

WILLI'S SEAFOOD & RAW BAR Backgrounder

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It all started with a mouth-watering photo of a lobster roll gracing the cover of Gourmet Magazine that made Chef Mark Stark miss the Chesapeake Bay seafood restaurants of his youth, where workers shucked oysters at the bar and served lobster rolls like the one pictured.

"I saw it and said, 'We can build a whole restaurant around that lobster roll!' " Mark says.

In 2003, Willi's Seafood & Raw Bar opened its doors in Healdsburg, California, becoming the second of seven Sonoma County California restaurants for James Beard Award semifinalist restaurateurs Mark & Terri Stark. It has been a favorite local restaurant, as well as a destination for visitors ever since.

The vibe at Willi's Seafood & Raw Bar has the flavor of Eastern Shore meets Wine country with a dash of Latin flare. Designed for sharing, the menu features New England-style Lobster Rolls, Maryland Crab Cakes, ceviches, and tartares. The chef's raw bar features an ever-changing selection of fresh seafood including at least eight varieties of fresh oysters. Dive into other delicacies like lobster, crab, prawns, and caviar.

In addition, Willi's Seafood & Raw Bar offers a wide variety of wines, microbrews and ciders to pair with dinner. They also have a rotating menu of seasonal cocktails and mocktails in addition to locals' favorites.

Willi's Seafood has won North Bay Bohemian's Best Seafood Award from 2008 to 2020. The restaurant has also been awarded by Press Democrat's Readers' Choice Best of Sonoma County: Best Restaurant 2014, and Best Seafood Restaurant 2012 and 2016 to 2020.