

Ashbell the Entrepreneur

FOUR STAR CHEF, RESTAURANTEUR, INTERNATIONAL MEDIA PERSONALITY & LIFESTYLE GURU



Ashbell's story is pure Americana: from humble beginnings as the great grandson of a sharecropper in rural South Carolina, he discovered his gift of spinning down home food and flavors into heavenly ambrosia from his trio of family 'cooking saints': Mother Retha Ludd, Great Aunt Laura and Papa Ashbell.

Educated at the Sorbonne, he travelled the world soaking up the ethnic tapestry of culture, tradition and cuisine that binds us all. Returning to the US, he

successfully branded and nationally distributed his own food products, while doing stints as executive chef for high profile restaurants and private corporate dining rooms. His talents soon caught the attention of the likes of Robert De Niro, President Bill Clinton, Patti La Belle and other celebrities, who engaged his services. Soon NBC television took notice and Chef Ashbell became on-camera presenter for the WNBC Weekend Today Show. There he cooked with Donald Trump, Matt Lauer, Al Roker and a host of other celebrities, raising ratings and wowing New York's ethnically diverse community with his larger-than-life personality and impressive knowledge of everything from potato latkes to Cuban pernil.



In 2001, Ashbell took his talents 'across the pond' to London, helming Harlem@Saint, a supper club in busy Covent Garden. Ashbell was invited to join the *BBC* television show *Good Food Live* as a result of Harlem@Saint.



Also 2002, Ashbell received a commission from the Royal Parks to run an exclusive café for the famed Serpentine Gallery Summer Pavilion designed by architect Toyo Ito.



In 2003 Ashbell opened his eponymous restaurant in trendy Notting Hill, dazzling AA Gill, the acknowledged 'toughest restaurant critic in the world' who bestowed a 4-star rating on Ashbells.



Chef Ashbell is a regular on *BBC Cable Food TV's* most popular show, *Good Food Live*, and appears on *BBC Broadcast TV* across the UK on *Good Food Bites*. He is currently launching a new line of handcrafted limited-edition specialty foods, '*Bespoke Cuisine*', a new beverage product, and is in pre-production for the filming of his show on US Public Television, *Chef Ashbell's Food in America*.

At Ashbells Café, Serpentine Gallery,
Hyde Park, London, England



In 2002 Ashbell received a commission from the Royal Parks to run an exclusive café for the famed Serpentine Gallery Summer Pavilion designed by architect Toyo Ito. Called 'Ashbell at the Serpentine', it was the first time that this internationally famous exhibit had ever allowed their café to be named for its chef, as well as the first time that an American, and a person of colour had ever been commissioned.

At Ashbells Restaurant, Notting Hill, London, England



ASHBELLS
NOTTING HILL • LONDON



★ ★ ★ ★ “This is very, very good food made with a control and care and an aesthetic judgment that you rarely get when eating it in America. It’s not just a welcomed restaurant; it’s a very accomplished and tasty one.” “...the menu is wonderfully, unfashionably fresh.” “excellent...” a revelation of big flavor. “Ashbells has been designed with barely restrained exuberance... a relief from every other doppelganger restaurant in London.

AA Gill, the acknowledged “toughest food critic in the world.”
Sunday Times, London

AFRODECOBAROQUEFRICAN ... A NEW DESIGN STYLE

“Ashbell has taken the food from his native South Carolina smartening it up and selling it on to a rich urban clientele. The interior is a mix of African textiles, croc leather banquettes, fabulous original Art Deco carpet and curtains taken from Radio City Music Hall, sumptuous and betasseled soft furnishings ... a mix you can describe as *AfrodecoBaroquefrican!*”

Kate Spicer, *Evening Standard, London*

Ashbells Moonshine Cocktails



“Give me Moonshine! We’re so over absinthe – Moonshine is the latest liquor of choice.”

Evening Standard, London

“Ashbell’s Moonshine is one of Britain’s top three cocktails ... with these concoctions drink will flow.”

Arena

“Moonshine has just arrived on these shores in the form of eight moonshine cocktails. To sample it have John Boy drive you down in the his daddy’s pick-up to Ashbells, Notting Hill.”

Olive, BBC Food Magazine

The Press Weighs In



The Press Weighs In



Restaurant Magazine



“Meanwhile, McElveen has other ambitions; lots of them. With Ashbells not yet up and running he’s already talking about opening a lower-end soul food joint called Soul In The Hole in a nearby premises: “Oyster Po’ boys, barbecue sandwiches with mounds of coleslaw, the meat spicy hot when you bite down on it.” Then there’s the Southern deli: “Honey cured ham, pecan pie, roast chicken, real home fries. It’s a wonderful thing with the potato that we do that most of the other people don’t.” Then there’s the TV series on Southern Regional Cuisine for PBS in the States, with the first episodes being filmed here, “because this is where it all began”. That’s not to mention the plans for branches of Ashbells in New York and Las Vegas. And if the food tastes as good as his silky patter sounds, who knows, it might just happen.”

“The South is the only regional cooking in the US that has the depth to be considered a cuisine.”



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AA Gill, the acknowledged “toughest food critic in the world.” *London Sunday Times*

The Press Weighs In

The New York Times

“AA Gill, the rapier-penned critic of the London Sunday Times who makes mincemeat of overreaching London chefs, gave four stars out of five stars to Ashbells, a soul food joint in trendy Notting Hill, which charges \$28 for a plate of pulled pork and grits.”

The New York Times

THE  TIMES

“Chef Ashbell... his southern US grub is the real deal.” “Exciting mains are almost all button-busting treats.”

The Times, London

The **Guardian**

“Chef Ashbell McElveen maintains that the American southern regional food in his restaurant is simply English food 350 years ago. If so, let’s just say both history and McElveen have been good to it.... It really has been a long time since English food had this much soul.”

The Guardian

TimeOut

“Ashbells... the food has true grit.” “...such a talented chef and such simple good food.” “...impossibly fresh” “...one of the most exotic restaurants in town.”

Time Out, London

METRO

“There’s a lot to like here,” “great stuff,” “Pork ribs, tender and meaty, dripping with a high-octane barbecue sauce, just the right mix...”

London Metro

marie claire

“July’s hottest table is at “US Cuisine King” Chef Ashbell’s... Ashbells Restaurant.”

Marie Claire

ELLE

Hot 100 Places to Go in the World;
#99: Ashbells Restaurant, London

Elle