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The Avante-Garde Arrives in Montclair, at Adara

By [GLENN COLLINS](#)



Glenn Collins/The New York Times A lineup of Adara's rasam-spiced gazpacho with saffron foam and nasturtium garnish.

Does Montclair, N.J., hunger for a restaurant whose mission statement promises to explore “the relationship between food, art and technology”?

At [Adara](#), which opens Wednesday on Montclair's haute restaurant drag, Walnut Street, Tre Ghoshal will become perhaps the first chef in the Garden State to fly the flag of molecular gastronomy.

“Montclair is a food-savvy town, and I think there is a lot of curiosity now about edge cuisine,” Mr. Ghoshal said to a visitor at a pre-opening dinner on Monday night. He showed off the tools of his trade, including an industrial-sized liquid nitrogen tank for flash-freezing, an immersion circulator and an anti-griddle cooktop for low-temperature cooking and a smoking gun for adding smoky flavor to foods before or after cooking.

On the menu were samples of some of the restaurant's fare, including: yellowtail hamachi with wasabi marshmallow and masago and tobiko caviar; a filet mignon anticucho with Peruvian-inspired pepper sauce and fried leeks; lamb loin in harissa and honey with mint crema; smoky baba ganoush with dehydrated picholine olives and goat yogurt;

two different carbonated brioches with cardamom butter, and an Indian rasam-spice gazpacho with saffron foam and a nasturtium garnish.

The advent of molecular gastronomy in the suburbs was initially greeted with raised eyebrows on some Manhattan food blogs, but Mr. Ghoshal, who is 30, said he has the highest aspirations for the restaurant, adding that his cuisine has been inspired by [Wylie Dufresne](#), Grant Achatz and [Ferran Adrià](#). “But it isn’t from their playbook, this is different, my own interpretation,” he said.

Some practitioners have rejected the term molecular gastronomy as elitist and unnecessarily complex, but, Mr. Ghoshal said, “We’re calling it molecular gastronomy because, in the marketplace, that’s a point of difference,” he said, “but really this is new American cooking using nontraditional techniques.”

He added: “I hope our restaurant will demystify molecular gastronomy, because this cuisine has robust flavor, balance and is global-influenced – and these are ingredients used through time immemorial. It’s not magic, at the end of the day, it’s just food.”

Mr. Ghoshal, who was born in the United States, said his cooking was strongly influenced by the East Indian roots of his family in Calcutta. He previously cooked in Market and Nouveau Sushi in Montclair, as well as the Savoy Grille in Newark, the Rotunda in Paramus, N.J., Davio’s Italian in Philadelphia and the Eureka Inn in Eureka, Calif.

He envisions an average check cost of \$65 to \$68, not including wine (the restaurant is a bring-your-own establishment). Adara — a name that the chef translates as “love” — also offers a collection of nonalcoholic “mocktails,” espresso drinks and a “tea boutique.”

In addition to a la carte dining, the restaurant will offer a three-course prix-fixe menu for \$59, a five-course “Tour” for \$79, a seven-course meal for \$105 and a twelve-course “Grand Tour” menu for \$165.

Is it too upscale for a downmarket era? “Everyone is concerned about the economy at this time,” Mr. Ghoshal said, “but I think that if you do something different, you can be successful. And this is different.”