

JULY CONCERT GUIDE • DISHES WORTH THE DRIVE: VIETNAMESE FOOD TRUCK AND AUTHENTIC MEXICAN • CHEAT DAY LAND AT IRVINE SPECTRUM

IRVINE

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JUNE 26, 2019 • NO. 18



THE EL TORO AIR SHOW:

A LOOK BACK AT THIS HISTORIC ANNUAL EVENT

DRACULAS

BY: LIZ GOLDNER

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SURF N TURF - PHOTO COURTESY OF BROKEN RICE

DISHES WORTH THE DRIVE FROM L.A. TO IRVINE

FROM HEALTHY AND AUTHENTIC MEXICAN TO THE NEW BRICK-AND-MORTAR LOCATION FOR A POPULAR VIETNAMESE FOOD TRUCK.

BY: MICHAEL COOPER

For this week's Dishes Worth the Drive from Los Angeles to Irvine, we're going on a multicultural culinary journey from Mexico to Vietnam!

First up this week, Taco Rosa in Irvine brings a little bit of Mexico to Orange County. The first one opened in Newport Beach in 2003, followed by the Irvine location in 2006. It's the same as

the full-service Mexico City restaurant from chef and owner Ivan Calderon. Calderon also owns Taco Mesa, the fast-casual restaurants serving healthy and authentic Mexican cuisine, as well as Taco Mesa Tortilleria Organica & Café, where he produces all the tortillas, chips and other masa-based products. The first Taco Mesa opened in Costa Mesa in January 1992 and is still

open today. Taco Rosa, which considers Taco Mesa its sister restaurant, was recently named the Best Lunch Spot in Orange County at the 2018 Golden Foodie Awards.

"The award-winning menu utilizes sustainable ingredients and artisanal spices brought to life through authentic and contemporary cooking techniques. Presenting the very best dishes and

beverages from a variety of regions throughout Mexico, Taco Rosa takes its commitment to authenticity and sustainability one step further by using GMO-free masa for all their housemade corn products and tortillas," says Calderon. The first dish that makes it worth the drive is the enchiladas de Mexico City. The dish consists of two chicken enchiladas topped with tomatillo sauce,



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FOOD

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CHILE RELLENO TACOS FROM TACO ROSA • PHOTO COURTESY OUTSHINE PR



ENCHILADAS DE MEXICO CITY FROM TACO ROSA • PHOTO COURTESY OUTSHINE PR

ing is the newest addition to TRADE Food Hall, Broken Rice, which first opened its doors back in March. The Vietnamese eatery first started as a popular Orange County and Los Angeles food truck. Serving classic Vietnamese staples, Broken Rice uses the textures and taste elements of its namesake, which are fragments of rice grains, and allows customers the opportunity to build the meal by adding combinations of veggies, proteins and handcrafted sauces such as sriracha BBQ, miso curry, peanut sesame or cilantro lime. The TRADE location offers two new options: crispy glazed salmon and cajun shrimp, in addition to the food truck's original offerings of chicken, beef and tofu.

The first dish we're recommending as worth the drive from Los Angeles is the surf 'n' turf bowl. The surf 'n' turf bowl is a craveable combination of Cajun shrimp and marinated angus beef on a bed of Jasmine broken white rice and topped off with our half cilantro lime mixed with half Sriracha BBQ. "We call this sauce mixture 'popular sauce' for good reason!" says chef and owner Peter Nguyen. The seafood and beef over all the other ingredients chosen for the dish makes it really delicious.

The second dish we're recommending is the creamy cilantro lime chicken bowl. "This is a delicious mixture of veggies, chicken breast and handcrafted cilantro lime sauces, mixed perfectly in a bowl that will keep you craving more after the first bite," says Nguyen. We couldn't agree more! The Broken Rice food truck built a loyal fan base throughout Orange County, and when the space at TRADE Food Hall became available, Nguyen jumped on the chance to serve his customers at the unique location. Guests are no longer limited to searching for the Broken Rice truck schedule, and the brick-and-mortar location at TRADE will also allow Broken Rice to facilitate take out orders and catering requests.

Whether it be authentic Mexican cuisine at Taco Rose or scrumptious Vietnamese food at TRADE Hall's newest addition, Broken Rice, you really can't go wrong at either of these places, and both are definitely worth the drive from Los Angeles to Irvine. Come back next month for two new restaurants and four new dish recommendations.

**Taco Rosa, 13792 Jamboree Road, Irvine.
Broken Rice, 2222 Michelson Drive, Ste. 206, Irvine.**

melted Oaxaca cheese, crema, queso fresco and marinated serrano peppers and onions, served alongside Mexican rice and pinto beans. There's a lot of Mexican food in LA, but these are really worth the drive because of how authentic they taste. The combination of flavors makes these anything but your average Enchiladas.

The second dish is the chile relleno tacos: two chilaca peppers stuffed with panela cheese, topped with calabacitas and served with white butter rice and black beans. If you can handle the spice, you're sure to love these tacos that are totally worth sitting in traffic for. "Since its inception in 2003, Taco Rosa has been committed to sustainability by using artisan alkalized water, produce sourced from hyper-local, regenerative farms, wild seafood guided by Seafood Watch, and humanely raised meats," says Calderon. "The restaurant stands out in Orange County's diverse culinary landscape by offering exceptional service and sustainable ingredients that honor our bodies, our ancestors, and the earth." Calderon has been widely recognized for pioneering healthy and authentic Mexican cuisine in Orange County for nearly 30 years.

The second restaurant we're spotlight-



BECK - PHOTO BY CITIZEN KANE WAYNE

YOUR JULY CONCERT GUIDE

FROM BEAST COAST TO THE PACIFIC SYMPHONY, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN, HERE'S WHERE AND WHAT TO HEAR THIS MONTH.

Sundays (7/7, 7/14, 7/21, 7/28, 8/4 & 8/11)

CITY OF IRVINE'S SIZZLIN' SUMMER CONCERTS

Happening on six consecutive Sunday evenings, the Sizzlin' Summer Concerts combine live music and gourmet food trucks (or the opportunity to picnic) to create a free, family-friendly entertainment experience at Mike Ward Community Park. On July 7, the cleverly-named Pop Gun Rerun pay tribute to all that's good about 1980s pop music, with the all-girl Suffragettes performing era-straddling Top 40 hits the following week. The Trip arrives on July 21, with its energized '60s-'90s cov-

er tunes, while country cover band the Country Club will also offer a little rock, pop, jazz and swing on the 28th. The Pacific Symphony brings its popular "Symphony in the Cities" to the park on Aug. 4 (see below), while O.C.'s Tijuana Dogs provide high-octane party rock for the series' final show on Aug. 11.

Mike Ward Community Park - Woodridge, Irvine

Thursdays: 7/11, 7/18, 7/25 & 8/1

OC PARKS SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

With food trucks, a beer and wine garden, and free admission, there's little not to like about OC Parks' Sum-

mer Concert Series. On July 11 at Mason Regional Park, Aliso Viejo '90s cover band SEGA Genecide throws back to listening to Alanis, Eminem and Smash Mouth on cassettes and CDs. Costa Mesa's veteran Irish folk/rock band play the same venue on July 18, bringing the blend of trad Emerald Isle tunes and old-school rock 'n' roll that's had them headlining theaters for nearly 30 years. On July 25, Irvine Regional Park welcomes ska/new wave stalwarts the English Beat, who enjoyed a string of household-name hits in the 1980s. But this series saves the best for last, with the evocative alt-country of The White Buffalo, who's wonderfully weathered voice was frequently heard on TV's

Sons of Anarchy, at Irvine Regional Park on Aug. 1.

Mason Regional Park & Irvine Regional Park

Sat. 7/13

HAMMER'S HOUSE PARTY: M.C. HAMMER, 2 LIVE CREW, BIZ MARKIE, SIR MIX-A-LOT

With its rotating bill of early '90s hit machines, always topped by ol' parachute-pants himself, MC Hammer's "House Party" tour is an ultimate celebration of retro R&B and hip-hop. Billed as Hammer's first major tour since 1991, its Irvine stop also features Florida's controversial 2 Live Crew ("Me So Horny," "Banned in the U.S.A.," etc.), the juvenile humor of "Just a Friend" rapper Biz Markie, and Seattle's Sir Mix-A-Lot who, despite being overwhelmingly best-known for 1992 mega-hit "Baby Got Back", has retained a cult following for his bouncy, bass-heavy style. But at the end of the day (or night) "Hammer's House Party" is all about the iconic MC Hammer, whose ability to laugh at himself has kept him in the public eye through TV commercials, reality shows, and movie cameos long after the hits dried up.

FivePoint Amphitheatre, 14800 Chinon, Irvine

Wed. 7/17

BECK, CAGE THE ELEPHANT

A quarter-century since his breakout album Mellow Gold, Beck Hansen remains rock royalty, the critical drooling over his multi-genre musical mosaics consistent even as his commercial fortunes have fluctuated. Angeleno through and through, his wide-eyed collage of folk, psychedelia, hip-hop, noise, jazz and more reflects the myriad cultures and social undercurrents of his home city. It seems safe to assume that at least one Grammy has already been set aside for Beck's imminent 14th studio, Hyperspace. This co-headlining bill continues a relationship begun when Beck featured on (and co-wrote) "Night Running" on Cage the Elephant's latest album, Social Cues. One of those bands you can seemingly find on radio anywhere in America at any time, CtE's savvy revisiting of funky, bluesy classic rock shows little sign of losing momentum.

FivePoint Amphitheatre, 14800 Chinon, Irvine

MUSIC

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Sat. 7/20

ROCKSTAR ENERGY DISRUPT FESTIVAL: THE USED, THRICE, CIRCA SUR- VIVE AND MORE

While the inaugural Disrupt Festival features solid, mostly post-hardcore lineups throughout – at its FivePoint Amphitheatre stop including Circa Survive, Sleeping With Sirens, and pop-punk bill misfits Sum 41 – the big draw for Irvinites may be a rare hometown appearance by Thrice, plus Huntington Beach’s similarly seasoned Areyu. Initially helping to define before ultimately far transcending screamo, Thrice have earned that rarest of rock accolades as truly a genre of one. Their original lineup constant and intact, last year’s 10th album, the wonderfully organic-sounding Palms, continues to classify Thrice as unclassifiable. Once metalcore personified, Areyu have increasingly incorporated ‘80s and Gothenburg-scene metal into brave recent releases, with last year’s *In Our Wake* further indulging arena-friendly melodies and epic ambitions.

**FivePoint Amphitheatre,
14800 Chinon, Irvine.**

Sun. 7/21

SHINEDOWN

Perhaps epitomizing the kind of robust, melodic mainstream rock beloved of faux-hawked and half-sleeved fans worldwide, Shinedown – while hardly a household name – have built the kind of career rock bands seldom enjoy anymore: slowly evolving and gathering commercial momentum over six albums and relentless touring since forming in 2000. At once almost the solo vehicle of lead vocalist Brent Smith (the band’s sole constant, alongside drummer Barry Kerch), and borderline rock-by-committee (with Atlantic Records heavily involved from the band’s inception), Shinedown has artfully ridden trends including nu-metal, alt-rock and post-grunge, while never overly committing to any one style. The sole constant has been arena-ready, slightly Southern-tinted songwriting, performance and production, which was once again delivered on 2018’s *Attention Attention*.

**FivePoint Amphitheatre,
14800 Chinon, Irvine.**



SIZZLIN SUMMER CONCERTS 2017 - PACIFIC SYMPHONY - PHOTO COURTESY OF CITY OF IRVINE

Thu. 7/25 & Fri. 7/26

ZAC BROWN BAND

It says much about Zac Brown’s devotion to the craft of country music that over the first dozen years of his eponymous band he gradually swelled its ranks to its current octet – happy to shoulder a seven-strong payroll in order to fully realize his embroidered, harmony-heavy sonic vision. And embroidery is central the ZBB sound, which takes simple, bluegrass- and Caribbean-tinted country – songs that could easily translate on just an acoustic guitar and voice – and lovingly embellishes it through up to four-part vocal harmonies and instruments (including banjo, mandolin, ukulele, and Hammond organ) that both fill-out and flit in and out of Brown’s blue-collar narratives. The result is a challenge to traditional country that flirts with jam band habits and world music influences – and an annual estimated band income of a decidedly white-collar \$32 million.

**FivePoint Amphitheatre,
14800 Chinon, Irvine.**

**Sat. 7/27, Sun. 7/28, Sat.
8/3 & Sun. 8/4**

PACIFIC SYMPHONY’S SYM- PHONY IN THE CITIES

An enduring O.C. tradition, the Pacific Symphony’s “Symphony in the Cities” is a free, family-friendly evening of music and fun in local parks. Led by music director Carl St. Clair and emceed by Classical KUSC radio host Alan Chapman, its program features both lightweight orchestral classics and sing-alongs with patriotic favorites. The series contests the notion that classical music and kids can’t coexist, with interactive activities for children including a drum circle, instrument making, an instrument petting zoo, and even the chance to learn how to conduct with Maestro St. Clair and then help lead the orchestra in its performance of Sousa’s “Hands Across the Sea.”

**Oso Viejo Community Park on the
Village Green and Norman P.
Murray Community and Senior
Center, Mission Viejo, July 27
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert
Hall (indoors), Costa Mesa, July 28
Aitken Arts Plaza at Musco Center
for the Arts at Chapman University,
Orange, Aug. 3**

**Mike Ward Community Park -
Woodridge, Irvine, Aug. 4**

Tue. 7/30

BEAST COAST

While the “Beast Coast” idea been bandied about for years – certainly since 2013’s Joey Bada\$\$-headlined Beast Coast Tour – only now does the collective have a defined membership, potent debut album (*Escape From New York*, released in May), and now an eponymous national tour. Consisting of Flatbush Zombies, The Underachievers and members of Pro Era (including Bada\$\$), the 10-strong Beast Coast deliver satiating beats and, as expected from such an A-list lineup, hypnotic flows from the likes of Meechy Darko, Kirk Knight and CJ Fly on *Escape*. The tour format wasn’t announced at the time of writing, but it appears that Bada\$\$ will headline, with Flatbush Zombies and The Underachievers also performing portions of the show, plus Beast Coast songs being delivered by the entire crew.

**FivePoint Amphitheatre,
14800 Chinon, Irvine.**



PAUL GAVIN - MARINES A TRADITION OF UNCOMMON VALOR - 1995

THE EL TORO AIR SHOW: A LOOK BACK

GREAT PARK EXHIBIT EXAMINES HISTORY OF FAMOUS AIR SHOW THROUGH VARIOUS MEDIUMS.

BY: LIZ GOLDNER

PHOTOS COURTESY OF: FEATURED ARTIST

The Great Park's Palm Court Arts Complex, at the site of the former El Toro Marine Corps Air Station, is uniquely positioned to mount art shows extolling the glory and thrill of aviation.

The inaugural exhibition at the arts complex gallery, displayed in 2011, was "Plane Air Power: Paintings and Sculptures by Jorg Dubin." With the title of the show – a play on the phrase "plein air painting," meaning painting in the outdoors – Dubin created landscapes illustrating the former marine base's runways, hangars and barracks, and two sculptures of F-18 fighter planes.

From July 2012 to March 2013, the Palm Court Gallery exhibited "Farmers to Flyers: Marine Corps Air Station El Toro and Mid-Century Orange County." The show related in pictures, words, video and sculpture how O.C. grew in a century and a half from vegetable fields and citrus orchards to a Marine air base, and then to a bursting-at-the-seems megalopolis. The core of the exhibition was the development of MCAS El Toro (carved out of land originally owned by pioneer farmers). Along with accounts of military training and paraphernalia, there were portrayals of life on the base, as this city within a city was occupied by hundreds of thousands of marines and their families over decades.

From June to August 2017, the exhibition, "Walt and the Flying Bull" was based on the Disney studio's design of the El Toro "Flying Bull" logo for the marine base. As delighted viewers to the show observed, Disney Productions created approximately 1,200 designs during World War II for American and Allied military units. The exhibition also included original designs by Marvel Entertainment, Pixar Animation Studios and several contemporary artists.

The current exhibition, "A Brief History of the El Toro Air Show: 1950-1997," running through August 18, addresses aviation as patriotic performance art at the marine base, through painting and photography. Most works on display were created during the air show's final years, concluding in 1997, and contemporaneously. Yet the annual El Toro Air Show began in 1950 to celebrate Armed Forces Day and to encourage people to visit the base. Attendance eventually reached 2 million.

The largest image in the exhibition, an untitled mural at 12x8 feet, was designed in 2019 by Gary Musgrave,

ARTS

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Jeff McMillan and Jake Kazakos. The artists collectively call themselves, "The Draculas," as they work late into the night. Their mural features four World War II-era P-51 Mustang fighter planes, flying majestically through the air, surrounded by luminous blue skies, and accented by yellow stripes indicated jet streams. With Disney's Flying Bull hovering among the bombers, the mural visually describes the dedication and intensity of fighting marines.

Nine paintings in watercolor, oil and ink by O.C.-based artist Paul Gavin were created during the last years of the El Toro Air Show. These stunning paintings, which were turned into posters, most in classic landscape style, capture the vistas, patriotism and drama of the air shows. Gavin's 1989 painting, "Orange County Centennial," depicts F-18 "Sharpshooter" planes on the tarmac, with long shadows and Saddleback Mountain in the distance.

Gavin's 1990 "El Toro Winter" is a striking overview of the marine base, based on photos shot from a helicopter. Featuring the barracks, theater and water towers, nestled bucolically within fields, orchards and foothills, the painting evokes classic California impressionist paintings from the early 20th century. The artist's 1991 "The Sound of Freedom," created during the Operation Desert Storm invasion of Iraq, possesses the energy and patriotism typical of Normal Rockwell paintings. In Gavin's artwork, throngs of onlookers wave their arms, motioning toward the majestic fighter planes in the air, while several people are hoisting American flags.

Along with paintings and posters from the subsequent years, 1992-94, Gavin's final three works are the most dramatic. His 1995 "Marines: A Tradition of Uncommon Valor" celebrates the 50th anniversary of the 1945 landing of marines on Iwo Jima, as well as the photo "Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima" by photographer Joe Rosenthal. The painting displays an F-18 Hornet flying above air show spectators, while the outline of the Rosenthal photo is depicted as clouds in the far-off sky. Of all Gavin works in this show, "Uncommon Valor" is the most symbolic, as it looks back to a time when unusual bravery helped save our country.

The artist's 1996 "Hail and Farewell" displays an F4U Corsair and F/A-18 Hornet flying over a landscape, with a sunrise and sunset as the backdrop. Along with flags and marine emblems



GEORGE KATZENBERGER - HAWKEYE



PAUL GAVIN - EL TORO WINTER - 1990

festooning the sky, the work looks toward the marine's impending departure from El Toro. Gavin's final painting, the 1997 "A Stars & Stripes Salute," a deftly designed collage of fighter planes, helicopters, flags, marines and an exploding bomb, bid farewell

to the extraordinary era of the El Toro Marine Base.

Also in this exhibition are black and white photos of planes – the B-2 Spirit, the B-47 Stratojet, the F6F Hellcat, the F11 Tiger and the F4U Corsair – provided by U.S. Air Force, the National Naval

Aviation Museum and the U.S. Navy. Completing this historic art show are several close-up black and white and color photographs, taken by George Katzenberger, during El Toro air shows. This body of work that the artist titles "Air Toons," depicts various aircraft, including the B-25 Mitchell, the Hawkeye, the Nighthawk and the Warthog, as appearing to be less than six inches from the camera. His contribution to this show is as much an artistic sleight of hand as it is an illustration of various planes that were on display. Katzenberger explains that the lens used for the images covers a 94-degree view, and that it gives the effect that the aircraft's tail, nose or weapon is comically exaggerated. His approach adds levity to the exhibition, perhaps expressing the human and empathetic side of the valiantly dedicated marines.

Great Park Gallery, Palm Court Art Complex, Orange County Great Park, Irvine; Thu. & Fri., noon-4 p.m., Sat. & Sun., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; free. cityofirvine.org/orange-county-great-park/arts-exhibitions.



RUBI RYMENMY



SCOTT FEINBLATT

STRIKING A POSE AT CHEAT DAY LAND

THIS POP-UP MUSEUM IS THE PERFECT BACKDROP FOR GUILTY FOOD-THEMED PHOTO SHOOTS.

BY: SCOTT FEINBLATT

PHOTOS BY: SCOTT FEINBLATT

Cheating suggests activity that is engaged in for instant gratification despite its immorality. In the case of diets, this usually happens when a person on a journey toward better health decides they've had enough salads, grilled chicken breasts or cups of wheatgrass, and would just like to remember the taste of pizza, a jelly donut or a chocolate shake that doesn't come from Slim-fast. Dietary cheating is one of the less

sinful varieties of cheating, yet it does come with a small cost – unless we're talking about a trip to ChEAT Day Land at Irvine Spectrum.

ChEAT Day Land is a museum of guilty food-themed photo shoot sets. Guests book appointments for \$20 - \$38, depending on the day / promotion (children 4 and younger get in free). For the cost of admission, they get a 60 - 90 minute guided tour through the facility's several dozen exhibits and installations.

Those exhibits range in dynamics from painted vignettes to painted vignettes coupled with relevant props to wholly immersive sets. The common thread through all of the set-ups is decadent food scenarios executed in a fun, cartoonish manner.

For Irvine Weekly's visit to ChEAT Day Land, manager Savannah Arjil provided us with a guided tour. As we walked through, Arjil identified the various props that accompanied some of the displays and indicated some choice photographic angles, as she does with other guests. At the end of the tour, the crème de la crème was a mountain made of sweets; technically, the mountain was on the floor so that guests could pose safely on it and then be photographed via an angled mirror that provides the illusion of great height. Following the tour's conclusion, guests are offered an actual treat – perhaps to compensate their stomachs after having been surrounded by larger-than-life sweets for the previous hour or so.

After my tour, I spoke with one of the ChEAT Day Land owners about the history of the business. Rubi Rymenmy, her sister Yolanda Reyes and brothers Nick Reyes, Manuel Reyes and Enrique Reyes, have been running fitness programs for several years. Those programs run the gamut from aerial yoga and acrobatics to belly dancing, zumba and tumbling. The inspiration for ChEAT Day Land came from a visit to a museum in

Tokyo, Japan, where Rymenmy saw an installation that allowed guests to climb a building; this became the inspiration for the mountain of sweets illusion that concludes the tour at ChEAT Day Land.

When Rymenmy saw the exhibit, she got the ball rolling for the new business. She recalled, "I told my brothers, 'Oh my God, this is really cool!' and I sent them pictures and everything. They said, 'We need to do something like this in L.A.' So, when I came back here, I did research to find out who else is doing something like that." Among the similar ventures Rymenmy discovered were Candytopia and The Museum of Ice Cream. Two years later, the family opened the first ChEAT Day Land, in L.A. That was in October of 2018.

As for the food theme, Rymenmy said the family determined that it would be a good idea because "everybody relates to it." She added, "[The name] ChEAT Day Land came up because of The Rock [Dwayne Johnson]." The family follows The Rock's Instagram posting because of their interest in fitness, and, through him, they were introduced to the concept of dietary cheat days. A caricature of The Rock is featured among the displays at ChEAT Day Land.

As for the inspiration to open a location in Irvine, this was the result of their having been approached by Storyland Studios. Rymenmy added that there has been a lot of additional interest. She said, "I'm getting a lot of proposals from [companies in] different cities and from all over the world ... everybody loves the place!" When the Irvine location opened in April, it was a major expansion. Rymenmy pointed out, "This is 30,000 square feet. The other one was something like 10,000 square feet."

Stepping up the family business game with first the L.A. location and now the Irvine location of ChEAT Day Land has enabled a challenging but rewarding introduction into a much larger playing field. Rymenmy said, "I'm super excited because it was for fun! We've always done events [with our fitness businesses], and we've been doing events at my studio for a long time; and we always sold out. [However,] our other events only [accommodated] a hundred people. ... Now, it's open to everyone to come and have fun. It's like a big party!"

For more information on ChEAT Day Land, including ticketing information, visit their website <http://cheatdayland.com>.

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