



Carmen Minjares Villalobos

FEB 19, 1932 - JUN 15, 2025



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Carmen Minjares Villalobos, beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and great-great-grandmother, passed away peacefully at her home on Sunday morning, June 15th, 2025, surrounded by the love and presence of her children. She was 93 years old.

Born on February 19, 1932, in Venice, California, Carmen was the second child of Pete and Lucille Minjares. She grew up as the middle sibling between her older sister Margaret and younger brother Peter Jr. Carmen is preceded in death by her parents, her sister Margaret, brother Peter, and her cherished grandson Joseph.

She is lovingly survived by her sister Michelle Minjares (Javier), her sons Gabriel Villalobos, Valentin Villalobos (Carrie), and Vincent Villalobos (Kimberly), and her daughters Margaret Powell (Lennie), Mary Alegre (Ernie), and Kathleen Herwaldt (Robert). She also leaves behind 15 grandchildren: Melissa, Candace, Anna, Sarah, Wayne, Jesse, Danielle, Alexis, Jammie, Jason, Robert Jr., Michael, Kelly, Ben, and Heather; 20 great-grandchildren: Mackenzie, Brady, Haley, Trevor, Katy, Arden, Norabelle, Jessiah, Jisela, Kennedy, London, Kruz, Will, Anna, Karissa, Ariana, AJ, Sophie, Ransom and Alexandria; and 3 great-great-grandchildren, Remi, Ronan and Lorelei.

Carmen's early years were filled with creativity and promise. She attended Nora Sterry Elementary in Los Angeles, where she excelled academically and first began to explore her many talents. She attended St. Clements in Los Angeles in 8th grade. Taught to play the guitar and sing by her father at just 10 years old, Carmen's musical gifts blossomed early—despite the teasing she endured for carrying her guitar on the school bus.

In 1945, she was 13, her family moved to San Marcos, settling on five acres along Nordahl Road. She attended Richland School and later Escondido High School, graduating with the Class of 1950. During high school, Carmen was actively involved in student life, particularly in art and music.



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In 1951, Carmen married the love of her life, Gabriel Villalobos. Together they began their life on 4th Avenue in Escondido, eventually moving to their longtime family home on Sheridan Avenue. There, they raised six children—three boys and three girls—a point of pride Carmen often expressed with a smile.

A devoted mother, Carmen sewed matching dresses for her daughters and costumes for all her children. She taught them to love God and appreciate life's simplest blessings.

Carmen's artistic talent was undeniable and enduring. A proud left-hander, she credited her creativity to this unique trait. Her career as an artist spanned more than eight decades. Her work, always original and never imitative, earned recognition and awards from high school through her later years, including "Best of Show" honors and countless accolades from exhibitions throughout San Diego County.

She served as president of the Showcase of the Arts in the 1970s and shared her skills with the community, teaching oil painting to students of all ages. Many of her students became award-winning artists in their own right.

Carmen's talents went well beyond the canvas. She was fiercely independent, resourceful, and capable of tackling projects ranging from masonry to plumbing, tile work to electrical wiring. No task was ever too daunting for her hands or her spirit.

From 1993 to 2005, she worked as an Activities Director at Beverly Manor Retirement Home, where she uplifted residents through music, crafts, and her joyful presence. Her voice and guitar brought comfort and delight to many during their final years.

Even after retirement, Carmen never set her paintbrush down. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she painted over 500 original pieces, pouring her vivid imagination and deep emotions into every canvas. Her artwork graces city offices, medical practices, and homes across the region.

Carmen also had a passion for cooking—especially recreating restaurant meals and inventing her own delicious recipes. Her love of Japanese and Indian cultures was evident in her art and the warm, unique décor of her home.



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Above all, Carmen adored her grandchildren. She always had words of wisdom, warm hugs, and sweet kisses to offer. Her legacy lives on in each of them and in all those who were blessed to know her.

Carmen Villalobos was a woman of resilience, talent, and deep love. She will be missed immensely and remembered always—for her laughter, her strength, her boundless creativity, and her unwavering devotion to her family and her faith.

Rest in peace mom, mama, Nana, Nana Achoo, Nina. Many endearing titles to a deserving loving soul.

A celebration of Carmen's life will be held, Friday July 11, 2025 beginning at the Church of the Resurrection, 1445 Conway Drive Escondido, CA 92027 where a recitation of the Rosary will begin at 10:30 am, followed by mass at 11:00

Burial will follow at 12:30 at Valley Center Cemetary 28953 Miller Road, Valley Center, California 92082

Everyone is invited to the home of Ernie and Mary Alegre at 2006 Montiel Road San Marcos, Ca 92069 after the burial to celebrate Carmen's life with family and friends.



Memories only last if you share them

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



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