

HICKORY, N.C. — Imagine One Hospitality, the culinary and entertainment division of design, management, and branding company Imagine One, introduces [Mas Amor Cantina](#), a new restaurant concept in the former Highland Avenue restaurant space at Hollar Mill in Hickory.

Championing fresh ingredients, Mas Amor Cantina features an array of authentic, home-made specialties made to order. The menu — which will change seasonally — offers traditional and contemporary favorites including wood-fired fajitas, enchiladas, tacos, molé and more, with everything made from scratch. Mas Amor Cantina joins Imagine One Hospitality's existing concepts including [Café Rule & Wine Bar](#) — a multiple Wine Spectator Two Glass Award recipient — and Wine Enthusiast's 100 Best Wine Restaurant's [Peppervine](#) in Charlotte.

"We are thrilled to unveil Mas Amor to the Hickory community, as we truly feel there is no restaurant quite like it currently," says Imagine One Chairman/Partner Robert Lackey, Sr. "Featuring authentic, fresh food at approachable prices in a festive atmosphere, Mas Amor appeals to diners everywhere."

Helming the kitchen is Executive Chef Michael Hoeneisen, previously of Ford Fry Restaurant Group. Hoeneisen relies on his partnerships with local farmers to bring in unique flavors influenced by natural ingredients – from the homemade tortillas and sauces to the pico de gallo made fresh every hour. The restaurant features authentic Tex-Mex food with a North Carolina twist, with the butchering, brining, and smoking all done in-house. In addition to on-premises dining, the entire Mas Amor menu is available to go.

"Offering something for everyone, the Mas Amor menu is ideal for a fun evening out with friends, date night, family dinners, and everything in between," says Imagine One CEO/Partner Robb Lackey. "The entire dining experience is fun, fresh, and colorful, offering highlights such as the wood-fired fajitas made with homemade tortillas."

Additional featured menu items include Street Corn made with grilled corn, Cotija cheese, cilantro, chipotle aioli; Chili Rellenos: Traditional, crispy battered stuffed Poblano peppers, seasonal vegetables, black beans, cheese blend, and Ranchero sauce; and Barbacoa Tacos: Three corn tortillas stuffed with slow cooked brisket, chico slaw, guacamole, and lime, served with charro beans.

"With opening Mas Amor, our aim is to offer something new and compelling to our Hickory guests and beyond," says Paul Nance, Imagine One Hospitality Director of Hospitality Operations. "Our goal is to provide an enjoyable, wow experience to each and every guest that dines in, calls in, or simply enjoys our beautiful bar. The fun, fresh, and festive environment will offer a memorable experience for everyone."

The bar program showcases traditional and seasonal margaritas, in addition to a variety of hand-crafted cocktails, all made with fresh fruits and ingredients. Featured offerings include a Pineapple Cilantro Margarita made with mezcal, fresh pineapple, cilantro, and agave with a Tajin spice rim; Frozen Mango Margarita featuring fresh mango puree, Lunazul Blanco Tequila, Grand Marnier, fresh lime, and agave; and Mexicana Manhattan with bourbon, blood orange, chile, and mole bitters. In addition, the menu spotlights a wide selection of tequilas that can be ordered alone or as part of a flight.

"Mas Amor is an incredibly beneficial addition to the Hickory dining scene," says Meg Locke, former owner of Highland Avenue and Partner. "Offering an assortment of fresh food and beverage options, we look forward to a welcome reception from the community."

The design of Mas Amor is inspired by the Riviera Maya on Mexico's northeastern Yucatán Peninsula. Lively and vibrant, while effortlessly hip and funky, the décor and design reflect Chef Michael's colorful menu. An oak and hickory wood-fired grill serves as the centerpiece of the restaurant. [The Indigo Road Hospitality Group](#) consulted on the concept in collaboration with Imagine One Hospitality.

"It's been an incredible experience collaborating with the Imagine One Hospitality team to open Mas Amor," says Indigo Road founder Steve Palmer. "We could not be more excited to introduce Hickory to this restaurant offering a unique menu and one-of-a-kind hospitality."

The notable contribution list includes Chef Michael Hoeneisen and his team for kitchen development, logistics, procurement, and food direction; Chef Rick Doherr for menu direction; Steve Palmer and the entire Indigo Road team for input and guidance in all areas; Laura Doherr for design and sourcing; Lauren Sheets for design, sourcing, and logistics; Karen Waddell for project management and logistics.

Mas Amor has a deep commitment to the Hickory community to operate and serve guests responsibly. The restaurant is following all CDC guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting.

Mas Amor is open Tuesday through Saturday from 5-9 p.m. Reservations can be made by calling 828-267-9800 or visiting [OpenTable](#).

About Imagine One Hospitality:

Imagine One is the management and investment company of a host of businesses, including air and water filtration, music & events, and restaurants such as Cafe Rule in Hickory. Founded by Robert Lackey more than 40 years ago, the business has encompassed over 40 companies, creating more than 20,000 products that can be found in more than 45,000 stores. Imagine One is known for changing entire industries, in the consumer products and service sectors. As a brand building entity Imagine One has a long history of revolutionizing markets, bringing creativity, design, marketing, and innovation in a way that has dramatically transformed the marketplace in numerous segments.

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