

# What's Cookin'

## Blues and BBQ on the California Coast

By Angela Strehli

Angela Strehli, "the First Lady of Texas Blues," now lives in Northern California where she can be found in a tiny and historic central Marin County town as one of the proprietors of a roadhouse diner and blues venue, Rancho Nicasio.

"We bought it 16 years ago," Strehli told *Blues Festival Guide*. "My husband's (Bob Brown) son is a chef and they always wanted to have a little place together, but this is not a little place."

Rancho Nicasio sits upon 4.5 acres along with a church, general store and post office. As an outside summertime music venue, it hosts a barbecue series featuring Strehli's longtime Southern friends Marcia Ball, Asleep at the Wheel, Paul Thorn and The Subdudes, along with Marin neighbors Elvin Bishop and

Tommy Castro. In the winter, there is music indoors with a large dance floor and some booths. Rebuilt in 1941 after a fire, Rancho Nicasio is a true destination roadhouse because it is the only commercial location for several miles. It is open daily for lunch and

Angela Strehli is the proprietor of Rancho Nicasio  
Photo courtesy Rancho Nicasio



dinner. Many of the diners and music lovers travel Strehli's "Blue Highway" north from San Francisco or west from Sacramento to enjoy Rancho Nicasio. The menu is extensive, the meals hearty.

"This is not California cuisine. There is nothing dainty about it," Strehli laughed.

Oysters are in season a long time due to the West's cool coastal climate, and Strehli shares the formula for the Rancho BBQ Oyster Sauce, as well as the recipe of a menu favorite, the Rancho Burger.

To find out more, visit [www.ranchnicasio.com](http://www.ranchnicasio.com). 🎵

### RANCHO BBQ OYSTER SAUCE

1 tbs. butter	1/3 cup horseradish
1/2 tbs. chopped garlic	Pinch of salt and pepper
1 cup ketchup	Touch of cayenne
1 cup cider vinegar	

Sauté garlic in butter, then add rest of ingredients and simmer for 15 minutes. Spoon over shucked oysters and convection bake in oven at 400° for 7-8 minutes.

### RANCHO BURGER

2 lbs. ground beef	1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1 egg	1.5 oz. Rancho BBQ oyster sauce
1/2 tsp. salt	
1/2 tsp. pepper	

Mix all ingredients with ground beef, form patties, grill and serve with grilled hand-sliced sourdough bread topped with grilled onions, lettuce tomato and pickle.

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