

Moss Landing is the lasting oasis of the California coast. It had this flair about it ...'

— Ray Retez, *The Whole Enchilada*

Moss Landing Reinvents itself



RICHARD GREEN/BUSINESS 101

Phil DiGirolamo, owner of Phil's Fish Market and Eatery, stands Oct. 20 in his Moss Landing business.

*Community is unique
and it likes it that way*

By **SUNITA VIJAYAN**
Business 101

MOSS LANDING — Perched at the midpoint of the Monterey Bay coast, Moss Landing has come a long way from its roots as a fishing village.

Named after a Texas sea captain of the 1800s, the coastal town along scenic Highway 1 has seen its iconic fish-

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ing industry dwindle in the past few decades.

As it enters its second century, Moss Landing's shift in focus to tourism has provided new business opportunities for its residents.

That's meant success for antique shops, restaurants, furniture sellers and food providers, local merchants say, and in particular for a handful of

entrepreneurs who own most of the town's restaurants and retail spaces.

"Moss Landing is an unusual place. It's like a vortex that draws people from all over the world," said Phil DiGirolamo, who owns three restaurants in the community. "They see the ocean and they see the harbor, and it's appealing to them."

Gretchen Werner, owner of Nido Fine Home Furnishings and Gallery at 7951 Moss Landing Road, said the community's small-town feel was so attractive to her that she decided to open the store in 2002.

"It's still an authentic fishing village,

and it's a stop between Santa Cruz, Carmel and Big Sur," Werner said. "A lot of people stop here and a lot of people meet here, but more than anything, I like the energy."

What she loves about the town can also be a drawback, Werner admitted. "One of the wonderful things is it's a quiet little town, but that's also a challenge for somebody in business," she said.

She said she sees the town growing in the future and drawing more tourists.

See **MOSS LANDING**, Page 12