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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Giselle Bernard
Publisher

Now that things have opened back up, it is time to start networking and taking advantage of all that the Greater Houston Builder's Association has to offer the industry.

According to Terry Swenson, Director of Public Relations for the GHBA; "no one will debate the South Texas origins of modern-day fajitas, those tender strips of beef, chicken or even shrimp, smothered with salsa and then eaten wrapped in a flour tortilla. Whether they are the fast-food version, the gourmet variety, or the kind you simply slap on the backyard grill, fajitas have become a culinary classic all over the country. On June 18, the Greater Houston Builders Association paid homage to this tradition with their first-time Fajita Festival that was held at Tri-Tech where teams of 4 prepared their recipes to compete with one another to be named the best of the best treasured Texas delight. In addition to the Fajita Category that included a variety of meats, there was also Red and Green Salsa, Queso and the



open category. They even had a Margarita Contest. To close out the event, a pepper eating contest was held that ended with the winner eating 12 Habanero Peppers."

Matt Pierce with Matt Pierce Photo attended and took photos of the event. As you can see, everyone had a wonderful time. The Metropolitan Builder's Cover Story Sponsor, International Flooring, had a booth at the event and walked away with 1st Place Best Margarita. Congratulations Richard Arnold.

The First Annual GHBA Fajita Fiesta was definitely a great opportunity to reconnect with your fellow GHBA members and make new connections. If you are interested in finding out more information about the GHBA's upcoming events and all that the Greater Houston Builders Association has to offer, log onto their website at www.ghba.org.





Building Is Personal for Top Notch Design Build Partners

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Building custom homes is very personal to John Tamborello and Dennis Porrovecchio, partners in Top Notch Design Build of Houston.

“We don’t sleep at night. We go to bed thinking about our projects, how to make them better,” declared Tamborello. “We become so passionate about each project that we are continually working and improving until we achieve perfection. We treat every house as if it were our own.”

Top Notch Design Build is a custom home builder specializing in multimillion-dollar homes and high-end renovations in Houston, Texas. The homes generally range from \$1 to \$5 million, depending on the size and design specifications. The company’s focus is on the Memorial,

Tanglewood and River Oaks area and the surrounding neighborhoods of Houston.

Quality, integrity and reliability, accompanied by honesty and dedication, are the foundations for Top Notch’s business.

In fact, it was their mutual commitment to quality that led to the partnership between Tamborello and Porrovecchio in 2019. John, with 20 years’ experience, had been focused on remodeling projects with his company Top Notch Design Renovation. He also has a staging company for high-end homes called In Style Home Staging that helps other builders sell their homes.

Dennis, with 32 years’ experience in building, was



overseeing the construction of 250-300 homes a year as a vice president for a production builder. The monotony of the repetition -- with the product always the same, just at a different address -- was no longer challenging him, which led him to seek new opportunities to use his skills. “Over the years I’ve seen the ins and outs of every side of this business,” he noted.

Each partner was ready for new challenges when they joined forces in Top Notch Design Build. Sharing their knowledge of construction and combining their experience in the home building industry, they are now focused on competing in Houston’s luxury home market, helping clients reach their own fulfillment by building the homes of their dreams. Top Notch Design Build already has built several multi-million-dollar homes that have exceptional quality and design, according to John.

“Everything we do is as a team,” John said. “We consult with each other and make decisions based on input from all parties involved in the building process [clients, architects, designers]. We are constantly refining all the details until we are satisfied with the results in our quest for excellence. When necessary, we are able to make changes and adjustments during the building process to capitalize on

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and enhance the home's potential. All aspects of the house are important. On one project, we increased the number of recessed lights specified by the architect from 100 to 220 because lighting is one of the most imperative things in

a build," he continued. He admitted that he will go to his projects at night to get a feel for the mood of the lighting and how the home "presents itself."

Porrovecchio explained, "We work well together. We work through every little thing, but we give each other our space." They both handle all aspects of the work, although John tends to focus on the design and finishes and Dennis focuses more on the structural and architectural design elements.

It's important to both of them to oversee the construction personally, although they have outstanding employees and subcontractors. "We're both on the job every day, all day. Because we have both been in construction for over 20 years, we know every aspect of how a house goes together. We pay close attention to every detail and decision that goes into the build," Dennis continued.

John agreed, saying, "Being in the field and having a hands-on mentality goes a long way. We strive for perfection, and, with that goal in mind, it helps us to build an exceptional home that we are proud to deliver to our clients."

"We build to the customers' vision and are committed to building their home with the highest quality. We build for customers, not ourselves," Porrovecchio added.

Tamborello said, "I am very friendly and develop relationships with my clients. I become very close with every client, and they are treated like a part of my family. It's about trust, honesty and integrity, which are the



building blocks of any relationship.”

“A lot of builders just care about money,” according to John. Dennis agreed. “Money is not our focus. Our focus is building homes. It’s about leaving a legacy. We build a home that will stand the test of time.

“A home is where families raise their children, celebrate holidays and entertain friends. It doesn’t get any more personal than that.”

For more information about Top Notch Design/Build, contact John Tamborello at 832-577-6007 or email johntamborello@gmail.com or call Dennis Porrovecchio at 713-397-2384.

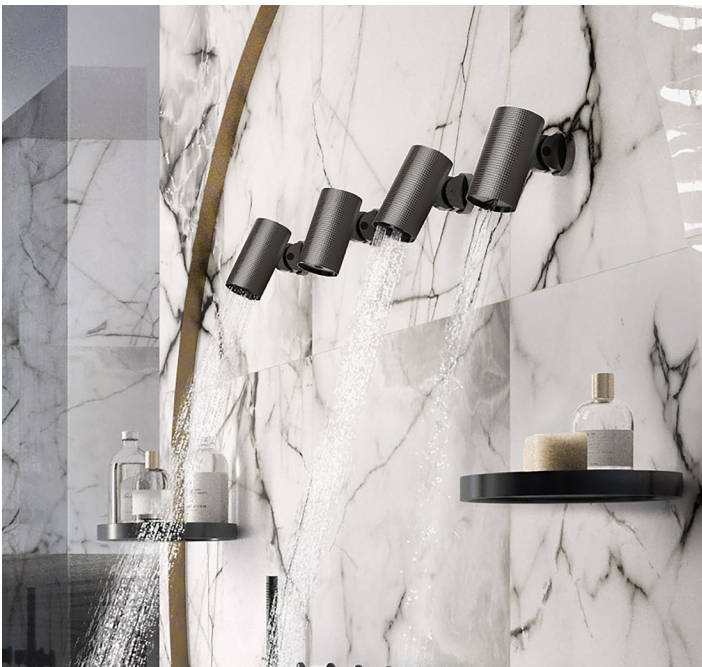
Their office is located at 55 Lyerly St., Suite 12, Houston, TX 77022.

Dramatic Design Inspirations!

By Linda Jennings

Rich textures, theatrical drama, and modern elements are leading remodeling trends. Homeowners in the market for a renovation are looking for fresh new fixtures and

fabulous upgrades to make their house a dream home. These new arrivals in the kitchen and bath and beyond are just the thing to take home to the next level.



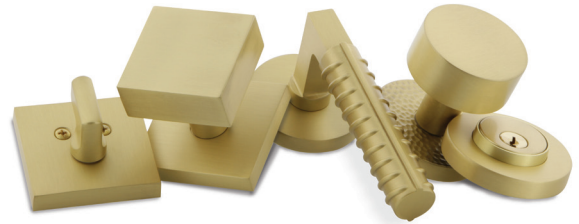
SpotWater Collection by Gessi

SPOTLIGHT ON SHOWER STYLE

Go architectural in the shower with the cool new SpotWater Collection by Gessi. Inspired by iconic spotlights of the theatrical stage, these swiveling tubular showerheads are a sculptural choice for the bathroom that delivers big visual impact as well as impressive performance. SpotWater showerheads may be installed alone or in groupings and are fully adjustable with flexible joints for precision positioning. With four different types of aerators to choose from – rain, mist, waterfall and multi-spray – users may mix and match elements and angles to create their own sensory shower experience. Gessi offers a variety of gorgeous finishes including copper, polished nickel, antique brass, aged bronze and shades of white, black and gold.

STUNNING IN SATIN BRASS

Builders will find plenty of options in the door hardware marketplace these days, but the quality and beauty offered by Viaggio Hardware is truly a step above the industry standard. Attention to the smallest detail is an important part of the Viaggio brand. Their concealed screw mechanism cleverly hides all installation hardware for a seamless look. Offered in a beautiful array of polished and matte finishes, including a trendy Satin Brass, all Viaggio



Viaggio Hardware Satin Brass Door Hardware

products are engineered for lasting performance, providing virtually unlimited operation. Their lever handles offer a 28-degree turn radius, providing greater ease of use and a smoother, more controlled turning experience.

MODERN MINIMALISM

Easy Drain takes subtle to a new level with their nearly invisible M-line drainage system. Perfect for minimalist-inspired bathrooms with its clean contemporary design, the M-Line system offers two grate finishes and reversible trim. The system can be paired with tile up to 3/4" thickness and can extend up to 47-1/4" in length. The high-quality stainless steel rough is designed with integrated sloping for effective water drainage and features the brand's Tile Adjustable Frame for quick installation. The M-line is 100% waterproof with their signature Water Protection System, a factory-assembled sealing membrane, and a flexible wall connection to ensure a completely watertight fitting.



Easy Drain M-line drainage system

BEACH INSPIRED BATH

The Serena bathtub from Acquabella is notable for its captivating design with a contoured silhouette inspired by the rolling tides. This elegant freestanding tub becomes the bath's focal point with gentle curves and intriguing angles that evoke a sense of tranquility and relaxation. It's crafted from Acquabella's signature Dolotek material. With its unique chemical and physical properties, Dolotek makes it possible to mold complex shapes into functional designs and create truly inspired tubs for the bathroom. Measuring 67" x 29", the Serena features an included drain, integral overflow and is offered in standard snow white as well as shades of gray, brown and black



Serena bathtub from Acquabella



Sterlingham Marble Rail towel warmers

MAGNIFICENT MARBLE

Sterlingham Company recently unveiled a luxurious line of Marble Rail towel warmers that feature a sleek, space-saving design. These brilliant rails efficiently radiate heat to gently warm towels. The new Marble Rails feature the same dry line heating cables that Sterlingham towel warmers have used for more than 30 years. The single rails may be hung alone or stacked and arranged in nearly any formation. Measuring nearly 24" long, the rails are cleverly installed with hidden wall mounts for a seamless look. They are offered in a selection of five distinctive marbles and available in the brand's stunning line-up of sixteen modern finishes.

For more information visit:
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Triple C Stands for Character, Commitment, Customer Service

By Kathy Bowen Stolz

Charles Vincent, owner of Triple C Roofing and Construction, has some advice for homeowners. “Whoever you hire to roof your house, make sure they and their company are of character. Ask your friends. Ask for references. A roofer should be a good house guest, of good character and good reputation.”

And Vincent practices what he preaches. “I am passionate about providing the best experience in the roofing and construction industry. I explain everything about the roofing process -- good points and bad points -- to my customers, an example of good manners. I give my customers the best bang for their buck, the best quality and service that I can possibly deliver,” he continued. He said his workers will replace plants, swimming pool covers or anything that is damaged during a project.

“In business, reputation is everything. If people have a good experience, they may tell 10 others. If they have a bad experience, they may tell 100 others.” Even though today’s

social media compounds that ratio, Vincent is proud to say that his company gets lots of good review on-line.

With about 75 percent of its business coming from residential homes, Triple C handles all aspects of roofing, including soffits, fasciae and attic ventilations, but it specializes in metal and tile roofing. Charles noted that metal roofs are becoming a more affordable option compared to asphalt shingles; metal, which is aesthetically pleasing and long-lasting, is now less than double the price of shingles.

Triple C is credentialed by CertainTeed, Firestone, GAF and Versico and qualifies for Master Elite status with GAF. It is a member of the National Roofing Contractors Association and the Roofing Contractors Association of Texas.

Triple C applies EPDM membranes and also does built-up, modified bitumen, shingle, TPO, flat and green roofs.

Within the next five years Vincent hopes to be the roofer to introduce solar shingles (not solar panels) to his market area, which extends from Houston to San Antonio to Dallas, depending on the job size.

Because of the nature of roofing, the company expanded into construction projects, such as framing, siding, guttering, pergolas and outdoor living areas, although no house construction. "We're a one-stop shop. On projects where there is a roof leak, we repair damage to the walls and ceilings. It's like it [the damage] never happened."

A roofer has to know plumbing and HVAC, not just roofing. "It's been my experience that if something goes wrong, people will blame the roofer. Plumbers will say it's a roof leak. The AC guy will say it's a roof leak. In roofing you're guilty until proven innocent. I love fixing the stuff no one else can. If you could get a Ph.D. in repairing roof leaks, I'd have two! So, troubleshooter is another good title for me."

Charles, as the owner, oversees all aspects of Triple C with assistance from his three employees, who include a field superintendent, a sales representative and an office administrator. But Charles doesn't step aside and let the others do all of the work. "I live, eat and sleep the business

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Recognized as a trusted team of roof specialists, Triple C Roofing & Construction provides top residential and commercial quality roofing services in Houston and surrounding areas.

Triple C Roofing & Construction is committed to providing the highest quality service, workmanship and the best experience in the roofing and construction industry.



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- Modified Bitumen
- Shingles
- Built Up Roofing
- Tile Roofing
- TPO Roofing Systems

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because it's fun," said this one-time food industry salesman who graduated from Texas A&M.

He learned what it was like to own a business from his father, who opened a steak and seafood restaurant in 1983. Charles grew up working in the restaurant in addition to working on the family's ranches. "My work ethic is three times what a normal person's is," he declared.

After losing his sales job at age 36 ("the best thing that ever happened to me"), he turned to door-to-door roofing sales because he knew a ne'er-do-well guy who was doing well selling roofs. "I figured if he could do it, I certainly could."

The timing was good because Hurricane Ike hit Texas in September 2008, soon after his career change.

Vincent's never looked back. "America is a beautiful place. It's up to you on how successful you want to be.

*To contact Triple C Roofing and Construction,
call 832-230-1449,
email sales@triplec360.com
or visit www.triplec360.com.*

*The mailing address is
11152 Westheimer, Suite 673, Houston, TX 77042.*



Ashley Norton's Natural Bronze Patina Offers a Modern Twist on Classic Gold-Toned Finishes

Ashley Norton, a leading designer and manufacturer of architectural hardware, debuts its newest finish, Natural Bronze.

With a warm undertone that closely resembles a sparkling glass of champagne, Natural Bronze evokes a timeless yet modern feel. Lighter and with cooler tones than traditional gold and brass finishes, Natural Bronze offers a fresh take on today's trending gold finishes. An effortlessly versatile finish that will develop a rich patina over time, Natural Bronze is available for all door hardware, cabinet hardware, and accessories in Ashley Norton's Solid Bronze Collection.

"The new Natural Bronze patina, combined with the beautiful texture of our handmade bronze hardware, adds a sense of depth and elegance to the finished product. The result is a luxurious yet classic look that easily fits into any space," states Ashish Karnani, Vice President of Ashley Norton.

After each individual piece is sand cast from art-grade bronze, the Natural Bronze finish is hand-applied. The finish adds further distinction to the one-of-a-kind look of each Ashley Norton hardware element. And since Natural Bronze is a "living finish," it will oxidize when exposed to elements and touch. Each element will develop its own special pattern of oxidation, giving each piece a unique character all its own.

Natural Bronze is available for the entire Ashley Norton bronze collection. Other available finishes include White Bronze, Light Bronze, Dark Bronze, Matt Black, and White Medium. Available at leading kitchen and bath dealers throughout North America, Natural Bronze finishes range from \$198 for passage sets to \$548 for entrysets.

For more information about Ashley Norton call 1-800-393-1097 or visit AshleyNorton.com.



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Dialogue with a Designer

Traci Marlow Designs

BATHS OF AMERICA opened its doors in January 2005 when brothers Ali and Zeeshan Sultanali decided to start selling plumbing and tiles to the Houston market. Baths of America focuses on customer service and partners only with those brands which provide quality products and outstanding customer service. In addition to plumbing, Baths of America now offers door and cabinet hardware, major appliances, cabinetry, and countertops. It has turned into a one-stop shop for designers, builders, and architects, showcasing the latest designs and trends in the market.

This month *BATHS OF AMERICA* speaks with Traci Marlow of Traci Marlow Designs, a full-service Interior Designer servicing the greater Houston area, who specializes in creating turning her clients dreams into a reality by creating the beautiful spaces in which to live.

BATHS OF AMERICA: What motivated you to go into the interior design field?

Traci Marlow: My passion for design and interiors started as a young girl, when I was always changing my room or helping my mother with our home. I was obsessed with design magazines and fashion. One of my first big projects as a child was creating a very Parisian look in my bedroom with fabric walls and ceilings. Ha!

BATHS OF AMERICA: How has the field of interior design changed since you graduated?

Traci Marlow: This question has been asked of me many times. In my opinion, the business has changed tremendously. I attribute it [the changes] to social media, reality design shows, mass production of products and online availability. Clients are much more involved now.

BATHS OF AMERICA: How can an experienced interior designer help custom home builders or a remodeling contractor with their building or remodeling projects?

Traci Marlow: My favorite time to be involved is in the infant stages. For me personally, I offer a second set of eyes, seeing things from a real-life function and aesthetic. Luckily for me, I work with some of the very best architects and builders; however, I add a layer that is very necessary. Lighting can be just that, but until you know the particular art piece being installed on a wall, the insight on lighting knowledge for the wall is limited. That is where I come in. I see the family and how they truly live in the space. The translation from plans to real world always

needs that design input. In the end it brings the plan to life.

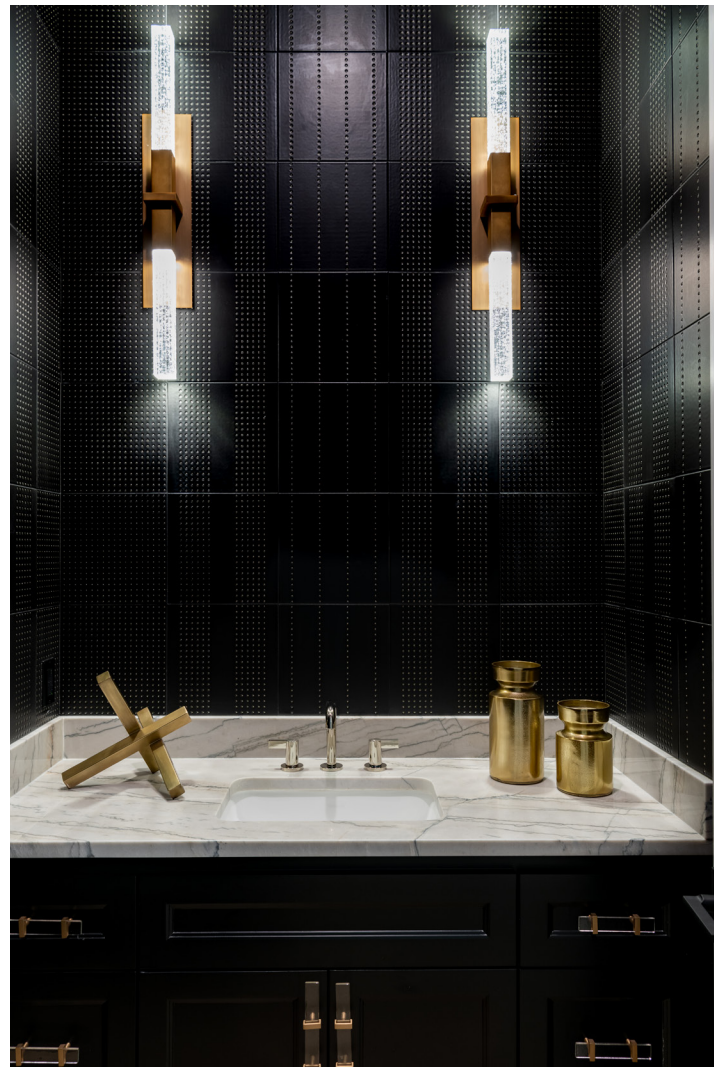
BATHS OF AMERICA: What sets you apart from other designers?

Traci Marlow: I only know what I do for my clients; it's much more than what I said above. Really looking at my clients' day-to-day lives and doing my best to make their homes function and feel true to them. In addition, I spend a lot of time on each piece, each area. It's not a mass rollout of what I always do; it is with real thought and planning, most times into the morning hours.

BATHS OF AMERICA: What has been your most challenging project and why?

Traci Marlow: The most challenging project. LOL. Well,

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I have had a few; however, one stands out in a tremendous way. It was post-Hurricane Harvey when families were at a standstill in the Houston area. A lot of them were living in conditions that were not easy while waiting for a contractor and designer to help. One particular job was the most stressful and complicated from 1/8-inch of base and casing. This is when I ask my clients, “Please trust me. Go to work, manage your family. Let me do what I do, and I assure you your expectations will be met when it is complete. It is why you hired me.”

BATHS OF AMERICA: *How do you begin the materials selection process when working with builders’ and remodelers’ clients?*

Traci Marlow: Ahhh, my favorite! The special details that make a home sing! Typically, I create a vision page with the look and feel of the space. From that moment sourcing of materials begins, and each one is dropped into a project database and a spreadsheet. This is my strength and my weakness. I am extremely particular and absolutely love interesting and unique finishes! With that said, I spend a lot of time on this process. I am a perfectionist, and it’s never complete until it’s great. Some [homes] may “sing” a black ring light chandelier. What is behind the scenes are hundreds of ring lights in every combination of materials, and I obsess over just the right one. Currently I am sourcing

587 cabinet pulls. Yes, lots of coffee is needed!

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What are some common mistakes made by builders and homeowners?*

Traci Marlow: In my opinion, it is missing the value of the designer, which results a lot of times in “we should have, wish we had thought of this, and how did we miss that?” Seeing the value [of using] a great designer from the start helps eliminate these moments and, even better, allows the plan to be truer and more complete before the builder closes in walls, etc. I see this more often than you would think. One of my current builders, Melrose Construction, gets this, and I am thankful. Sal [of Melrose Construction] asks for my input on plans from the start. It is the best feeling to know he values my input before he starts plumbing and framing. It makes for a great team.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *How to you keep yourself up to date with all the design trends happening in the industry today?*

Traci Marlow: I get a lot of literature, and ASID is very good about getting out industry information that is relevant and trending -- from environmentally motivated to resources.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What is your favorite design style?*

Traci Marlow: Oh, wow! This question is like asking what my favorite band is! I love so many! All strike a different mood in me, and all are welcome at different times. I love a very classic, tailored space -- block panel, Charles Edward-style drum lighting, crisp polished nickel. My forever home, however, is absolutely a modern, masculine, moody space. A nod to Frank Lloyd Wright. Vaulted ceilings, sunken living space and floor-to-ceiling windows bringing the outside in. Warm tones, mixed white with lots of texture, yet minimal. My Instagram page regularly features my love for this style.

BATHS OF AMERICA: *What fascinates you and how have you incorporated that into your designs?*

Traci Marlow: Grand Scale material installations -- always! Museums and hotels often give me that take-a-breath moment and capture my attention. I love large installations of materials and, whenever possible, I try to incorporate them.

To contact Traci Marlow Designs,
call: 832-481-7296,
email: tracimarlow@yahoo.com
or visit:
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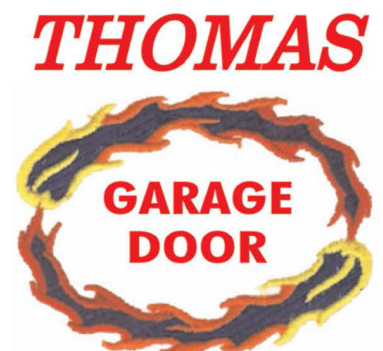
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