

CREATING COMMUNITY

CROWN & ANCHOR WINS LOYALTY OF LOCALS AND GUESTS

By Lisa Crawford Watson



Crown & Anchor owners Tony Sutton-Deakin and his wife Sarah. Photo provided by Crown & Anchor

A bar typically serves a wide selection of liquor and cocktails, including beer and wine. A pub also tends to serve wine and cocktails but is distinguished by a larger selection of beer, as well as cider. A bar tends to offer a minimal menu of appetizers, maybe pizza and wings. A pub menu provides hearty meals, side dishes, and, sometimes, dessert. A bar trends in the city, whereas a pub is the cornerstone of a community, particularly in villages and small towns.

The difference between a bar and a pub is The Crown & Anchor in Monterey. It's a place where friends meet, in a happy-hour hangout, a watering hole, a late-night stop. It's an institution, really, says Tony Sutton-Deakin, owner of the award-winning pub that took first place in the Monterey Herald's 2021 Readers' Choice Awards for best bar/restaurant to cure a hangover, best date-night dining, best gastropub, best happy hour, best late-night stop, sports bar/restaurant, best watering hole with character, best bartender, best pub, along with more than a dozen other category recognitions with 2nd, 3rd and honorable mention awards.

When a place receives a total of 27 Reader's Choice Awards, Sutton-Deakin and his crew don't really mind what you call it, as long as you keep stopping in.

"The Crown & Anchor is all about meeting friends, old or new. It's a social thing," said Sutton-Deakin, "a place to gather. In England, it's part of a culture, a familiar place to feel at home. People go down to

the pub to relax, to enjoy themselves, to feel part of something, and then go home in a nice mood."

Besides being a popular place to hoist a pint, The Crown & Anchor is also a gastropub, serving a varied menu, particularly traditional British pub fare.

"Guests can order many things, fish and chips of course because that's very British," said Sutton-Deakin, "as is roast beef, as well as pasties, Yorkshire pudding, lamb shanks, and beef loaf. It's the best in comfort food. You also can get a salad and steaks. And, we have a vegan menu and a vegetarian menu. We cater to anyone who wants to come in, enjoy a beverage, have a nice time, and get something good to eat."

These days, people have so many different needs, preferences, and ailments, it's important to accommodate everyone, says Sutton-Deakin. That's how you create community.

"Besides," he said, "I'm British; that's my trademark. It makes sense to have a pub that serves British food but offers so many other options. We want everyone to feel welcome."

Bringing in the British

Raised in York in Yorkshire, north of London, Tony Sutton-Deakin came to America 42 years ago, seeking a change. Having visited California while on vacation, he developed an affinity for the place along with some friends he'd known in England, the kind he'd meet in a British pub. It made sense to foster that in his new hometown. Prior to com-

ing to California, he attended hotel-and-restaurant school and then spent many years working in the trade before he decided to move to America in 1980. He had the Penny Farthing Tavern in south Salinas for 17 years before moving his business to Monterey to establish The Crown & Anchor.

Sutton-Deakin, who opened his pub 23 years ago, believes it's the "Readers' Choice" because the place offers good food and good cheer, and because it's a friendly, welcoming place with a dynamic atmosphere, which has earned the loyalty of a lot of regular patrons.

The pub houses a television at either end of an imposing, well-stocked bar, so sports fans can sidle up, order a beverage, and watch the game among comrades. The back of the house hosts a restaurant, where friends and family can gather to dine in comfort, in a quieter setting more conducive to conversation.

"The Crown & Anchor has a lot of history and a lot of character," he said. "People go around the place, taking photographs. It's not a dark and dingy bar; even the kids who come in like to see the boats and other nautical decor, so it's not just for grownups. In England, kids often go down to the pub with their parents, that's how it was for me growing up."

At Crown & Anchor, he says, you should be a stranger here but once. 🍷