

# Killer gets life in prison

## Man gunned down Aptos restaurateur

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A year after a popular restaurant owner was gunned down in front of his family, his killer was locked away for life.

On Monday, Enrique Paniqua Colin, 34, was sentenced to life in prison with no chance of parole for murdering Khoon Shao "Sean" Koay. The restaurateur was slain as he enjoyed a meal with his wife, 3-year-old daughter and father after closing early on Christmas Eve.

Colin had agreed to plead guilty to first-degree murder in exchange for prosecutors not seeking the death penalty.

Today, Koay's widow Eriko said she wants to focus on her future with her daughter Maya, a daunting task made somewhat easier by Monday's sentencing.

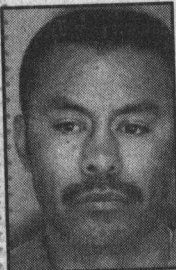
Koay's widow, who did not attend the hearing, issued a statement read by a friend.

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## Sentenced

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"Your support has given me the strength to move forward with my life," she said, thanking the prosecutors, detectives and others who have helped her through the ordeal. "You have shown me that his is my home and the community is my family."



**COLIN**

Eriko Koay has another fight on her hands, though. Immigration officials have reportedly sought to deport her now that she has stopped working.

Again the community has rallied around her, enlisting the help of Congressman Sam Farr D-Carmel, who is helping in her appeal for a new visa.

Eriko Koay is Japanese and met her Chinese husband at a cooking school in Paris. They ran Pacific Rim Buffet for 13 years. It never reopened after the slaying.

According to testimony, Koay had resisted Colin's demand for money. His 63-year-old father was shot three times as he tried to help his son, who was shot in the head and chest.

Paramedics found the older man, who may never regain full use of his arm, sitting beside his son, pleading with rescuers to rush him to a hospital.

Colin, a divorced father of two boys whose parents own a Watsonville restaurant, apologized to Koay's family Monday. The paper in his hand shook as he read.

"I have brought so much hardship ... please forgive me ... so much hurt I have caused you," he said. "I will carry the pain inside me I would give my life if it would bring back Sean, but I can't."

Colin, who was born in Mexico and graduated from Watsonville High School, had been awake all night before the murder, drinking and smoking methamphetamine, according to his probation report.

Prosecutor Ariadne Symons dispensed with the normal case recap during the sentencing hearing

because, she said, Koay's widow wants to focus on the future and because Colin had "the courage to step up and admit his responsibility and take the consequences."

"We want to commend him for that, but it does not excuse the crime," she said.

Symons said she would see to it that Eriko Koay receives a copy of Colin's statement. She said his daughter might want to read it one day.

Colin's attorney, Bill Weigel, spoke of the "smaller tragedies" in Colin's life in the year before the murder, including his wife of 10 years leaving him and his excommunication from the church. He had been a Jehovah's Witness lay minister.

"Enrique Colin killed Sean Koay," he said. "But he's not a killer. He did not set out to kill someone."

David Lee, a friend of the Koays, had a different view of Colin. In court Monday, the San Jose police officer denounced Colin as evil, saying he could not fathom why God had created someone as depraved as Colin.

One of Colin's sisters decided to address the court after Lee spoke, say-

ing Colin was a very loving dad and a good brother. •

"If you could see him before all this," she said. "Don't judge by what you read in the newspaper."

The judge allowed Colin's sisters to hug him before he was taken away. He will go to San Quentin first, then the Department of Corrections will decide where he will spend the rest of his life. His attorney hopes for Salinas Valley State Prison.

At some point he will be taken to Monterey County to face charges stemming from his arrest and shoot-out with deputies in a home on Hidden Valley Road in north Monterey County.

His sentencing had been delayed because it was unclear whether Monterey County would drop its charges against Colin, which was a condition of his plea agreement. Even though those charges will not be dropped, Colin decided to keep to the agreement.

Judge Art Danner also ordered Colin to pay \$137,241 in restitution.

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