



Merlita S Rich

MAR 3, 1960 - AUG 26, 2023



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Merlita S Rich

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Merlita (May) Sarmiento Rich, 63, of University City in San Diego, passed away on August 26th, 2023, after a courageous five-year battle with ovarian cancer.

Merlita was born in the province of Binalonan, Pangasinan in the Philippines on March 3, 1960, the cherished sixth child of Gonzalo Sarmiento and Gertrudes Cruz, who owned and operated small businesses in Olongapo. She graduated from Assumption High School of Pampanga in 1977. In 1981, Merlita emigrated to the United States and began the life she had always dreamed of. She became a naturalized U.S. citizen in May of 1987.

Merlita pursued a fulfilling career as a legal secretary for the City of San Diego, dedicating 31 years to her work and retiring in November of 2018. She was a professional par excellence and a beloved presence among her co-workers, many of whom became lifelong friends.

Family was central to Merlita's life. She was a devoted daughter, sister, wife, and mother who loved nothing more than attending and—especially—hosting family events.

Merlita was an accomplished cook and an enthusiastic traveler, and in the last four years, a doting mother to her beagle Roxy. She was mindful of her health throughout her life and practiced hot yoga later in life. She was the standout dancer on any dancefloor that she stepped onto. Among her many talents was her knack for discovering hidden gems in consignment stores and swap meets, a testament to her unique and wonderful zest for life.

Merlita's memory will forever be intertwined with her passions, her love for family, her radiant and infectious smile, and her vibrant spirit that touched everyone fortunate enough to have known her.

Merlita and Tom Rich married on May 26, 2014. She is survived by her husband, Tom; her son, Christopher Barnes of San Diego; her sisters Lalaine Escobedo of Sacramento, CA, Wennie



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Ballard of Lebanon, IN; Josie Hetzer of San Marcos, CA, Gemma Gallagher of Woodbridge, VA, and Edy Hipke of Blythe, CA; her brothers Rod Sarmiento, Jun Sarmiento, Fernando Sarmiento, Danilo Sarmiento, and Tony Sarmiento, all of San Diego; and her grandchildren Kaitlyn Medley, Ethan Medley, Hudson Barnes, Adaline Barnes, and Finley Barnes, all of San Diego.

Merlita is predeceased by her father, Gonazalo; her mother, Gertrudes; and her beloved daughter, Karen, who passed away in 2018 after her own battle with cancer.

Visiting hours will be held from 5 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, August 31st at Clairemont Mortuary in San Diego. A funeral mass will be held at Our Mother of Confidence Church in University City, San Diego at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, September 1st. Internment will immediately follow at El Camino Memorial Park in Sorrento Valley.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance (OCRA) or to Our Mother of Confidence Church.

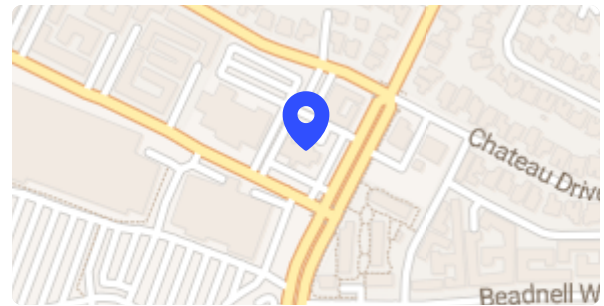


Events

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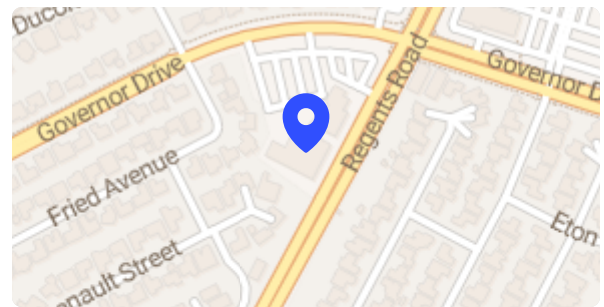
Viewing and Rosary

- Thursday**, August 31, 2023
- 5:00 PM - 9:00 PM PT
- Clairemont Mortuary**
4266 Mt Abernathy Ave, San Diego CA 92117



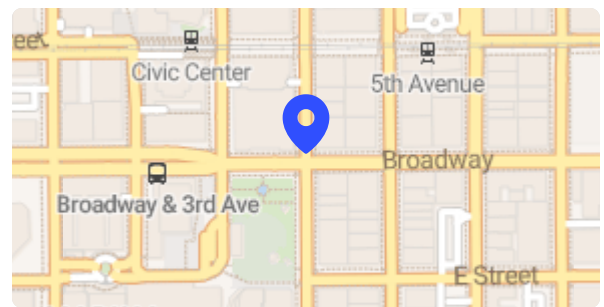
Funeral Mass

- Friday**, September 1, 2023
- 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM PT
- Our Mother of Confidence**
3131 Governor Drive, San Diego CA



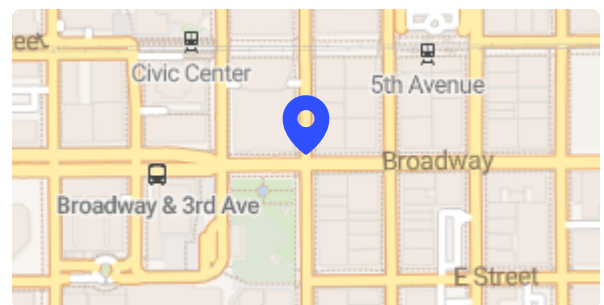
Burial

- Friday**, September 1, 2023
- 12:30 PM - 1:30 PM PT
- El Camino Memorial Park**
San Diego CA



Cemetery Details

- El Camino Memorial Park**
San Diego CA





Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Rich family.

August 31 at 11:11 AM



Anonymous sent a Serene Reflections Bouquet to the Rich family.

August 31 at 9:58 AM



Anonymous sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the Rich family.

August 30 at 11:32 AM



Anonymous planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Merlita.

August 30 at 11:32 AM



CB

Carmen Brock shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

We will all miss you more than you can possibly imagine. Thank you for just being you and being there for all of us all these years.

August 30 at 10:01 AM



Anonymous sent a Beautiful Heart Bouquet to the Rich family.

August 30 at 9:49 AM





Tribute Wall

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Anonymous planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Merlita.



August 30 at 9:49 AM



Your Tsia Family sent a Divine Light to the Rich family.



August 30 at 6:22 AM



Anonymous sent a Gracious Lavender Basket to the Rich family.



August 30 at 5:26 AM



Anonymous planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Merlita.



August 30 at 5:26 AM



Cox And Antes Family. sent a Basket Full of Wishes to the Rich family.



August 30 at 3:05 AM



Cox And Antes Family. planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Merlita.



August 30 at 3:05 AM



Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent a Fiery Lily and Rose to the Rich family.

August 29 at 8:12 AM



Anonymous sent a Sentiments of Serenity Spray to the Rich family.

August 29 at 8:08 AM



Anonymous sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Rich family.

August 29 at 5:53 AM



Anonymous sent an Enchanted Cottage to the Rich family.

August 29 at 2:45 AM



AS

Aurora Sheldon posted:

To my dearest friend, There are no words to convey how saddened we are to learn of your passing. May your spirit live on forever in our hearts and souls. Rest in peace, my dear friend. You are gone but never forgotten. Aurora

August 29 at 1:26 AM



Carmen Brock shared a photo to the **Tribute Wall** album.

August 30 at 10:01 AM





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Merlita by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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