



Soledad Irene Mercado

November 11, 1956 - September 6, 2026

Stockton, California

Soledad Irene Mercado died in Stockton on September 6, 2026. She was sixty-nine. Born there on November 11, 1956, she grew up in a delta that still had tomatoes at the edges and offices in the middle. She learned English at school and a second set of manners at the table. She never treated either language as a costume.

She spent nineteen years at a cannery off the deep-water channel, first making boxes, later keeping the floor for people who arrived late from the field with a child asleep in the back seat. She kept extra water without putting a note on the counter about generosity. When a fog closed the road she made coffee until the urn complained. Later she sold sandwiches at a park concession and treated a long line of tourists as weather you could live with if you kept moving.

She married Ruben Mercado in 1978. They raised a daughter in a bungalow that needed a new roof more often than the budget admitted. Ruben worked the railroad. Soledad packed lunches that could survive a climb in heat. After he died in 2017 she kept his chair for a year and then gave it to a nephew who needed a place to do homework.

Neighbors remember a woman who would jump a battery in the lot at dusk, who knew which intern needed a second explanation of the register, and who could hear a rice pot without looking. She loved the first cool evening on the slough, a burrito on a Saturday, and the particular quiet after the last box was taped. She died in Stockton, in air she had always preferred to a heavy heat. The floor is someone else's now. The patience she practiced there is harder to replace than a vacancy sign.

Services

A rosary and a simple service in Stockton. The family welcomes a favorite hymn and a gift to a cannery-workers' fund.

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