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BIG MOVE—
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WITH GWEN



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**CHIP &
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Baby Joy!

EMOTIONAL
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Trump's "zero tolerance" policy separated thousands of migrant children from their families. What happens next?

Blake Shelton is a much better judge of music than he is of cocktails. Behind the bar at his new Nashville restaurant, the country star is checking out a few of the eatery's signature drinks, including a Tishomingo Sunset, a whiskey beverage named after his Oklahoma hometown, and a Cumberland Punch, a fruity homage to the river running through downtown Nashville. Taking a quick sip, he isn't quite sure what to make of either of them. "I have one drink, and it's Sprite Zero and vodka," he says with a laugh.

Blake's Next Move

THE COUNTRY SUPERSTAR LOOKS AHEAD TO SEASON 15 OF *THE VOICE*, HIS BRAND-NEW RESTAURANT CHAIN AND BUILDING A LIFE WITH GIRLFRIEND GWEN STEFANI: 'I'D LIKE TO RIDE THIS WAVE TILL I DIE'

By **CYNTHIA SANZ**



The Nashville Ole Red



Cocktails and Country Music

Shelton opened the Nashville Ole Red with an all-star show on June 6—two years after he and Stefani first toured the vacant former bank building. The first Ole Red launched in Tishomingo, Okla., last fall, and several of his Nashville pals and *Voice* protégés have already come to perform. Next up: a Gatlinburg, Tenn., outpost opening later this year.

But while the drinks might be a bit sugary for his taste, Shelton, 42, happily confides that the rest of his world is even sweeter. “I wouldn’t change one thing about my life right now,” he says. “I’m happy. Sometimes happiness can seem like fleeting moments, but this one has been staying in the same lane for a long time. It’s just amazing.”

The Voice’s winningest coach (six wins in 14 seasons) is already back on set for the 15th season of the hit NBC show even as he’s been packing arenas with his Country Music Freaks tour. And that’s while launching his new Ole Red restaurant chain, which he hopes will bring live country music to fans around the U.S. “This is a big deal for me,” he says. “It’s overwhelming.”

Even more exhilarating: He’s also blissfully in love with former *Voice* coach Gwen Stefani, 48, and enjoying spending time with her and her three sons, Kingston, 12, Zuma, 9, and Apollo, 4. “I would just like to ride this wave till I die,” he says. “The personal side of my life has been chaotic at times over the last few years, but it’s kinda settled down now and just feels good.”



‘People have gotten really invested in Gwen and me as a couple. It’s fun for us’
—BLAKE SHELTON

Shelton admits they seem like an unlikely pair. “It is interesting,” he says. “Even I know that. Like, ‘She’s with him?’” But despite their differences, he says, they work surprisingly well. “When we first started seeing each other, friends of mine would be like, ‘What the hell is that all about?’” he says. “But then they see us together, and it makes sense.”

They spend much of their time in Los Angeles these days but also make frequent trips to his waterfront home in Oklahoma. “We love to go out on the lake,” says Shelton. “My family, Gwen and her family, we all get together and go out and float around. The kids swim and tube and all that stuff. We have a blast.”



↑
Family Man
Shelton says he loves spending time with Stefani’s three sons Zuma, 9, (left), Kingston, 12, and Apollo, 4 (not pictured). He even cast the two older to appear in the video for his No. 1 hit “I’ll Name the Dogs.” “We had a blast,” he says.

Shelton says he understands the fascination with their romance, but he laughs off questions about the two tying the knot. “Don’t you read the tabloids? Gwen and I already have a few kids. We’ve been married and divorced and married again a couple of times. We were married before we ever even met each other!”

And for the moment, at least, he’s focused on his restaurants, which he hopes will be not only “a celebration of country music” but also a way to torture his fellow *Voice* coaches. “Can you imagine how this is going to change my run on *The Voice* now?” he asks. “None of those other three morons can say, ‘If you get on my team, you’ll have a gig at Ole Red.’ What can they say? ‘Do you want to play Adam’s barbecue?’” ●

COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: PATRICK KICULLAN/GETTY IMAGES; COURTESY OLE RED NASHVILLE; ERIKA GOLDBRING/OLE NASHVILLE