

15 MINUTES

Spinning in Chico

Born and raised in Long Island, New York, Amir Qureshi founded Soundscape Records as a mail-order business around 2010. After meeting his wife and moving to Chico in 2017, he opened Soundscape as a brick-and-mortar store at 347 Nord Ave., Ste. 3, which is tucked behind Xhale Tobacco and Gifts. A self-described vinyl enthusiast, Qureshi predominantly carries new records—including a variety of genres from numerous decades—with plans to introduce a wider used selection later this year. Vinyl records are enjoying a resurgence—according to the Recording Industry Association of America, the physical format generated revenues totaling \$419 million in 2018, an 8 percent increase compared with the previous year and the highest level since 1988, back when Tracy Chapman's "Fast Car" was climbing the charts.

What attracts people to vinyl?

You can be someone that actually loves to listen to streaming sites and things like that, but if you have a favorite band or two, you're going to want to go into a store and support that band. I feel like that's also ... helped touring bands of all calibers, too, because it's actually promoting people to get out there to support an independent shop in the community. As well as [creating] some excitement and buzz for people to get out there and explore a shop.

Why got you into vinyl?

I have always been a visual person, and I loved the fact that records have this expanded artwork that you can open ... and flip through. It just kind of brought out kind of the best of everything. I think it's the exclusivity and the limited nature, too, that kind of adds to the appeal. As well as taking something home that's pretty badass that you can listen to that sounds flawless.

How would you describe your selection?

When I was ready to open up my shop over here,

PHOTO BY ANDRE BYIK



I really wanted to try out a completely fresh concept, where everything would be brand new. Newer artists, more obscure artists ... titles that you won't be able to find unless you go out as far as the Bay Area or Sacramento. More ... indie exclusives or the artists that you would not typically see in other shops. And I feel like that really attributed to the shop's success over time, and that's what I'm continuing to roll with.

What are you currently spinning?

The last record I was actually spinning, it was actually a very heavy record. It was Killer be Killed, and I've been on a kick on that record for weeks now. I think it's fantastic. It's just a supergroup of musicians from all sorts of bands like Mastodon and Dillinger Escape Plan and Soulfly. If I [could] be here 24 hours a day and just listen to music, I would do it.

—ANDRE BYIK
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THE GOODS

Falafel on the shelves



by
Meredith J. Cooper
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A few weeks ago, I got a hankering for a soda while watching TV and loaded my Boston terrier sidekick, Oliver, into the car and shot over to the **ABC Market** on West Ninth Street. I was not at all prepared for what I'd find inside.

The single island of shelves in the middle of the store had been replaced by two sets of shelves, with an aisle between them. And instead of being stocked with only generic convenience-store fare like Pringles and Progresso, there was a full-fledged Mediterranean market. I think my jaw literally dropped. My soda craving was forgotten; it was shopping time.

As I ogled the items, from couscous and falafel mix to exotic teas and spices I'd need to Google to figure out what to do with, I told the clerk how excited I was at the change. He said the owners had grown tired of making trips to Sacramento to buy ingredients, so they decided to bring the ingredients to them. Awesome! I walked out with just a jar of tahini and a bottle of rose water—even though it was cool outside, with Oliver in the car, I couldn't stay long. Next time I'll bring recipes!

REOPENED ON THE RIDGE Last Friday (May 24), the **Paradise Medical Group Clinic** reopened on the Ridge (at 6460 Pentz Road) after having been damaged in the Camp Fire. In addition to replacing its former facility, the medical group, which also now has a Chico presence, unveiled a new tech platform dubbed **PMG Connect**. The platform, a collaboration with **Blue Shield of California**—which donated \$2 million toward the Camp Fire rebuild effort—will allow patients to visit with PMG doctors via cellphone, tablet or computer. That seems especially needed considering so many people have been displaced since November.

FINDING A WAY While perusing Facebook last week, I stumbled upon a post for a bakery I hadn't heard of before called **Loophole Food**. It's run by Chico mom **Jessica Jackson**, who was "tired of telling my sweet kiddos 'no' every time they saw something in the store they couldn't have" Her family eats gluten-free, so baked goods were particularly difficult to find.

The photos on Jackson's site are impressive, the doughnuts and cookies, etc., candy for the eyes. And with flavors like blackberry amethyst and blueberry lemonade, I'm intrigued even if I have no gluten allergy. It's all free of GMOs and artificial coloring and flavoring, too. Go to myloopholefoods.com for more.

SIDEWALK SALE While out for a coffee break last week, a couple of co-workers and I walked past **Woodstock's Pizza** and chatted briefly with the employees manning the table out front. The restaurant closed after the storms a few months ago, which caused its ceiling to cave in. Apparently, the damage was so extensive it might be a few months before it reopens. In the meantime, they're selling slices and preordered full pies out front.

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