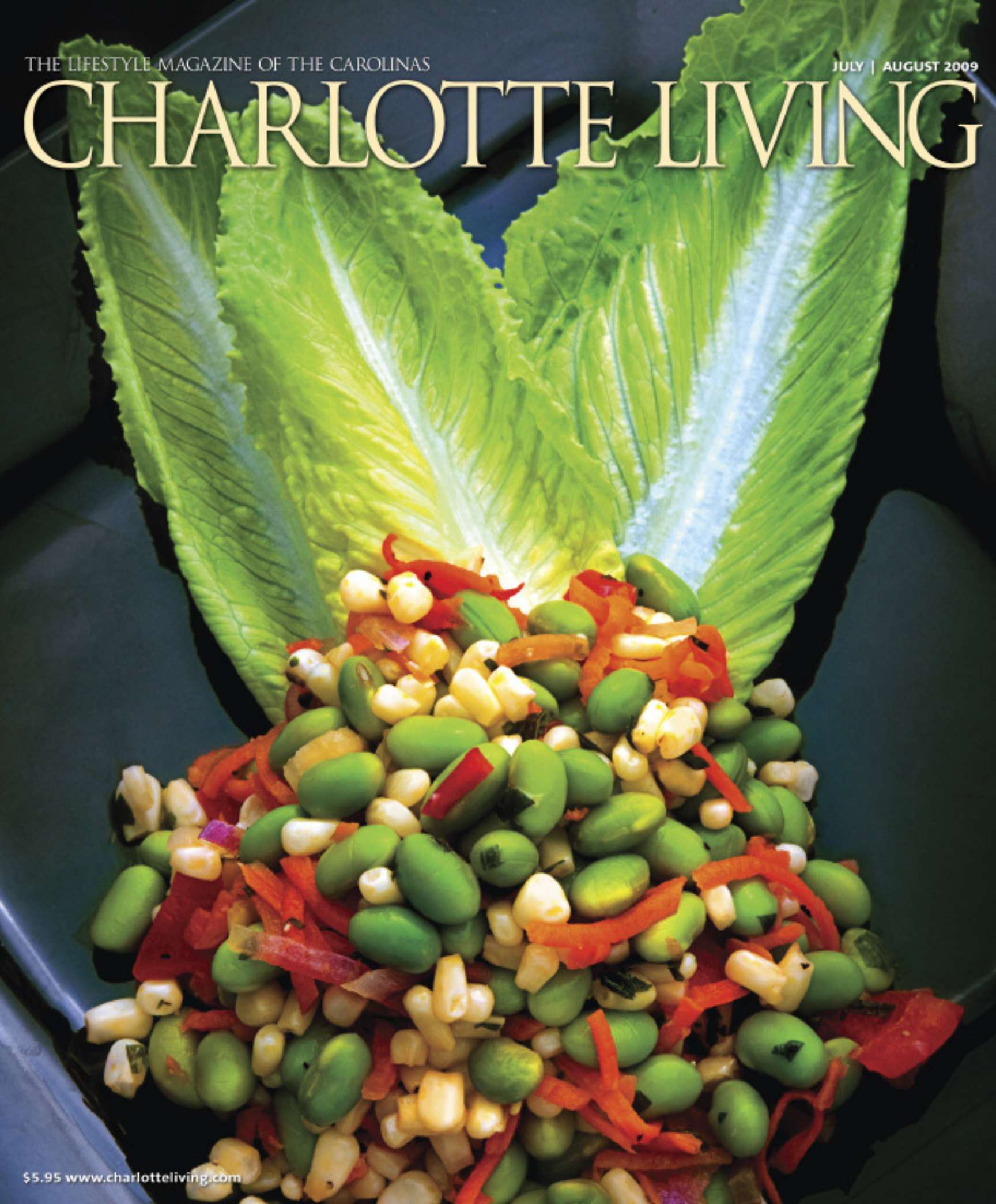


THE LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE OF THE CAROLINAS

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# CHARLOTTE LIVING



# get your body *back*

THE REFINE INSTITUTE CAN HELP YOU GET AN EVEN BETTER BODY AFTER THE BABY.

TEXT BY **MARY MARSHALL**  
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IF YOUR IMAGE IN THE MIRROR CAUSES YOU TO FANTASIZE about the graceful body that was once your reflection or perhaps the body you've always dreamed of, then a visit to The Refine Institute in the Stonecrest area is just for you. Here you'll find cosmetic surgery that offers gentle precision and polished elegance. Their core consultation, high tech/less invasive procedures and technique expertise give patients the subtle and positive changes they desire. A specially designed wellness program helps patients maintain their body for years to come.

Andrew J. L. Gear, MD, is The Refine Institute's specialty trained surgeon. He has ten years' training with some of the most renowned surgeons in the country. Dr. Gear firmly believes that by doing small things as you age, you'll have less chance of having to do major corrective procedures down the road. The benefits are two-fold. When smaller procedures are performed, they are less invasive, and the recovery time is much quicker.

It's Dr. Gear's personality and mannerisms that draw patients to his care. "Many patients comment that he is not the sales pitch type," says Eric Wilson, practice administrator. "He is very congenial, yet upfront and honest as to the pros and cons of a procedure. He educates the patient so that they can make very informed decisions as to whether a procedure is right for them. He also believes strongly in the physician/patient relationship being nurtured, calling his patients the evening following their surgery and also giving them his cell phone number in case of an emergency."

Dr. Gear specializes in breast and body contouring. Through the use of the Vectra 3-D Imaging System, which can be used for many different treatments such as the breasts, body contouring and facial rejuvenation, he is able to show patients post-operative silhouettes and outcomes with strikingly accurate images.

"Today, what we refer to as the Mommy Makeover



Andrew J. L. Gear, MD

The Mommy Makeover is the ideal solution for women who have tried diet and exercise but were unable to repair the impact of pregnancy.

is a very popular procedure," says Wilson. This can be a breast lift, breast augmentation or a combination of the two with a tummy tuck or Smartlipo to the abdominal area. Smartlipo is the latest method for removing fat. The laser procedure rapidly dissolves fat and tightens the surrounding skin. It requires small incisions, and the downtime is minimal compared to other surgical options. "The Mommy Makeover is the ideal solution for women who have tried diet and exercise but were unable to repair the impact of pregnancy," adds Wilson. "We believe that women make huge sacrifices when having children. Not only can their bodies be impacted long term, but this can contribute to a change in a woman's confi-

dence and/or her interaction with her partner or spouse. The Refine Institute can assist women in regaining that positive self image and restoring their self confidence."

Penny Meekins, a Blythewood, SC resident, recently had a Mommy Makeover. "I did a lot of research on the Internet and was most impressed with Dr. Gear's credentials, his history and the professionals he has worked with. When I entered the office, I had an instantaneous feeling of welcome. The respect the staff has for Dr. Gear is obvious. I also asked follow-up patients in the waiting room about their experience. All commented they were amazed with their results. I was very pleased with what Dr. Gear proposed for me, as well as his mannerism when dealing with a woman. I sensed that the staff was well trained and could readily see that each has a part in the process. There's a real team effort for the patient that is amazing." Meekins, who had Smartlipo to the inner and outer thighs, hips, flank, and lower and upper abdomen, stayed at the Ballantyne Hotel following her surgery. "One of the nurses helped me arrange transportation to the hotel, came over and checked on me and assisted in getting me back to the office for my appointment," she says. "They really made me feel like

family. After 12 days, the results of my procedures were absolutely amazing—far and above anything I ever expected." Meekins is so pleased that she plans to return soon for breast augmentation.

All surgical procedures are done at The Refine Institute's surgical center in their office, which meets nationally accredited standards for outpatient surgery. "Each patient meets all of our staff members," adds Wilson. "They are comfortable with them administering their care. We've created a very professional, yet relaxed environment."\*

For information visit [refineinstitute.com](http://refineinstitute.com) or call The Refine Institute at 704.909.4800 to schedule a complimentary consultation.