, but not Sherry, who believes that a well-intended concept that is fully visualized, articulated and well-executed can indeed work miracles—and not just in the business world. "Applying principles of ideation to the nonprofit sector, such social issues as hunger might be solved and an even greater opportunity created," says Sherry. According to the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County, with which Sherry and her business have partnered, one in four people in Santa Barbara County rely on food support; 44% of the individuals served are children. In a region where food is literally falling from trees, wasting away on sidewalks and in yards, the hunger problem is difficult to swallow. Moreover, for families unfamiliar with the taste and preparation of vegetables such as kale or other non-traditional greens, the decision to choose less healthy, more convenient and less expensive options takes precedence. "Through the Foodbank's 'From Hunger to Health' initiative, Santa Barbara has the opportunity to realize a time in which all of the necessary factors influencing access to—and demand for—nutritious food sources can work together synergistically, bringing better nutrition to those in our community who need it most," says Sherry.

Wave of the Future

"From Hunger to Health" seeks to create and sustain healthy communities through nourishment, literacy, and empowerment. Operating at a hyper-local level, the entire community is encouraged to contribute by donating food and excess produce from their properties, by participating in literacy programs about health, nutrition, and food preparation, and by helping to create and maintain community gardens and kitchens. At cultivation events, Sherry demonstrates the power of the model by creating gourmet meals for prospective donors at her restaurant—using only ingredients found on the shelves at the Foodbank. "When donors are able to experience the high quality, nutritious food available through the Foodbank's community partners, they are eager to help."

For more information about the Foodbank or to get involved, go to www.foodbanksbc.org. ★

WARDROBE BY



1269 Coast Village Road, Montecito
 805-563-2425
allorabylaura.com

HAIR & MAKEUP BY



Hair by Alicia, Makeup by Elizabeth
 1250 Coast Village Road, Montecito
 805-969-6700
shineblowdrybar.com