

The Great Tide Pool

TALES OF PACIFIC GROVE, CALIFORNIA
by local award-winning author, [Brad Herzog](#)



JOINT VENTURES

As Valentine's Day approaches, I find myself thinking about love stories in my hometown. So the story of Tyler Ellis and Kelsea Richmond resonates with me. Tyler and Kelsea traveled the country for nearly a year—in a 1987 Mallard Sprinter RV. They chose the Monterey Peninsula because it offered job opportunities... and nearby mountain biking trails. Eventually, Tyler and Kelsea found work at **Captain + Stoker** coffee roasters in Monterey, and a couple of years later, they bought it. Now they have a second location in Pacific Grove.

Just a few hundred feet from Captain + Stoker, **Fandango** restaurant has an entirely different love story. Pierre Bain was heir to the Grand Hotel Bain in Provence, France, the world's longest continuously owned family hotel (since 1737). Instead, he became part of a team that opened Club XIX in Pebble Beach, where he met Marietta Marcuzzo from Monterey. They've been married nearly 50 years and have owned Fandango since 1986.

Each husband-and-wife business venture has an origin tale of its own. Chris D'Amelio and Laura Medina-D'Amelio were high school sweethearts who opened their own business together—**Red House Café**—in 1996. Liz and Kelvin Jacobs met in Devon, England, where she (a food writer) and he (an award-winning chef) started an inn and restaurant. When the global recession hit in 2008, they packed everything up and moved to California, eventually starting **Wild Fish** in 2018.

Mugo and Talin Tersakyan, owners of Mum's Place furnishings since 1986, met on the Monterey Peninsula after he moved here from France and she moved here from Istanbul, Turkey. Todd and Jordan Champagne met as students at UC-Santa Cruz in the 1990s, learned about food preservation during a summer on a fjord family farm in Norway, then lived in a teepee along the Pajaro River while working at Happy Boy Farm in Watsonville. They've combined their canning experience with a café at **Happy Girl Kitchen**. Boston-born chef Mark Davis moved to California in the late '70s (bringing his clam chowder recipe with him) and met Monterey High grad named Julie. They started **Vivolo's Chowder House** in 1990. Julie's maiden surname: Vivolo.

Finally, there's the story of Matthew and Alexa Sims, the lovely couple that greets you at **The Yellow Mustard Seed**. He's a firefighter from Watsonville; she's an Illinois-born artist whose paintings adorn their gallery and boutique. They met online when she lived in Florida, and they visited each other often. Lots of cross-country flights. So when he proposed seven months later, he did so... at the airport, recruiting an entire flight of passengers and crew to each present Alexa with a rose. Spoiler alert: She said yes.

So the next time you visit one of these establishments, consider the passion and partnership behind it.

*The Great
Tidepool*