

“Steel Magnolias” comes to the Gilroy stage

By [Gilroy Dispatch Staff](#)

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Gilroy might be 2,000 miles from the southern town of Natchitoches, Louisiana, where women are as delicate as magnolia flowers yet strong as steel – but for one month, thanks to Gilroy’s theater company, locals have the chance be whisked away to that magical place.

The beloved off-Broadway play, “Steel Magnolias,” – a play made famous by the 1989 uplifting drama featuring an all-star female cast including a young Julia Roberts – is coming to Limelight Actors Theater on Monterey and Seventh Streets, opening Sept. 14 and running through Oct. 12.

The production features two casts and twelve Bay Area actresses. Evening performances are “Bring Your Own Dinner Theater” where guests are encouraged to bring food and drinks to enjoy together before the show. (There is a \$10 corkage fee for alcoholic beverages, which goes to supporting the Gilroy Arts Alliance.)

During the Sept. 22 performance, Rally Round Downtown Gilroy, a group dedicated to patronizing downtown businesses and events, plans to attend the play together. All are welcome to join the RRDG group that evening. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for the dinner portion, and the play begins at 8 p.m. RSVP to Kevin Heath at (408) 472-3292.

A list of all the performance dates and times can be found at LimeLightActorsTheater.com.

[Neighbor News](#)

Steel Magnolias at Limelight Actors Theater

By [Kevin Heath, Neighbor](#)

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"Steel Magnolias" is set in Truvy's beauty salon in Chinquapin, Louisiana, where all the ladies who are "anybody" come to have their hair done. Helped by her eager new assistant, Annelle (who is not sure whether or not she is still married), the outspoken, wise-cracking Truvy dispenses shampoos and free advice to the town's rich curmudgeon, Ouiser, ("I'm not crazy, I've just been in a bad mood for forty years"); an eccentric millionaire, Miss Clairee, who has a raging sweet tooth; and the local social leader, M'Lynn, whose daughter, Shelby (the prettiest girl in town), is about to marry a "good ole boy." Filled with hilarious repartee and not a few acerbic but humorously revealing verbal collisions, the play moves toward tragedy when, in the second act, the spunky Shelby (who is a diabetic) risks pregnancy and forfeits her life. The sudden realization of their mortality affects the others, but also draws on the underlying strength—and love—which give the play, and its characters, the special quality to make them truly touching, funny and marvelously amiable company in good times and bad.

Limelight Actors Theater, Gilroy's Downtown Theater, breaks new ground in South County Theater with their approach to this production. Directed by K. DaVette See (most recently known for directing "Inherit The Wind" at South Valley Civic Theater), the show has been developed with two casts. Each cast will have a consecutive run of seven performances. Twelve Bay Area actresses are involved in the play including Limelight Alumni Rosalind Farotte, JoAnna Evans, Jen Ellington, Betsy Andrade, Dana Morgan and Donna Knippen. Newcomers (to Limelight) Denee Lewis Bohnsack, Joanne Engelhardt, Robin Harris, Deanna McGill, Roberta Vinkhuyzen Rasmussen and Rachel Perry, round out the casts. A total of four matinees will be available for this popular show. "Steel Magnolias" opens September 14th and runs through October 12th at the Gilroy Center for the Arts, 7341 Monterey St, Gilroy (on the corner of 7th and Monterey). Tickets are \$18. Friday and Saturday performances are "Bring Your Own Dinner" theater. Wine and non-alcoholic beverages are for sale at concessions, and you can bring your own bottle of wine for a nominal corkage fee. All proceeds from concessions and corkage are donated back to the Center for the Arts.

The Beehive Cast:

Denee Lewis Bohnsack, JoAnna Evans, Joanne Engelhardt, Robin Harris, Deanna McGill, and Roberta Vinkhuyzen Rasmussen
Performing Sept 14,15,16,21,22,23,28

The Bouffant Cast:

Betsy Andrade, Jen Ellington, Rosalind Farotte, Donna M. Knippen, Dana Morgan and Rachel Perry

Performing Sept 29,30 Oct 5,6,7,11,12