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Hot Beers a cool move for Zengo

By Bill Husted, Denver Post Columnist

Zengo at Riverfront Park is going to change the way Denver looks at restaurants.

Developer Mark Smith has hired way-hot NYC designer Jeffrey Beers to make the 6,000-square-foot space on Little Raven the coolest restaurant in town. I went through the plans and the room on Wednesday - and it's gonna be something. (Check out Beers' projects at www.jeffreybeers.com)

Beers is the guy who reinvented Las Vegas nightlife when his Runjungle at Mandalay Bay kick-started the now booming club scene. His restaurants in Las Vegas and NYC include DB Bistro, Tuscan Steak, Tabu, China Grill, Red Square, Club Float, Dylan Hotel, Restaurant 44, Empire Grill. You can't get hipper than Beers.

Developer Smith figured to make the spot a destination, it had to stand out. "We wanted something really special," he says. "So that people would come to it from all over Denver. This would be cool in New York. In Denver, it'll be really cool."

Beers says guests will feel like they are inside a candle - like a flame. "Warm, interesting, stimulating, memorable," he says. "It's not just a restaurant, it's a state of mind, an experience."

The design will echo the Latin/Asian cuisine of Richard Sandoval (Tamayo) and Troy Guard (Roy's, Raffles and Toa). Look for a huge bar/lounge scene drifting into the dining room - and a Zengo bar serving ceviche and sushi. In the spring and summer, the patio will be a sunset mecca.

Plans are to begin the multimillion dollar buildout this summer, open in November. Get ready to Zengo, daddio.