

# Gaston *Alive!*

Home • Garden • Style • Fun • Food • Happenings

## Get Back to School with **Complete Eye Care** p.10



**Good Food, Fit Life** p.12

**Introducing: Ask Tammy** p.20

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—Patricia R.

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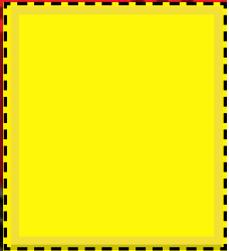
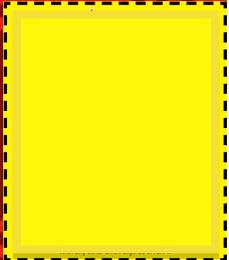
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# Publisher's PICK



Pam L. Goode  
Publisher,  
Gaston Alive! Magazine

Do you know of a great place around town that's a best kept secret? Are you a local resident who wants to nominate a unique story of the greater good of Gaston County? We want to help spread the word. Favorite band, art show, or just someone doing something good.

We at **Gaston Alive!** want to showcase our pick each issue. Submit your story, favorite place or event to [info@gastonalive.com](mailto:info@gastonalive.com). Help us spread the "Goode News" by being our PUBLISHER'S PICK!

# Goode News

# about the cover

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This month's cover was shot on site at Complete Eye Care. See related article on page 10. Cover photo by Dodie Huffman and Josh Gaddis of Image Gallery. For more information visit [www.igstudio.biz](http://www.igstudio.biz). Production assistance by Pam L. Goode and cover graphic design by David James.

*Gaston Alive! Magazine* is published monthly in the Gaston County, NC area by ARA Marketing Solutions, LLC. All editorial contained within is the property of the publisher and cannot be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission. The publisher accepts no liability for the accuracy of statements made by the writers or advertisers.  
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10

10

FOR ALL YOUR VISION NEEDS



12

12

TRANSFORM YOUR LIFESTYLE



20

20

RELAMPING YOUR STYLE



## Coffee Shop Connections

*I was never really a coffee drinker. I never understood the whole coffee experience. I knew people who wouldn't wake up to the world until they had coffee, but I still never understood. I always thought "Let's have a cup of coffee," translated to, "I want to pitch a pyramid scheme to you."*

*My first real experience with the coffee connection was during my time living in Canada. For those of you who know anything about the country Canadians call home, it could be referred to as "coffee is king." Tim Horton's, to be exact, is this king. Canadians live and die by a cup of Tim Horton's. I fell victim to the coffee craze there and still swear there was some sort of an addictive drug in that coffee! It literally made my SUV turn in the drive-thru line wrapped around the building onto the street after dropping the kids off to school, before soccer practice, or any excuse during the day I could find myself in that line. Without even being aware of where I was until I was handing the cashier at the window my debit card, until I had that precious liquid gold in my hand, I never understood the power of coffee. My experience in Canada was much more than the taste of the coffee – it was the social aspect of talking with friends over coffee, sharing stories, making plans, and dreaming of warm weather. It was the smile and a memory delivered with every cup of coffee in Canada. This is where I began to appreciate coffee but could never duplicate that taste upon returning to live in the states.*

*Once I returned and started back to work I realized the social aspect of sharing a cup of coffee was the same here in the states, just not as good of a flavor. The two country's coffees did not share the same taste, but they did share the same meaning. I didn't have the opportunity to have business relationships in Canada but sure made some amazing friends and shared many cups of coffee with those I still cherish today. So I had to adjust. The coffee craze here in our area has grown and coffee shops are popping up everywhere. I personally find myself setting up meetings and conducting business in local coffee shops. I have met some of the most interesting people in coffee shops. It is like an office away from the office. A place where you can conduct business, relax and share a cup of coffee... even if you don't like the coffee.*

*I never really understood how they make money. On an average visit I may spend \$7 on two cups of coffee – one for me and one for my client. Sometimes if we run over on a meeting and food is on our minds, I splurge on a slice of pound cake or a muffin and water. Okay, \$10.00 and we stay half the day working out details of the next big marketing campaign or roll out the most creative direct mail project. This is what I personally get out of the coffee shop, but coffee shops are so much more. Coffee shops are social places where people with different stories come together on common ground.*

*Independent coffee shops are positive markers of a living community. They function as social spaces, urban offices, and places to see the world go by. Communities are often formed by having spaces in which people can have casual interactions, and local and walkable coffee shops create those conditions, not only in the coffee shop themselves, but by those who frequent them.*

*Coffee shops are unlike other community assets in that they enable us to mingle with strangers in ways that we might not in restaurants, to meet a wider range of people than we would in a bar, to linger in ways that we don't at the grocery store, or to people-watch with an ease that would be awkward almost anywhere else.*

*I personally frequent Floyd and Blackie's, SPLAT!, Caravan, and my newest favorite located close to my office, Zoë's. These coffee shops offer so much more than a cup of coffee. They offer a place to connect on many different levels, and they offer a connection to the community. I value this connection and its importance. I ask that you support your local coffee shops. They offer character to our community; they are an important part of "local" and one we should embrace. Visit your local coffee shop and enjoy your favorite brew. Although I will hang on to the taste of Tim Horton's and my Canadian coffee experience, I am and will continue to be a coffee shop supporter in my local town with business deals and relationships built on coffee shop connections right here in the place I call home.*

*What's your favorite coffee shop story? This may just be the newest feature in Gaston Alive!. Until Next time, pour yourself a cup of your favorite flavor. Better yet, order it at your local favorite coffee shop.*

*Pam L. Goode*

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# GOING BACK TO SCHOOL WITH COMPLETE EYE CARE



By Pam Goode



## **GA!: Tell us about the doctors at Complete Eye Care.**

**Dr. Harald Vaher:** I started complete Eye Care along with my wife Dr. Barbara Marcussen (Vaheer) 20 years ago in Belmont. We have two precious daughters, Kristina and Katelin, who are 13 and 7. At our office we provide eye health and vision eye exams, fit contact lenses, treat eye disease, and manage an in-office lab for making glasses. In 2012, Dr. Hilary Gesford joined our practice. Dr. Gesford is a residency trained pediatric vision care specialist, who recently had her first child, Calvin, in January.

## **GA!: What services do you offer that are different than a typical eye doctor's office?**

**Dr. Harald Vaheer:** We are the only office in Gaston County that provides vision therapy and are one of only a few offices in the entire state of North Carolina that provides GVSS (a wave front form of orthokeratology). We offer specialty contact lens fittings, as well as treat dry eyes.

## **GA!: What is vision therapy?**

**Dr. Hilary Gesford:** Vision therapy is an individualized program similar to physical therapy, which retrains the eyes how to work better together and how to work more efficiently with the brain to improve vision. It is used to treat children with learning problems resulting from poor eye teaming, eye tracking, eye focusing, or from difficulty processing and remembering what they see. It is also used to treat children and adults with a "lazy eye" (amblyopia), eye turn (strabismus), and vision deficits caused by traumatic brain injury.

## GA!: How do I know if my child needs vision therapy?

**Dr. Hilary Gesford:** There are a variety of signs that may indicate your child has a vision problem, even if he/she has 20/20 vision. Children may show signs of squinting, rubbing their eyes, tilting their head, or covering one eye. They may complain of headaches, eye discomfort, sensitivity to light, and double or blurred vision. Signs related to academics include problems with reading (skipping/substituting/rereading words, losing their place, words look like they jump or move, confusing similar-looking words, poor comprehension, or holding the book too closely), poor handwriting, poor spelling, and letter or number reversals. Many children with these type of vision problems are very smart, yet still struggle when it comes to reading and academics.



## GA!: What results have children seen after completing your vision therapy program seen?

**Dr. Hilary Gesford:** Prior to vision therapy, several of the children had significant issues with reading. After vision therapy, these children are now able to read faster and more efficiently, often improving several levels in reading and performing at a much higher level in all areas of academics. Other children have also seen great improvements in their sports performance due to newly enhanced depth perception. The biggest reward to us and to the parents is seeing these kids have a new sense of confidence and increased self-esteem.

## GA!: What is GVSS (The Gentle Vision Shaping System)?

**Dr. Barbara Marcussen:** GVSS is a wave front form of ortho-keratology. It is a process where someone sleeps in a specially designed contact lens and then removes the contact lens in the morning. The lens re-shapes the cornea at night and when it is removed in the morning, the person sees clearly for the next 24 hours.



## GA!: What are the benefits to GVSS?

**Dr. Barbara Marcussen:** It provides clear, sharp vision all day without glasses or contacts, and no surgery is required. It is great for kids because they are active. They can jump in the pool, do a gymnastic flip, dive for home base, or throw a karate punch without worrying about their glasses or contact lenses and still have great vision. The best part of GVSS is seeing kids who have done this for the past 10 years and their prescriptions have not changed. GVSS is able to slow the progression of nearsightedness and stop the eyes from changing so quickly from year to year. It is similar to a braces retainer for the eyes, and it is a safe and effective treatment for nearsightedness. We have treated people ages 8 to 65 with this procedure. There have been some new advances recently and even greater amounts of nearsightedness have been able to be treated.

>>Article continued on page 26.



"Personal Attention Your Vision Deserves"

# ChewOnThis

*Chef Ashleigh Easterling*



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## Orange Shrimp Skewers

### Ingredients:

- 12 Medium Shrimp
- 2 Oranges (one for juicing, one for skewering)
- 1/3 Cup of Smuckers Marmalade
- 2 Tablespoons Olive Oil
- 4 Tablespoons Balsamic Vinegar
- 1 Sprig of Dill
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 Pinch of Salt & Pepper

### Directions:

In a Ziplock bag or bowl, combine 1/2 freshly squeezed orange juice, 1 Tablespoon olive oil, minced garlic and salt. Refrigerate for 20- 30 minutes.

In a small saucepan, combine balsamic vinegar, 1/2 freshly squeezed orange juice and marmalade. Gently whisk the marmalade into the balsamic vinegar and orange juice. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat. This will allow the mixture to reduce and get thicker. You want the mixture to reduce into a glaze consistency. This will be used to drizzle over the skewers once they are complete. Preheat grill or grill pan, remove the shrimp



from the refrigerator. Take the remaining orange and slice it into segments for the skewer. Alternating between shrimp and orange, gently thread onto the skewer. Grill the shrimp skewers until the shrimp are opaque. Once the shrimp are grilled, drizzle the glaze on top. Serve and Enjoy!

### Chef Notes:

Make sure the grill is on a medium-low setting, the shrimp will overcook if the grill is too high. Also, oil the grill down by putting some oil on a towel and holding with tongs, wipe the grill grates down. This will ensure the shrimp do not stick to the grill.

Save some dill for presentation!

# Fitness with Chef Easterling

## My Journey...

Over the last two years, I have gone through an incredible fitness journey losing over 50 pounds and discovering my passion for fitness and cooking all natural, healthy food. While working out is essential, eating the right foods is the key to reaching your weight loss goals. I feel amazing to have been able to find my true calling in helping others like me – who have fitness goals they want to meet. If you or anyone you know needs help with meeting their weight loss goals, please contact me. As a fitness coach and a Johnson & Wales 2014 graduate, I can help you reach these goals through **accountability and personalized meal plans.**



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# Publisher's PICK

By Pam Goode

Kim Johnson has experienced her share of working her way through the ranks as she is now serving as Gaston's County's first female Chief Deputy second in command under Sheriff Alan Cloninger.



With the advice of her mom, Kim started her career 24 years ago at the age of 19. She started there for the benefits, but Kim's parents did not realize that she would end up benefiting her community in such a powerful way. Kim has worked her way through the Sheriff's office, from clerical assistant to detention officer, and quickly through the ranks by proving herself in every position. Sheriff Alan Cloninger stated, "Kim Johnson has earned the promotion from

Assistant Chief Deputy to Chief Deputy of the Gaston County Sheriff's Office. She has earned respect not only of the personnel of the office, but also throughout the state as one of the top Jail Administrators in any Sheriff's Office. Chief Johnson possesses the leadership qualities, integrity and compassion to help me in providing protection, effective and efficient law enforcement service to all people of Gaston County."

Kim has been the Jail Administrator for the past 10 years and describes the experience as "rewarding and challenging." There is never one day that is the same as the other and she loves that about her job. Kim has witnessed some inmates go from behind bars to college, while others become repeat offenders.

Police work is in the family. Her husband, Gary Johnson, currently serves as a Sergeant with the Gastonia City Police department. Kim is not short of fans in her family. "Kim is a wonderful woman, who is dedicated to her family, loyal to her friends and committed to her career. She is very hard-working and is driven to be her best at anything she does. Kim has a very tough and strong outer shell, but she has a tender and caring heart. She cares for people and is always helping those in need, but seeks no credit or attention for it. Kim is genuine and I think that is why people like her so well," said Gary.

Kim is one tough cookie. Just by hearing her southern drawl and seeing her no nonsense personality, one would conclude that she is the epitome of the cliché "dynamite comes in small packages." Having the pleasure of knowing her on a personal level makes this Publisher's Pick so much more meaningful. She is a mom to Nick, age 11, a wife, friend and a respected Professional Woman. I admire her and the job she does for our community. Join me and Gaston Alive! Magazine in congratulating Kim on a job well done when passion, hard work and loving what you do pays off. It pays off for the citizens of Gaston County knowing that Kim holds such a position. We are fortunate to have Kim and Gaston Alive! Magazine salutes her for her commitment and dedication to our community. Keep up the "Goode" job and more power to girl power!



**Know someone doing the greater "Goode" of Gaston County? Send us an email at [info@gastonalive.com](mailto:info@gastonalive.com). We may feature your story in the next publishers pick!**

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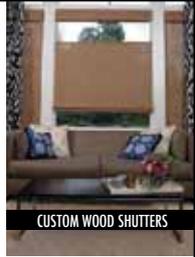
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The National League of Junior Cotillions Gaston County Chapter will be reestablishing the cotillion program and beginning classes this fall. Jennifer Winters and her husband, Charles Winters II, will be offering these classes for 5th-8th grade students in the Gaston community. Through this cotillion program, the children will learn: technology etiquette, correspondence and communication, introductions and first impressions, formal dining etiquette, manners in the home and in public places, paying and receiving compliments, good sportsmanship, traditional dances, acknowledgement of gifts, dress code for all occasions, and character education.



# did you know?

*By Jennifer Winters*

Charles' father and mother, Charles and the late Anne Winters, ran cotillion chapters from the late 1990s to the early 2000s, and the Gastonia chapter ran for about 3-4 years. Over the years they had taught more than 1,000 students, ranging from 5th grade through 8th grade. At the end of the season, Anne did the '50s Spring Fling that was always very fun for the students. She also did the Grand Spring Ball at Gaston Country Club.

Jennifer holds a Bachelor's Degree in Communications, Public Relations with a minor in Psychology from UNC Charlotte. She has been involved with the national conventions and trainings for existing and new directors for the National League of Junior Cotillions for 10 years. She is a proud mother to her beautiful, energetic three-year-old daughter, Hallie Anne. She is a member of Calvary Baptist Church of Charlotte and is active in the community. Jennifer and Charles reside in Gastonia.



There will be five classes and two balls, and the cost for the program is \$275. The Parents' Reception will be held on August 24th, and the cotillion classes will begin in September.



## Now Enrolling

Please contact the program director for more information.

**Phone:** 704-301-7035

**Email:** [jennifer.winters@nljc.com](mailto:jennifer.winters@nljc.com)

**Website:** [nljc.com/chapter/gastonnc](http://nljc.com/chapter/gastonnc)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/nljcgastoncounty](http://www.facebook.com/nljcgastoncounty)

**Instagram:** [nljcgastoncountychapter](https://www.instagram.com/nljcgastoncountychapter)



Do you have something new in the community you want everyone to know?  
Send your article to [info@gastonalive.com](mailto:info@gastonalive.com), and you may be chosen to be featured in an issue of Gaston Alive!

Ask Tammy...

# SOLVING YOUR DECORATING DILEMMAS



By Tammy Taylor



Energy efficiency is a popular subject these days. In several recent design-related magazines, newspapers and internet articles, I have noticed that lighting is a big subject in relation to energy efficiency. I just wonder how that will affect the aesthetics of our homes.

As a designer, I love the warmth and ambiance those good old incandescent bulbs give and I am all for lowering energy costs and doing what we can to better our environment. However, do these new bulbs that I am seeing in stores and reading about provide the illumination I need to make my clients' homes "shine"? After doing some research I found that it's probably not as bad as I feared. There are ways



to transition into the world of the new and improved where light bulbs are concerned...

By now, you have probably heard of the Compact Fluorescent Light bulb (CFL). CFLs consume roughly 30% of the power required for a similar incandescent, thus saving you money on your power bill each month. They have also been known to radically cut down greenhouse emissions. Okay, that sounds great, but when you are in the light bulb aisle at your neighborhood home improvement store, how do you know what to choose? Here are some tips:

## 1. Choose the right kind of CFL

These new and improved bulbs do have limitations. For example, they do not like cold temperatures—they like to be warm. In fact, their efficiency goes down with the temperature. Speaking of temperature, CFLs can be used outdoors, but make sure that they are labeled as such.

The life of the bulb can be shortened with vibration, so using them in a ceiling fan, for example, is probably not the best choice.





To achieve their level of claimed efficiency, a CFL must warm up to its operational temperature. This can take anywhere from 30 seconds to 3 minutes, during which time they are about the same level of efficiency as our old friend the incandescent. Most modern CFLs, however, have an almost immediate start up time.

## 2. Quality, Quality, Quality

You get what you pay for, and that includes CFLs. Buy brands that you know-GE, Sylvania and Phillips, for example. The ballast quality is what separates the good from the bad. Low quality ballasts will buzz and flicker and will not last as long as their better counterparts. Spend more money up front for lasting results later.

CFLs produce a very narrow color spectrum, but do come in “warm light” and “daylight.” This does at least give us somewhat of a choice when selecting our new bulbs. When you begin to get rid of those incandescents, buy a couple of each type of CFL to decide what works best for the spaces in your home. This process of substituting one light bulb for another in order to save energy is referred to as relamping.



## 3. Disposal of CFLs

Although an intact CFL will not emit Mercury, they do require a very small amount of it to function. Because Mercury is poisonous, it is very important to dispose of CFLs properly, especially if you have a broken bulb. If you happen to break a bulb, ventilate the area and clean up using latex gloves. Place bulbs, cleaning materials, etc. in doubled zip-loc bags and treat as hazardous material. Currently, there are very

few CFL-specific recycle areas, but you can call 1-800-CLEANUP to find the facility closest to you.

Hopefully you know a bit more than you did about the Compact Fluorescent and can make an informed decision when you begin the relamping process in your home. Happy lighting!



*In addition to her Interior Design work, Tammy Taylor operates a retail location in Cramerton and also provides Interior Design Services through Next Generation Interiors, also in Cramerton. You can contact Tammy Taylor Interiors by calling 704.908.3740 or via email at tammytaylor1@gmail.com*

# Barre



By Megan Moose

In the 1950s Lotte Berk, a ballet dancer, developed her own method of exercise. With the help of an osteopath, she developed a series of exercises that concentrated on building “core stability.” Similar to Pilates and yoga, her system focused on targeting specific areas of the body for strength and flexibility.

The originator of all the barre exercise programs, Lotte Berk’s unique body shaping workout included strength training, orthopedic exercises for the back, and elements of dance. The goal was an “ultimate body transformation.”

Today the bar method incorporates modern exercise and sports science with techniques in muscular development. Following an initial warm-up, the workout progresses into concentrated movements, deep muscle conditioning, and stretches that tone, define, and lengthen muscles. The result is a firm, shapely body in its most optimal form: sculpted legs, chiseled arms, flat abdominals, and a lean, defined waistline.

The goal was an “ultimate body transformation.”

Classical ballet barres, small weights, resistance

bands, and exercise balls are used to achieve the streamlined physique of a dancer.

Students can expect to develop improved posture, balance, coordination and endurance with this intense no-nonsense workout. Set to



upbeat music, classes are challenging, efficient and invigorating. Like all forms of mind/body exercise, the purpose of barre work is to maintain optimal health and physical fitness.

If you are interested in trying a barre class, M2M Studio in Gastonia offers barre workouts daily.

**For more information visit**

[www.m2mstudio.net](http://www.m2mstudio.net) or call 704-685-1040.



**M2M Studio**  
3826-8 S New Hope Rd  
Gastonia, NC 28056

**704-685-1040**

[megan@m2mstudio.net](mailto:megan@m2mstudio.net)

[precisionpilatesofgaston.com](http://precisionpilatesofgaston.com)

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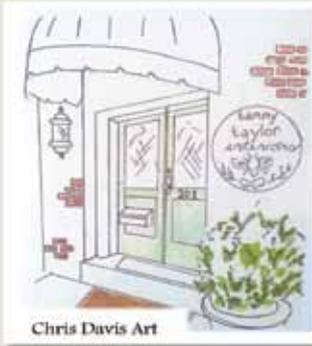
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704.865.2193

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>> Article continued from page 11.

## GA!: What types of specialty contact lens fittings do you offer?

**Dr. Barbara Marcussen:** There are many new advances in contact lenses for people who may have dry eyes or need help reading up close, which include more than just the traditional soft contact lenses. As a certified wave designer, we are able to take measurements of 11,000 points on the surface of an eye and design a lens that exactly maps that surface, resulting in a totally customized lens, which will allow for the best possible vision. New advances in scleral contact lenses also allow for better comfort. We have fit patients who previously were unable to wear their contact lenses all day while on the computer without feeling like their eyes were getting dry toward the end of the day.



## GA!: Where can people find out more information on the services you offer?

**Dr. Harald Vaher:** Fox News Charlotte recently came to Complete Eye Care to do a story on GVSS. There is a link to that story on our website, as well as video testimonials. The Gaston Gazette recently published an article written by Dr. Hilary Gesford about vision therapy and how it has helped several kids in our area. There is a link on our website to the full story, in addition to video testimonials.

**For more info: [www.completeeyecare.net](http://www.completeeyecare.net)  
Questions? [frontdesk@completeeyecare.net](mailto:frontdesk@completeeyecare.net)  
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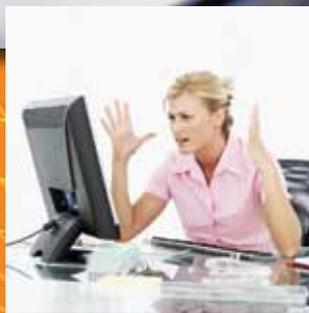
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## Friends Sports Bar & Grill

16 North Main Street, Belmont  
704-825-1401 • www.friendsportsbarandgrill.net  
\$-\$\$ ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨

## Glenway Premium Pub

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## Johnny B's Pizza Pad & Watering Hole

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704-825-8900 • www.jb pizzapad.com  
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182 S South Street, Gastonia  
704-867-6777 • www.nicks Gastonia.com  
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## Old Stone Steakhouse

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www.thesakeexpress.com  
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## Tequila's Mexican Grill & Taqueria

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704-867-8050 • www.tequilasgastonia.com  
\$\$\$ ① ② ③ ④

## Thai House

4008 E Franklin Blvd, Gastonia  
704-823-1797 • www.thaihouse.us.com  
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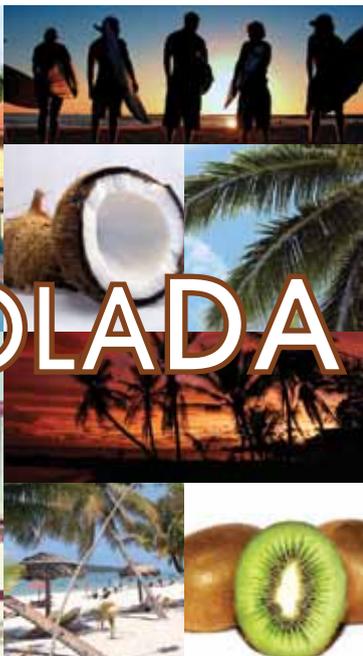
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