

Bahia Cantiles

The "Cheers" of Northern Baja

By Martina
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The Santos brothers are creating a fine dining destination in the most unlikely of places. The very familiar song from the famous TV series "Cheers" could have been written for Bahia Cantiles.

and barbequed baby back ribs to the fresh Calamari steaks, and the indescribably delicious Black Sea-Bass house specialty.

Nicholas was the youngest of seven brothers, and a self-proclaimed "cowboy from Chihuahua." He said, "If it hadn't been for my brother I might have stayed a happy cowboy



IN A PLEASANT SUNNY DINNING ROOM, a 6-course gourmet dinner can be served, surprising the many fans who find that Cantiles is more than the local pub. Mixing gourmet cuisine with a homey "Cheers" atmosphere everyone goes away completely satisfied.

"Sometimes you wanted go where everyone knows your name, and they are always glad you came."

on the farm." But instead Agapi, the elder, pushed Nicholas to come to Baja and to learn English. So,



LEFT TO RIGHT NICHOLAS, ALFREDO, AND AGAPI standing behind the bar. Their smiles are genuine, everyone is invited to take their favorite bar stool, and just like the "Cheers" TV series, it is a place "where everyone knows your name."

Nicholas and Agapi's number one commitment is to make everyone feel welcomed, have fun and eat hearty.

Nicholas is well known in the northern Baja area as the tall handsome bartender that makes sure everyone is feeling just fine. Most recently his brother Agapi has become the new gourmet chief, creating a truly remarkable menu from down home authentic southern fried chicken

in 1995 Nicholas joined Agapi working at the *Palmiras*, Spanish meaning a group of palm trees. Today it is known as The Palm Cantina in Canta-

mar.

Agapi started as a waiter there, but being a fast learner became a Sous Chef. He urged Nicholas to take a dishwashing job, leaving behind the life of the happy cowboy. In just a short 13 years Nicholas learned English, became the bartender and General Manager for Cantiles, made a bunch of new friends as well as becoming a member of the Diane Gibbs prestigious real estate team. "My brother and all my friends have helped me have a great life. They pushed me and kept telling me to get out there; that I was ready. Like when a parent tells their child they are ready to walk."

As a team Agapi and Nicholas have upgraded the menu, making Cantiles into what Nicholas calls, "A 5-Star Joint." While this off the cuff humor is a personal style for Nicholas, it is his brother that fulfills the culinary promise. They both admit they will never make 5 Stars for presentation, but when it comes to the special cuisine that Agapi creates it wouldn't matter if it had to be eaten off a paper plate. It is truly a gourmet treat not to be surpassed anywhere. In 1993 Agapi was one of the first graduates from the cooking school in Rosarito. More importantly he had the opportunity to work with fine chiefs in both the United States and in Baja's fine hotels. He has learned from the best, but what makes him great is that he became an artist, and like an artist he mixes his palette of the finest seasonings and highest quality ingredient to create a superb blend of subtle flavors.

Nicholas's ad boasts that they "serve the best black sea-bass in Baja." But this is an understatement. Ac-

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JUST TAKE A LOOK at the kind of faces you'll find here at Cantiles, the "Amigo's Cantina." Jorge will make sure you are very happy, serving you heavenly lobster bisque and Agapi's now famous Black Sea Bass.

tually, it might just be the most delicious black sea-bass served anywhere. Black sea-bass is a Pacific coast fish caught in the warm southern waters of Baja. Seafood lovers will be astounded and unable to describe the sweet delicacy of this fish prepared perfectly. The black sea-bass has become so popular that Nicholas suggests people call ahead to make sure they haven't sold out. Everyday is a special day at Bahia Cantiles. Nicholas and Agapi will make sure you are filled up on good food, good drink and good cheer. **BN**

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