

TOADSTOOL TOURISM BRINGS BOOMING ECONOMY — THEN LEAVES EARLY

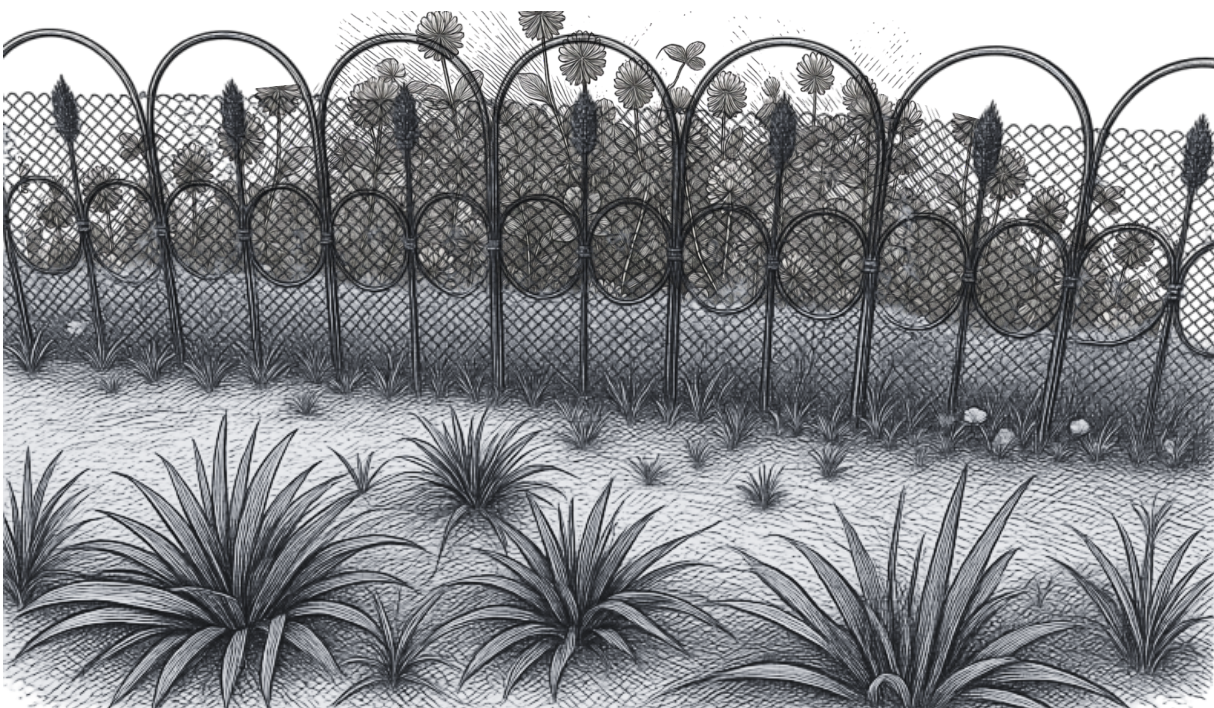
Hobbit Hill visitors depart ahead of schedule, leaving Hemingway Heights to deal with the consequences

BY Matilda Horowitz

Hemingway Heights officials announced this week that the annual arrival of Hobbit Hill toadstools has brought valuable nutrients, increased garden productivity, and several residents pretending they always understood fungal economics.

The seasonal visitors have long been considered an important part of the community, improving soil quality and contributing to what experts call “the general vibe of the place.”

However, this year’s tourism season ended earlier than expected following the completion of several neighborhood renovations, including the newly installed Hemingway Heights community gate.



White Dutch Clovers breaching the gate of Hemingway Heights near Black Mondo Lane. Captured June 2026 by Winston Smith.

While residents initially celebrated the reduced number of unwanted visitors, some are now questioning whether the gate solved the right problem.

“I don’t miss the toadstools blocking the walkway,” said one resident. “But I also didn’t expect the weeds to immediately move in like they owned the property.”

Weed activity has reportedly increased near the new gate, where residents claim large gatherings of unwanted growth have formed along Black Mondo Lane. Some have described the situation as “deeply concerning” and “a little too organized.” Older residents have expressed concerns about the weeds’ alleged “mob mentality.”

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WEATHER OR NOT July Forecasts



METEOROLOGY

Expect classic summer behavior: morning clouds, afternoon sun, and residents pretending the gray sky is “actually kind of nice.”

Temperatures will linger in the low to mid-70s before occasionally reaching the upper 70s or low 80s, causing widespread panic, aggressive window-opening, and at least one person declaring it “too hot.”

Marine clouds will continue arriving from the Sound each morning to inspect everyone’s plans, create unnecessary doubt, and then leave by noon without offering an apology. Rain chances remain low, though mysteriously increase whenever outdoor furniture is uncovered.

August will bring longer sunny stretches, dry lawns, and residents suddenly remembering they own plants. Winds will remain light, except when someone has just put a freshly washed car cover, picnic blanket, or important paperwork outside.

NIGHT WATCH



NEW MOON — Tuesday, July 14, 2026
FIRST QUARTER MOON — Tuesday, June 21, 2026
FULL MOON — Wednesday, July 29, 2026 *Buck Moon*
LAST QUARTER MOON — Wednesday, August 5, 2026

HOROSCOPE

Aries, the Ram ~March 21 – April 19~ A garden gnome challenges your leadership. Surprisingly, it has a platform.

Taurus, the Bull ~April 20 – May 20~ You will defend a snack-based opinion with the intensity of a court trial.

Gemini, the Twins ~May 21 – June 20~ Your two personalities finally agree. Unfortunately, they are both wrong.

Cancer, the Crab ~June 21 – July 22~ A neighbor’s strange behavior is explained. The explanation makes things worse.

Leo, the Lion ~July 23 – August 22~ You will be applauded for a heroic act no one asked you to do.

Virgo, the Virgin ~August 23 – September 22~ Your carefully labeled system fails because someone moved the labels.

Libra, the Scales ~September 23 – October 22~ Balance arrives when you stop refereeing arguments between imaginary plants.

Scorpio, the Scorpion ~October 23 – November 21~ You uncover a secret nobody asked you to investigate. Naturally, you investigate further.

Sagittarius, the Archer ~November 22 – December 21~ A quest begins after you accidentally volunteer for something.

Capricorn, the Goat ~December 22 – January 19~ Your hard work pays off in compliments and a mildly disappointing prize.

Aquarius, the Water Carrier ~January 20 – February 18~ Your strange idea works. This annoys everyone who doubted you.

Pisces, the Fishes ~February 19 – March 20~ You sense a shift in the universe. It may be a feeling. It may be the washer’s spin cycle.

SHADY

Because perspective is everything

Future looking suspiciously bright?

GET JADED

Feeling a little gray?

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WDC RESPONDS: “WE WERE HERE FIRST”

In response to recent concerns, representatives of the White Dutch Clovers (WDC) have denied accusations that they are causing problems along Black Mondo Lane.

“We prefer the term *established ground-cover community*,” said one spokesperson from the Fabaceae family. “We have been part of this landscape long before anyone started adding gates and issuing opinions.”

The spokesperson, a prominent member of the WDC, dismissed claims that the group had taken advantage of the toadstools’ early departure.

“People say we moved in. Moved in from where? The ground? We’ve been here the whole time.”

The WDC spokesperson rejected accusations of having a “mob mentality.”

“We are a family-oriented organization,” they said. “Yes, we spread quickly. Yes, we travel in groups. But that’s called community support.”



Representative for the Fabaceae family and WDC.

When asked about residents describing the WDC as “too organized,” the spokesperson appeared confused.

“You call it a takeover. We call it excellent root management.”

The developments have reignited fears that keeping the Hop 'N' Chomps bunny gang away may have created an entirely new threat.

The notorious rabbit group was previously blamed for garden damage and suspicious nighttime activity. Following last month’s vote, residents approved the gate in hopes of reducing trespassing and restoring order.

“We built a barrier to keep out rabbits,” said one resident. “We did not realize we were inviting a clover coalition.”

Town officials remain optimistic that the situation can be controlled, though they recommend residents avoid making eye contact with particularly confident-looking patches of White Dutch Clovers.

Meanwhile, Hobbit Hill toadstools are expected to return next season — assuming

they are still interested in doing business with Hemingway Heights.

NOTES AND BOOKS CONTINUE LONG TRADITION OF WELCOMING NEW RESIDENTS

BY Matilda Horowitz

Opposing storefronts remain among Devlivore's most visited establishments

Situated across from one another on Withering Way, Notes and Books have long served as unofficial landmarks for newcomers arriving in Devlivore.

The arrangement is simple enough. Notes sells blank journals, diaries, notebooks, and stationery supplies. Across the street, Books offers completed journals purchased from local residents who have finished writing them.

Together, the two shops see a steady flow of business throughout the year.

Many newcomers visit Notes shortly after arriving, often before securing permanent lodging. Residents say the practice has become something of a tradition.

“The past is the only thing we bring with us when we get here, you know,” said longtime resident Mrs. Mimi Whimston, a frequent customer of both establishments. “Might as well write it down before it starts getting mixed up with everything else.”

While some visitors initially express surprise at the idea of selling personal journals for public reading, local residents generally regard the custom as an important part of community life.

“Turn it into a story for a fellow wanderer,” Mrs. Whimston explained. “Keeps things interesting around here, that’s a sure thing. Doom and gloom and drama — that should be the town slogan!”

She reportedly laughed for several minutes after making the remark.

Employees at Books say memoirs, travel accounts, family histories, and personal reflections remain among the store’s most popular offerings. However, journals detailing feuds, scandals, and poorly considered decisions continue to outsell all other categories by a considerable margin.

“We’re a curious town,” one employee admitted.

Residents credit the two businesses with helping newcomers settle into life in Devlivore. Some say writing provides a way to organize old memories, while reading helps them understand the unusual community they now call home.

Others simply enjoy the gossip.

As one customer leaving Books remarked while carrying a stack of recently acquired diaries, “Everyone has a story. Around here, you can usually buy three of them for the price of a sandwich.”

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Rufus pictured at an unknown time at his post guarding the Devlivore Hotel.

“I don’t have a bad attitude. I was carved with standards.”

Since joining the Guild of Gargoyles, Rufus has reportedly become a quieter presence. Some residents believe the silence is part of his new role, while others suspect he is simply gathering material for a possible return to comedy.

“The difference between guarding a hotel and performing comedy is minimal,” one longtime Devlivore resident claimed. “In both cases, you stand still, watch people closely, and silently judge their decisions.”

As all Devlivore residents understand, time and census are flexible concepts in the loving town of limbo. A person may have one career,

RUFUS THE GARGOYLE REMAINS A PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY

Hemingway Heights welcomes Devlivore’s most reliable (and mildly disappointed) protector

BY Matilda Horowitz

Residents of Hemingway Heights can sleep a little easier knowing Rufus, the beloved gargoyle of Devlivore, continues his watch over the neighborhood.

Unlike the grand stone guardians of old tales, Rufus is a more modest figure — a small but steadfast gargoyle bust with tiny wings, a permanently unimpressed expression, and the posture of someone who has heard enough nonsense for several lifetimes.

For centuries, Rufus served as a fixture of the Devlivore Hotel, where guests became familiar with his watchful presence and famously grumpy mug.

“He always looked like he was judging everyone,” said one resident. “Which, to be fair, he

then another, and occasionally both at once.

After joining the Guild of Gargoyles — an honor considered among the highest achievements in gargoyle society — Rufus now protects Hemingway Heights from rude giants, suspicious spirits, and general neighborhood nonsense.

probably was.”

Despite his stern appearance, many locals insist Rufus has always been a beloved figure throughout Devlivore. As one resident explained, “A grumpy face doesn’t mean a grumpy heart.”

Rumors about Rufus’s earlier years continue to circulate throughout Devlivore. According to regular patrons of the Dead Men Tales Tavern, Rufus was once the establishment’s headlining comedian — a claim that surprises newcomers but not longtime residents.

“He had such a smile on him,” said one patron. “All the giggling ladies would sit up at the front tables, batting their lashes at Rufus.”

Tavern regulars still fondly recall one of his most popular lines:

Residents of Devlivore note that Rufus is deeply missed and hope he will return home when the time is right.

Until then, Hemingway Heights remains under the watchful eye of a gargoyle who may look tired, but is always paying attention.

New development reshapes neighborhoods around Obsidian Circle

Further toward the edge of town, just before Black Mondo Lane, developers continue looking upward. The Forever Purple and Forever Red Coral Bells have added impressive vertical growth this season, creating what planning officials have affectionately begun referring to as Hemingway Heights' first "high-rise district."

"They're not skyscrapers," one resident clarified. "But they certainly think they are."

Despite the recent building boom, town officials maintain that the community's slower-growing residents remain equally important to Hemingway Heights' identity.

"Not every neighborhood needs to expand at the same pace," a planning committee spokesperson said. "Some simply prefer to establish themselves before attracting attention."

Additional construction is expected through late summer, weather permitting.

Compared to this time last summer, Hemingway Heights has experienced notable growth as several established neighborhoods continue expanding into previously underdeveloped areas surrounding Obsidian Circle.

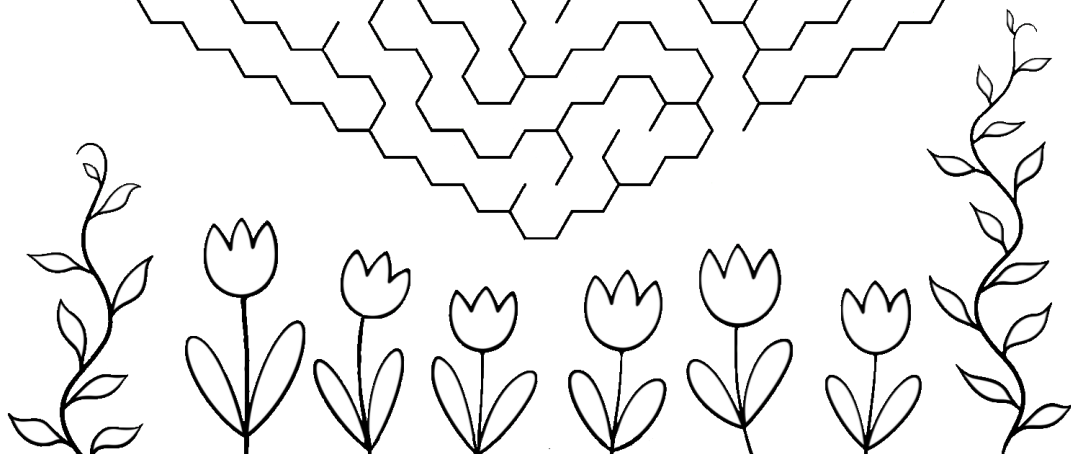
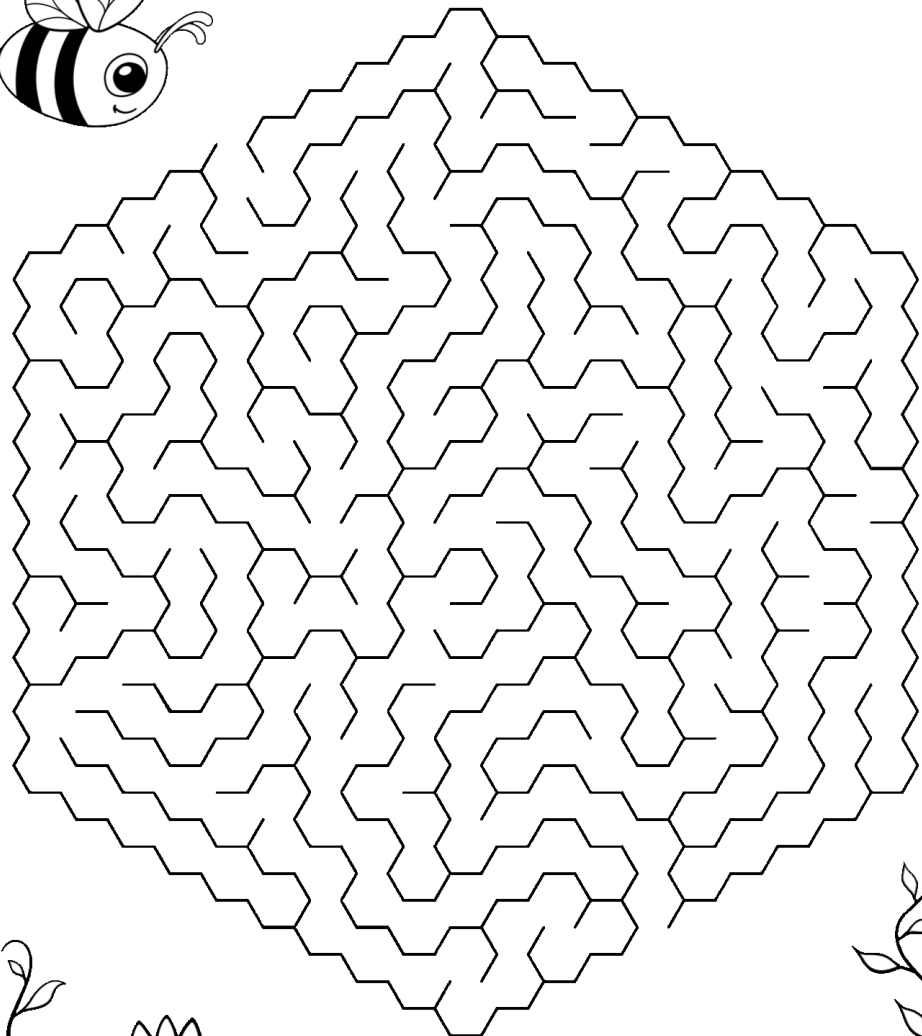
The most significant changes have occurred southwest of the Circle, where new development near the Rocket Fire district has steadily increased. Black Scallops, once limited to a modest footprint, have established a thriving neighborhood that officials describe as "healthy, ambitious, and spreading exactly as expected."

Meanwhile, northeast of Obsidian Circle, along Maple Leaf Lane, both the Chocolate Chips and Black Scallops have enjoyed a particularly successful season. Residents credit favorable growing conditions and recent community improvements for the neighborhood's rapid expansion.

WHY BE ANYTHING OTHER THAN YOURSELF?
Feeling overwhelmed by expectations? Still chasing your "best self"?

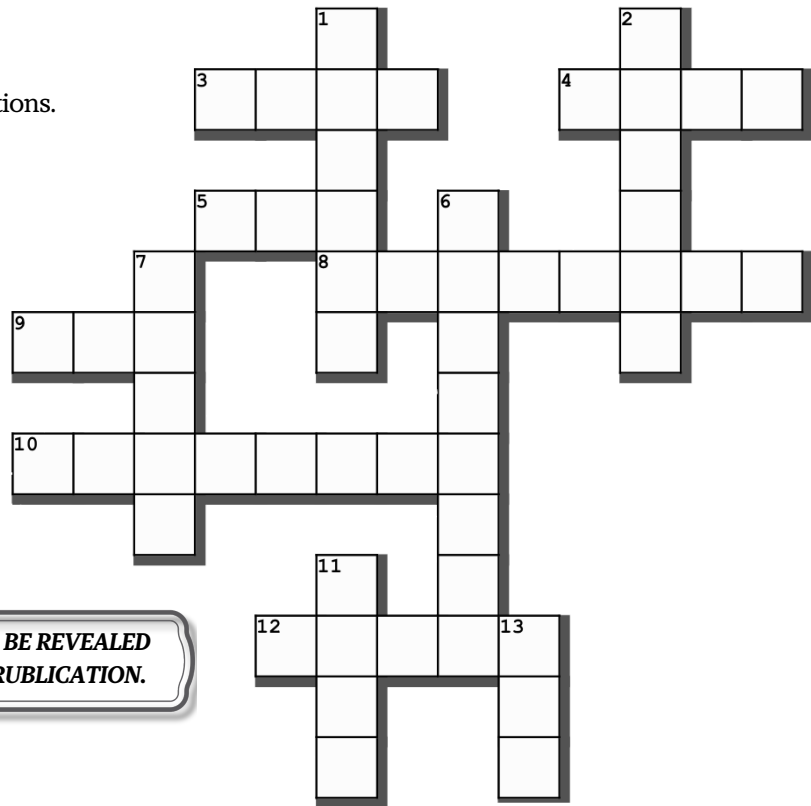
Overachieving is the scam of the century.
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being good enough is plenty.

A cartoon bee with large, expressive eyes, a small smile, and two antennae. It has a striped body and two large, leaf-like wings.

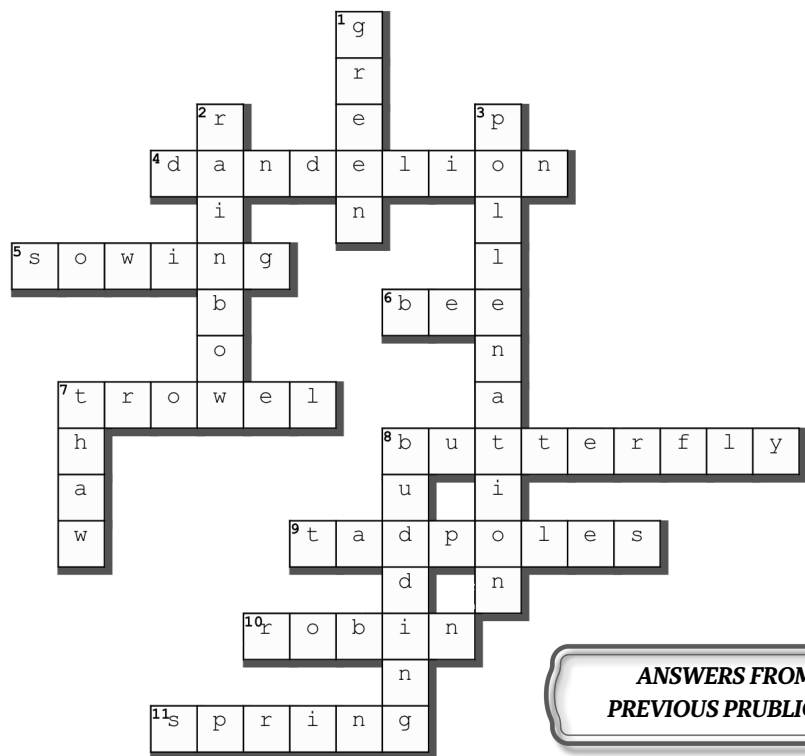


1. Eating outside on a blanket.
2. Season known for heat, sunshine, and vacations.
6. A sweet, sour drink made from lemons.
7. Sandy place by the ocean.
11. What you build beach castles with.
13. The hot star in the sky.

3. What you do in a pool or ocean.
4. A summer month.
5. Enjoyment or amusement.
8. Cold dessert you lick or scoop.
9. Cold frozen treat or cubes.
10. A trip or break taken for rest and fun.
12. Ocean movement you see at the beach.



**ANSWERS WILL BE REVEALED
IN THE NEXT PUBLICATION.**



**ANSWERS FROM THE
PREVIOUS PUBLICATION.**

RECIPE

Shrimp Tacos with Mango Slaw

topped with a creamy cilantro-lime sauce

OUR SEASONAL PICK BY
Chef Ja Ja

SHRIMP

- 1 lb large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- Salt and freshly cracked black pepper

MANGO SLAW

- 2 cups shredded cabbage
- 1 ripe mango, diced
- ¼ cup red onion, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1 tbsp honey
- Pinch of salt

METHOD

Pat the shrimp dry, then toss with olive oil, chili powder, smoked paprika, cumin, garlic powder, salt, and freshly cracked black pepper. Cook in a hot skillet for 2–3 minutes per side until lightly charred and just cooked through.

Meanwhile, combine the shredded cabbage, diced mango, red onion, cilantro, lime juice, honey, and a pinch of salt. Toss gently until the slaw is bright, crisp, and evenly coated.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the sour cream, mayonnaise, lime juice, chopped cilantro, garlic, and a pinch of salt until smooth and creamy. Adjust the consistency with a splash of water if desired.

CILANTRO-LIME SAUCE

- ½ cup sour cream (or Greek yogurt)
- 2 tbsp mayonnaise
- Juice of ½ lime
- 2 tbsp chopped cilantro
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Salt to taste
- 8 small flour or corn tortillas
- Lime wedges, for serving

Warm the tortillas in a dry skillet or directly over a gas flame until soft and lightly blistered. Fill each tortilla with shrimp, top generously with the mango slaw, and finish with a drizzle of the cilantro-lime sauce. Serve immediately with fresh lime wedges.

WHY IT WORKS

These tacos are built on balance. Sweet, juicy mango brightens the warm spices on the shrimp, while crisp cabbage adds freshness and texture to every bite. The cilantro-lime sauce ties everything together with a cool, creamy finish that softens the heat without masking it.

The result is a meal that's vibrant and satisfying without feeling heavy—exactly the sort of dinner best enjoyed outdoors with a warm evening breeze and plenty of napkins.

