

**September 02, 2008**  
**IN THE KITCHEN WITH**

## **Jeremy Ashby**

---

by Anne Sabatino

Walking into AZUR Restaurant in the Beaumont Centre, you're likely to notice a couple of things right off the bat: the intriguing design, cool color scheme and the attentive face of Chef Jeremy Ashby glancing up from behind a half-wall that both guards and reveals the working kitchen at AZUR.

What goes on behind that wall is both science and mystery and, for Ashby, a whole lot of fun. He pursued training and experience in Charleston, S.C., and Miami, the traditional and exotic blending in such a way that he came back to Lexington prepared to offer a unique new dining opportunity.

"Charleston and Miami were a little more 'haute' than Lexington. [AZUR] gave me creative freedom," Ashby said. "We want to be mystical, fun and playful so people want to go out to eat."

AZUR's menu delivers the divine in dishes that offer favorites like pork tenderloin or foie gras with a flourish through the cooking technique known as 'molecular gastronomy.' Known to foodies and fans of shows like "Top Chef," molecular gastronomy is "when you take an ingredient and process it in such a way that it's in a different form, so it's exotic but tastes familiar," Ashby said.

In addition to culinary training, Ashby also boasts a degree in business and hospitality from the University of Kentucky. He worked at Merrick and Murray's before making his move. "It was a good opportunity for me," he said of his partnership with the investor-owners of AZUR. "I wanted to be a great chef, but I also wanted to be an owner."

Indeed, Ashby's decisions are influenced by many things, not the least of which is his passion for relationships and delighting people with food. "It should be about eating out, not feeding. I like the aspect of friends at the table."

From the kitchen of Chef Jeremy Ashby, a great recipe to make use of sensational end of summer tomatoes.



Chef Jeremy Ashby.  
*photo by: Anne Sabatino.*

---

## Tomato Chutney

10 fresh tomatoes halved and sliced 4 times to make 8 pieces

1 cup fresh ginger chopped

2 yellow onions, julienne

4 cups red wine vinegar

4 cups sugar

1 tablespoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Pinch of salt

Place vinegar, sugar, ginger cinnamon and onions in a large skillet. Cook on high until mixture is reduced by half. Add remaining ingredients and reduce heat to medium. Cook until the mixture reaches a syrupy consistency.