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HAWAII RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION'S

# Fourth Annual Hall of Fame

The Hawai'i Restaurant Association (HRA) is a nonprofit trade organization, representing our state's restaurants, food-service businesses, hospitality and tourism industries. Since 2007, the HRA has honored Hawai'i's food-industry pioneers with an annual Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

By  
**MARTHA CHENG**

The inductees' lives are woven into the history of Hawai'i: stories of fifth-generation family businesses; immigrant success stories; tales of visitors who fell in love with Hawai'i, put down roots and made a go of it in a notoriously difficult industry. They tell the history of plate lunches, Hawaiian food, Pacific Rim Cuisine and uniquely Hawai'i eateries. Some of this year's inductees have passed on, but their legacies remain through the restaurants they created.



# Lynne, Charles & Kirk Toma

Sam Sato's  
*Waihuku, Maui*

**T**he Sam Sato story began in 1933, when Sato leased a plantation store to start a bakery, restaurant and grocery store for the plantation workers living in the camp. A war, three locations and a generation later, Sam Sato's exists as a more pared-down establishment, serving a simple menu of mostly ahi in, its famous dry noodles and manju from Sato's mother's recipe. Lynne Toma, Sato's daughter, now runs the restaurant with her husband, Charles, and son, Kirk. She has an eye to both the history and posterity of the business: she's grateful for her parents' work and is optimistic about her son's enthusiasm for its future.

Generation after generation continues to eat at Sam Sato's, "so we've seen a lot of people grow throughout the years," Toma says, including Major League Baseball player Shane Victorino. They come perhaps out of nostalgia and because of the foundation her parents laid. "My mom used to say, 'be nice to people because good things may not come back to me, but they'll come back to my kids and my grandkids,'" Toma says. "That was her philosophy in life. She was right because a lot of good things have come back to us, and I think that's because of her."

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—Lynne Toma



Sam Sato's, as it appeared from 1963 to 1980. Right, second-generation owner Lynne Toma runs the business with her husband, Charles, and son, Kirk.