

# sherman oaks

MAY 2017

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## GLORIA GIFFORD

ACTRESS, PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR

page 4

PHOTO BY KAREN RAY PHOTOGRAPHY



# Home Listings and Sales Update



May 2017

## SALES

Address	Sales Price	Beds	Baths	Sq. Ft.	Built
4537 Tyrone Ave, Sherman Oaks	\$1,385,000	5	3.75	3280	2000
4197 Hayvenhurst Drive, Encino	\$3,750,000	5	6.5	5876	2016
5440 Lindley Ave, #110, Encino	\$429,000	2	1.75	1582	1973
11015 Blix Street, NoHo	\$815,000	3	1.75	1538	1929
3613 Dixie Canyon Ave, Sherman Oaks	\$1,715,000	4	3.75	3356	1967
4239 Bellingham Ave., Studio City	\$1,800,000	4	4.5	2757	1936
3826 Benedict Canyon Dr., Sherman Oaks	\$2,900,000	5	5.5	4800	2016
4247 Whitsett Ave, #2, Studio City	\$525,000	2	1.75	1207	1979
13517 Contour Dr., Sherman Oaks	\$1,700,025	4	2.75	3381	1937
4242 Mooncrest Place, Encino	\$2,003,435	5	3.5	3618	1958
14305 Roblar Place, Sherman Oaks	\$4,999,000	7	8.75	6760	1936
12021 Guerin St., #107, Studio City	\$808,000	3	2.5	1570	2005
14332 Greenleaf St., Sherman Oaks	\$1,432,500	4	3.5	2427	1951

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**4655 White Oak, Encino**  
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Content Due:	Edition Date:
April 20 .....	June
May 20 .....	July
June 20 .....	August
July 20 .....	September
August 20 .....	October
September 20 .....	November
October 20 .....	December



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## DEAR RESIDENTS

Seasonal celebrations from Cinco de Mayo and Mother's Day to Memorial Day usher in several weeks of outdoor dining and picnics. Longer days prompt us to plan vacation getaways and outings to festivals, summer concerts, and the theater.

Our cover story subject, Gloria Gifford, knows a few things about the 'theater' part of the equation. As one of the producers, she's assembled an international cast of actors and talents at her Gloria Gifford Conservatory, who will take the stage for several compelling productions this summer and fall.

Read how Kimberly Dickson's Ultimate Body Contouring helps clients prep for the summer and stores along Ventura Boulevard. Guest columnist, Bernard Otis, meanwhile, helps us reflect upon and appreciate the mother figures in our lives.



*Elyse Glickman*  
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## GLORIA GIFFORD

# All The World's Her Stage

By Elyse Glickman / Photos by Karen Ray Photography

**G**loria Gifford shines her spotlight on talented actors from all backgrounds, choosing plays reflecting the human condition.

Some people come to Hollywood to become a star. Once Gloria Gifford got her resume going, she chose to concentrate on sharing her gifts with others through her work in acting, producing, directing, and operating a theater company and conservatory bearing her name (The Gloria Gifford Conservatory for Performing Arts). Take her latest production, "Love Allways," for example. The pastiche of short pieces, penned by Renee Taylor and Joe Bologna, reflects relationships amid the shifting morals and values of America.

Gloria's live theater and film acting credits (among nearly 100!) include "Summer and Smoke," "On Golden Pond," "Wait Until Dark," and "Our Lady of 121st Street." She has cultivated a stable of fresh, young talent attending Glendale Community College, with productions that include Sam Shepard's "Fool for Love," and Shakespeare classics "The Comedy of Errors" and "Much Ado About Nothing". She is also partially responsible for the writing of "Down on Your Knees and Up to the Moon" in 2016. Talent she's discovered and refined includes such recognizable actors as Efen Ramirez (*Napoleon Dynamite*), Carlos Bernard (*24*), Max Greenfield (*The New Girl*), Jenna Elfman and Bianca Lawson.

The NYC native got her start over three decades ago when studying at HB Studios. She sent her picture out to an agent who secured her an audition for "The Merchant," a contemporary adaptation of Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice" directed by British director John Dexter.

"This was four years after I started acting, and I was fortunate enough to get a major role in the play," she recalls. "It was huge because it presented me with the opportunity to work alongside Zero Mostel, who was in his first dramatic role. I was also the only black actor among the 21 people in the cast."

This breakthrough, in turn, led to her impressing a top black comedian popular with mainstream audiences. "When the first day of rehearsal for 'The Merchant' was aired on local television, the comedian saw it and asked his agent to 'find that girl,'" she continues. "An agent from the William Morris Agency called me the next day, and said he was interested in me for a pilot; I took a meeting with the producer and was asked if I wanted to go to Sardinia to shoot the pilot. Though I would not give up my first major Broadway role, he called me to check on my availability now and then. After 'The Merchant' closed, he arranged for me to meet Hebert Ross, the director of 'California Suite,' who in turn brought me to L.A. to meet Neil Simon."



On the big screen, Gloria appeared in such 80s classics as *48 Hours*, *This Is Spinal Tap* (the scene where she was "airport security," and found the cucumber), *DC Cab*, *Vice Versa*, *Going Berserk*, *Big Trouble* (director John Cassavetes' last film), *Halloween II* and *Death of a Centerfold* (with Jamie Lee Curtis). She made Hollywood history in local theater producing the first play George Clooney acted in "The Biz," directed by Miguel Ferrer. Members of Generations X & Y got to know her on television as a series regular on the groundbreaking drama *Life Goes On*, as well as *The Nanny*, *Tracy Takes On*, and *Hanging With Mr. Cooper*.

Gifford's knack for presenting universal themes appealing to multi-generational audiences can also be traced to her education. She has B.A. in political science from SUNY New Paltz, and studied for her M.A. in Criminology at The New School in NYC. After graduation, she became Bloomingdale's first black executive in their New York City headquarters.

Gloria's passions, besides books and music, remain acting, teaching and directing. She started teaching acting to children in the mid-1980s. In the mid-1990s, she had a long run at the Beverly Hills playhouse teaching adults, under the mentorship and support of Milton Katselas. As she gained a reputation as one of the playhouse's top teachers, she was brought into the American Film Institute (AFI) through Rick Rosenthal, the director of *Halloween II*. She taught a Masters course for directors on how to work with actors for six years.



Her conservatory is a labor of love on many levels. "Since we're doing all these productions, and our company continues to grow, we spend way too much time together when a play is in production, sometimes up to seven days a week," Gloria remarks on the family dynamic of her company. "The theater becomes our home. Serious actors, like medical students, have to commit with intensity, as it is often not enough to do two or three classes a week. I encourage my students to work on their body, speech, art, watch old movies, read, go to museums, and do plays. I also have friends, including Juliette Lewis, Donna Pescow, Mark Hamill, and Joe Mantegna talk to the students about acting, Garry Marshall also had been a frequent guest at The GGC, and hired our students."

Once "Love Allways" wraps, the company launches into its next production, "The Lost, The Lonely and the Devastated," written by Sy Rosen, Executive Producer of *The Wonder Years*. This fall, the company will return to Shakespeare with a production of "Anthony and Cleopatra" set to music.

Beyond her theater family, Gloria cites her favorite production, adult son Adam, who follows her footsteps in the arts as an actor and front man for his band, Lovechild. She is also an avid book collector, and some of her nearly 5,000 books can be found beautifully displayed in her Sherman Oaks home. For the past ten years, she's enjoyed the culinary culture and retail offerings such as Bamboo, Panzanella, Sweet Butter, Maxson's Drug Store, and Gelson's ("It's got the best catering and staff," she insists).



# Theater Review: "Allways" a Classic

By Elyse Glickman

Can an assemblage of short scenes about love and relationships penned in the 80s be relevant in 2017? The answer is a resounding "yes" in the hands of director/executive producer Gloria Gifford and her GGC Players. The material, "Love Allways", crafted by enduring comedy power couple Renee Taylor and



Joseph Bologna, is solid. The pop cultural references and vernacular in the snappy dialogue are fun to follow, and ring with nostalgic appeal. Period-appropriate songs sew the scenes together effectively. On its own, the show serves as a window into an America that existed a half-century ago.

Gifford and her multi-cultural cast of players add a 21st century edge that make the universal truths about love and relationships depicted in the show resonate with the audience beyond

the laughs. She is particularly gifted when it comes to bringing out the individuality in each actor no matter how big or short his part is in the overall show. The actors' handling of the material, in turn, makes for memorable characters and moments that will stay with you beyond the individual scenes.

Jamaica Moon Productions and GGC Players present "Love Allways" Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 7:30pm Extended run through May 7th at Gray Studios located at 5250 Vineland Ave. in North Hollywood. Tickets are \$30. Call (310) 366-5505.



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**KAREN RAY**  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
karenrayphotography.com

[EVENTS]

## MAY

May 4 & 5

### Cinco de Mayo

@Casa Vega, 13301 Ventura Blvd, Sherman Oaks, CA  
Celebrate the holiday at the 60-year-old institution on the precipice of Studio City and Sherman Oaks with the restaurant's famed margaritas and classic combo plates and appetizers. Added attractions include a photo booth, specialty cocktail or shot by Maestro Dobel; and "Tacos & Tequila" Throwback Thursday promotion (.60 cent taco with purchase of The Boss Margarita) throughout the night.  
Time: 11:30-2am • Cost: food & drink purchases

Through May 7

### Picasso and Rivera: Conversations

#### Across Time Exhibit

@LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles  
Pablo Picasso and Diego Rivera are two giants of late 20th century art. Did you know that they were friends (at least for a little while) and living in Paris in 1914? It is quite interesting to see how they approached cubism during that time, and what these skilled men were like as teenagers.  
Time 10am-5pm Cost: \$15 adults; free for kids 17 and under • lacma.org

May 13-14

### 2017 Rotary Art Show

@Studio City, CA, corner of Laurel Canyon and Moorpark Street  
Enjoy the perfect post Mother's Day brunch outing courtesy of The Rotary Club of Studio City & Sherman Oaks. The show will feature between 90 and 120 artists and artisanal practitioners showcasing and selling their works. The bi-annual art show is in its 48th annual season, and is the main fundraising event the Rotary Club of Studio City - Sherman Oaks benefitting a number community service projects and non-profit organization. | rotaryartshow.org  
Time: 10am-5pm • Cost: free

Weekends through May 19

### Wild for the Planet

@The Los Angeles Zoo, 5333 Zoo Drive, Los Angeles  
The Los Angeles Zoo series of weekend events to spotlight the importance of protecting the planet and its animals is back in observance and celebration of Earth Day and will conclude May 19, after a celebration of Endangered Species Day. Activities will include a puppet show for youngsters, craft workshops with recyclable materials, and worm composting demos.  
Time: 10am-5pm • Cost: free with paid admission-\$20, adults; \$15, kids 2-12

Sat, May 20, 2017

### Meetah Cheetah in Sherman Oaks Cheetah Conservation Fund

@Private Residence  
Enjoy an afternoon with a live cheetah and award-winning conservationist Brian Badger, Special Guest Cheetah and Celebrity to be announced. This celebration is a benefit to save the wild cheetah. Take a photo with an ambassador cheetah | Participate in a silent auction | Enjoy delicious hor d'oeuvres and drinks  
Location: Provided in Purchase Confirmation  
eventbrite.com/e/meetah-cheetah-in-sherman-oaks-tickets-32513790623  
Time: 1-4pm

May 27-29

### Topanga Days County Fair

@1440 North Topanga Canyon Blvd., Topanga, CA 90290  
The 44th Annual Topanga Days fair is as American a celebration as one can get, with its traditional Memorial Day parade preceded by three days of fun. The festivities include over 30 bands rocking two stages, food vendors serving up favorite American comfort foods (including vegan adaptations), carnival games with prizes, a kids' zone, healing arts, fine arts and crafts, and more!  
Time: 10am-7pm • topangadays.com

May 27-29

### Valley Greek Festival

@St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, 9501 Balboa Blvd., Northridge  
Have your homemade moussaka and juicy souvlaki, and your Greek folk dancing, too! Spend a part of the long weekend in the heart of the Mediterranean at this eagerly anticipated

festival, which also features vendors hawking everything Greek, live music, kids' activities and an opportunity to tour St. Nicholas Church.  
Time: Noon-10pm • Cost \$3  
valleygreekfestival.com

Sats through July 8th

### The Princess and The Frog

@Theatre West, 3333 Cahuenga Bl. West, Los Angeles  
In association with Storybook Theatre, this live, interactive musical is perfect for children ages 3 to 9 years and occasions such as birthday parties and school field trips (discounts available for school field trips during the week). Free parking across the street.  
Time: 1 pm • Cost: \$12 adults; \$10 kids  
TheatreWest.org

Ongoing

### Sleeping Beauty

@4024 Radford Ave. Studio City, CA 91604  
In association with Storybook Theatre, this live, interactive musical is perfect for children ages 3 to 9 years. Great for birthday parties, school get-togethers and special occasions. Free parking across the street.  
Time: 1 pm • Cost: adults, \$12; kids \$10  
theaterwest.org

Ongoing

### Love Allways

@The GGC at Gray Studios, 5250 Vineland Avenue, North Hollywood  
Director Gloria Gifford and her troupe of talented actors bring a fresh, updated spin on the collection of short plays scribed by enduring comedy writing/acting couple Renee Taylor and Joseph Bologna.  
GloriaGiffordConservatory.com  
Time: Sats; 7:30 Sun: 8pm



Happy Memorial Day

# Body (and Soul) of Evidence

Kimberly Dickson melds Eastern and Western wellness ideas with her experience as an RN and entrepreneur to come up with a new way to approach customized wellness.

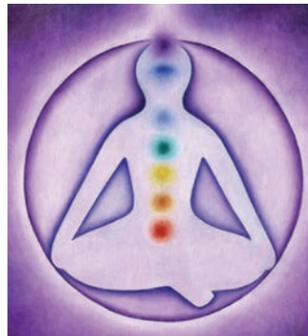
By Elyse Glickman

Nursing is a challenging yet satisfying career choice for those who have set down professional roots in hospitals and medical practices. However, Kimberly Dickson, 51, was compelled to take her career choice into a bold new realm based on her observations as a registered nurse, nutrition expert, reiki practitioner, and competitive athlete. Her vision came to life in July 2016, when she opened Ultimate Body Sculpting on the Encino/Sherman Oaks border.

"There are people who are interested in looking at the future of both their body and their mind," she explains. "They are ready to take steps in the direction of improving their physical and mental health with better lifestyle choices. While there is a modality in our services that help clients achieve their goals of losing fat, the important piece for me is that as humans we are a collection of mind, body and spirit. If your body is not where you want it to be, it can affect your mind and spirit. If your spirit is not where it should be, it can also show up in your eating habits, how you feel about yourself or how well you take care of yourself. The three pieces are intricately interwoven, and we must think about all of them of a whole."

Ultimate Body Contouring is well known for its "contour light treatment," a natural process using LED light therapy to specifically target fat cells to open and release fat. In contrast to cool sculpting, laser, ultra-sound and liposuction, which kill tissue, the LED light tricks the fat cells into thinking they have received the same message the body sends when it needs energy. Other services include energy healing and chakra balancing; nutritional counseling; hypnotherapy; and Health Coaching.

Though Dickson's business opened less than a year ago, it literally hit the ground running. In response, she collaborated with hypnotherapist Norman Plotkin, who will add extra benefits to Ultimate Body's 21-day Total Body Detox. This program connects and cleans out mind, body and spirit, as opposed to just clearing out your liver alone. The package includes supplements required for a detox, plus three sessions with Plotkin and ten sessions of contour light.



"When I think of weight loss, it's not just about improving appearance," she says. "(It is) also removing anything extra that's weighing on your mind. I see a lot of clients with cortisol-related fat, which is a result of stress that's harder to lose, lands in the mid-section. With today's American diet, it's already hard to lose fat. Add in the stress of living in a large city like Los Angeles, and the problems multiply."



One thing Dickson recommends to all clients no matter their reason to coming to her center is the practice of meditation. She hopes to dispel any myth about meditation from the media, or via word of mouth, by explaining how and when to do it, and how it address a variety of physical and spiritual problems the client may be experiencing.

Actual Photos of Fat Melting Away After Just One Treatment



"During the treatments, I encourage clients to factor in a meditation practice," she says. "When introducing it to a client, I put nice music on and show them how to put all the stresses and pressures of life aside and let the day go for 30 minutes. Even when they tell me they are going to miss meditating when they complete their sessions, I gently remind them they can do it at home or anywhere they choose."

Dickson says that the most satisfying element of being a nurse combined with a business owner is her ability to "share wellness" with clients from different walks of life. She notes that she's gotten feedback from clients who say they appreciate her approachability, even if the questions are as simple as what to eat, when to eat, or selecting the best fruits and vegetables when grocery shopping.

"I enjoy offering people pearls of wisdom they can carry over into their every day lives," she continues. "And when people

share what they have learned from me with friends or family, it makes for a nice ripple effect where I can impact many lives beyond my business. It's all about communicating and letting people know what is out there beyond what has been marketed to them in the media as what is 'healthy.'"

Dickson, who lives in North Hollywood, says she chose a shopping center the centrally-located area near Ventura Boulevard because of the community's demographics. The customer living in the area falls between the ages of 30-55, and has life experiences and goals that tie into the many services Ultimate Body offers.

"I want my business to be seen as a wellness center with a truly caring approach rather than a storefront that people notice when they're looking to lose weight," Dickson says. "The populations of Sherman Oaks and Encino include people who are more inclined to holistic approaches and alternatives."



For more information about Ultimate Body Contouring's services, contact Kimberly Dickson at kimberly.ultimatebody@gmail.com or 310-855-2273. Visit: ultimatebodycontouring.com

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# The "Mother" of All Tributes

Mother's Day should be far more than an occasion for Sunday brunch.



By Bernard Otis

Although there are cards, gifts and restaurants serving special Mother's Day meals, we really need to take into account what our mothers, and the women in our lives deal with in terms of the challenges of raising families and adjusting to the changing needs of those they love. We never spend enough time letting the world know how much we owe to these remarkable women. It goes without saying that everyday should be Mother's Day.

I first became aware of the incredibly difficult task a mother plays in our lives in the late 1930's when America began to prepare for WWII. While my father's role in an essential industry kept him out of the military, most of the men in our family, and many others as well, were being drafted. This left big voids in the care of families as well as in the labor market-roles that had to be filled by Mothers and Grandmothers.

I watched as my Mother went back to work leaving early each morning after getting us off to school, returning at dinner time and helping grandma get us ready for dinner, helping us with our homework and getting us ready for bed,

In addition, Mom had to take work breaks to get us to doctor's appointments when we were ill, in need of various vaccinations shots and dealing with other child raising necessities.

In today's world, dads help out a lot more with many of the household chores and parenting duties. However, mothers have to work to help fund the high cost of living, education and healthcare in addition to the housework and childcare. We also should consider the growth of one-parent families, where the burden a mother carries is increasingly difficult. In addition

to all of this, mothers are faced with the increasingly difficult task of caring for their aging parents. Grandmothers (as well as Grandfathers), if they are lucky enough to be in reasonably in good health, have the task of taking care of their mates who are dealing with memory or other physical and mental.

Therefore, all of us, whether we are the children, spouses, parents, or friends of these wonderful women who have so many responsibilities, need to shout a big "Thank You," and find other ways to demonstrate our appreciation their efforts to ensure their loved ones have nurturing and love every step of the way. Finally, even if the relationship

with your mom has had a few rough patches, make an effort to forgive her if they don't always see the world as you do.

After all, it's what you'll want from your own kids some day.

Bernie Otis is a blogger, author, speaker, and advisor to families needing information on Senior Living Facilities and other issues related to aging, and can be reached at [Seymour.Otis@gmail.com](mailto:Seymour.Otis@gmail.com) -818-519-8347. Check out his weekly blog at <http://seniormomentswithbernardotis.com>



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# Making the Most of the Market

By Chelsea Hall



No matter the harvest season length, the day inevitably comes when our beloved farmers, bearers of beets, shepherds of sugar snap peas, commanders of cantaloupes sadly pack up their produce in anticipation of winter. The joyful return of farm stands and farmers markets has become synonymous with spring and summertime, so to get ready for market season, here are some ways to make the most of your local farmers markets.

### Have a plan:

Make a list and do your best to stick to it. Treat this like a trip to the grocery store rather than a shopping spree. Abundant piles of vibrant vegetables may look beautiful, but do you need a bushel of heirloom carrots and a flat of lemon basil? Save one off-the-list splurge for those gorgeous sunflowers or a slice of artisan pie.

### What to bring:

A basket or a bag. No sense in wasting plastic and paper; bring your own reusable bag and save the vendors money. Plus, there's a good chance a tote bag will be more comfortable to carry and more durable, too.

Raid the piggy bank to make sure you have cash on hand. Though credit cards are becoming more widely accepted at produce stands and markets, many vendors still only take cash.

A cooler. Many markets these days sell meats, cheeses, yogurt and eggs. You'll want the cooler to keep items cold as you continue to shop.

### What not to bring:

Pets. I know, I know, Mr. Pugglesworth goes everywhere with you. But most times, farmers markets have to ban furry friends (except service animals) due to health and safety laws.

### Who to buy from:

Eye the lines. Any stand with a line is probably worth checking out. If people are willing to wait for a certain farmer's tomatoes, then they probably have some of the best.

Vendors you know and trust. It makes sense to give your business to farms whose product you have bought and liked in the past.

### Ask the vendors questions:

Don't see zucchini blossoms, but need them for a recipe? Ask the vendor you get your zucchini from if they have any available.

There might not be a big enough demand to display a certain fruit or veggie, but they'll likely bring what you ask for next week.

### When to go:

Early! Farmers markets are abuzz in the early mornings for one reason: patrons want to be sure they get their melons, herbs and corn from their favorite purveyor. Getting there early might not guarantee no lines, but you'll have the best selection to choose from.

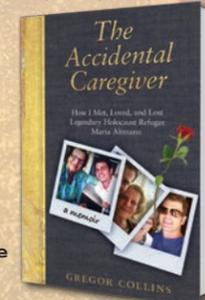
Spring, summer and fall. Most farmers markets are open into the early winter, selling items like squash, root vegetables, spices and canned items.



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# PICTURE VASE: Happy Mother's Day, Mom!

By Tori S. Bevins

This was a fun way to spend an afternoon with my kids. At two and four years old and armed with their smocks, the painting was by far their favorite part. Take care to spray paint outside, and enjoy their expressions when this project comes to life and they see their little faces in the frame window.

- |                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mason jar            | Photo                          |
| Interior satin paint | Plastic cup (that fits in jar) |
| Paint brush          | Fresh flowers                  |
| Colored masking tape | Clear spray paint              |

1. With masking tape block out a square on the outside of the mason jar the size of your picture.
2. Turn the jar upside down and paint the rest of the jar with the chosen color.
3. Remove the masking tape before the paint dries.
4. When the jar is dry, insert the picture on the inside of the jar into the window created by the masking tape.
5. Secure the photo with tape.
6. Head outside and spray the exterior of the painted jar with clear spray paint to seal.
7. Place plastic cup in the jar and fill with water. Avoid putting water directly in the jar to keep your photo dry.
8. Place flowers in the cup.



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# Vegetable & Garlic Pasta

By Jordan King

## Ingredients:

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves of garlic, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 4 cups zucchini, shredded
- 2-4 carrots, peeled and shredded
- 1 small jar of artichoke hearts, chopped
- Handful of fresh basil, chopped
- ½ cup Parmesan or Romano cheese
- 1 lb spaghetti
- Salt and pepper to taste

## Instructions:

In a large pot, heat oil and sauté garlic, onion, zucchini, carrots and artichoke hearts for 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender and most of the liquid created by the vegetables has been cooked off. Add basil and cook for 2 more minutes. Season the sautéed vegetables with salt and pepper to taste. Remove the pot from heat and mix in cheese.

In a separate pot, cook spaghetti as directed. Strain spaghetti and toss hot noodles with the vegetable mixture. Serve hot and garnish with extra cheese.

Serves: 4  
Prep time: 20 minutes  
Cook time: 20 minutes

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