

#TOMBALLTOGETHER

TOMBALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT:



CISCO'S SALSA COMPANY



COVID-19
IMPACT

| CISCO'S BATTLE AGAINST COVID-19 |

Proudly operating in Tomball since 2011, Cisco's Salsa Company is determined to safely serve the community it loves during the COVID-19 pandemic. Following recommended health protocols and utilizing unique defenses to the virus, Cisco's is doing everything it can to protect its employees and customers. Cisco's owner, Laura Wilson, is steadfast in her devotion to her team and town.

CISCO'S SALSA COMPANY



"I am fully committed to our employees, customers, and the Tomball economy. In order to survive, we are figuring out ways to improve safety," offered Wilson. "My focus is 100% on safely keeping our employees employed and customers fed. We are fighting for our economy, in addition to fighting the virus."

Cisco's has taken safety and health very seriously since the virus arrived in Texas. All employees have been required to wear masks since before the government mandated it. The restaurant also performs daily deep cleanings, 30-minute sanitation checks, and pre-shift temperature checks, while asking their employees to refrain from social gatherings where masks and social distancing are not present.

Despite the precautions, Cisco's came face-to-face with the virus when it temporarily closed in late June due to two employees testing positive for COVID-19. Despite every other of her roughly 20 employees testing negative, Wilson decided it was best to reset and further explore safety procedures.

"We felt it necessary to close, even though CDC guidelines did not mandate it," added Wilson. "My team and I needed time to figure out how to best manage this attack on our business. I wanted to make sure we were taking every possible safety precaution."

When Cisco's reopened on July 6, Wilson heightened protections at the restaurant. During the time it was closed, Cisco's installed an air purification system that helps guard employees and customers from harmful bacteria and viruses. This type of technology is common in hospitals, proving Cisco's commitment to health and safety. Face coverings, deep cleanings, temperature checks, and social distancing remain in place.

Cisco's has also put an emphasis on outdoor seating, offering customers a safer environment. Recognizing that open-air is preferred by many customers and that the Texas gulf coast is not always conducive to al-fresco dining, Wilson is climatizing their outdoor dining experience.

"We are excited to give customers a really nice dining alternative to going inside a building, where they might not feel as safe," said Wilson.

The upgrades to the patio are being partially funded by the Tomball Economic Development Corporation's (TEDC) Façade Improvement Grant (FIG) program. Created in 2019 to enhance the overall commercial character of the heart of Tomball, the FIG program offers matching grant funds to assist significant renovations in the Old Town Business District. Cisco's grant was approved by the TEDC and will help the restaurant create their desired outdoor dining experience. Wilson expects the outdoor upgrades to be completed in August.

Additionally, Cisco's is using funds from the FIG to upgrade the interior of the restaurant. Influenced by the virus, Cisco's is designing a safer, cleaner environment for customers. Wilson said much of the work was able to be completed during COVID-19.

“The Façade Improvement Grant has allowed us to improve the building from back to front in a way that will make it as nice as possible and offer customers a safe environment to dine,” added Wilson. “Thanks to the TEDC’s guidance, the process was extremely easy and helpful.”

Support from the TEDC is representative of the entire Tomball community, according to Wilson. The love and encouragement that Tomball has shown Cisco’s in difficult times, including during COVID-19, is part of the reason why Wilson has so much passion for keeping the Tomball economy prosperous.

It was the love of Tomball, specifically Old Town, and bloodlines that led Wilson and her husband, Dennis Henderson, to open Cisco’s. Wilson’s family has owned Mexican restaurants in southern California since 1971. After moving to Tomball in the 1990’s, Wilson and Henderson took a break from the restaurant scene. A visit from her brother prompted Wilson to consider opening Cisco’s, especially once they found the right property in Old Town Tomball.

While COVID-19 is the latest challenge, it is far from the only challenge Cisco’s has faced since moving to Old Town nine years ago. Soon after leasing the building, Wilson discovered an antiquated liquor ordinance in Old Town.

Enacted in 1944, the liquor ordinance banned beverages with an alcohol content over 14 percent. For Cisco’s, that included one of their staples—margaritas. Cisco’s was initially able to use a private club membership, however, this caveat proved unsustainable.

In 2014, Wilson and Henderson gathered over 1,200 signatures on a petition that allowed Tomball voters to decide the fate of liquor sales in Old Town. Voters overwhelmingly passed the ballot measure and Tomball has benefitted through restaurants and other establishments moving to the Old Town district.

“It has been a real positive change for Old Town Tomball,” stated Wilson. “The new laws have allowed a number of places to open in the area and the economy has thrived because of it.”

The margaritas that they fought to serve has become one of Cisco’s staples. Wilson believes that the 100 percent agave tequila margaritas, all made with fresh homemade mixers, is the perfect complement to Cisco’s fresh and diverse food menu.

“The diversity of our menu and the quality of our products are what make us unique. From our craft-style margaritas to our Baja Mexican dishes, everything is made fresh every day,” added Wilson.

Cisco’s loyal customers were ready to enjoy Cisco’s distinctive menu after the COVID-19 reevaluation. Wilson was pleasantly surprised with the amount of business the first few days after reopening. The real joy, however, comes from being able to keep people employed and the economy moving. That is why Wilson and her team are taking the necessary steps to create a safer, more enjoyable environment for employees and customers.

“Cisco’s is going to fight,” said Wilson. “We are going to take care of our people and support the Tomball economy, so we can all come out on the other side of COVID-19.”



Owner, Laura Wilson