

Sides to the center

At some restaurants, the sides are so compelling, it's tempting to make a meal out of them.

Brooks

Among the sides chef Andy Brooks offers at his 2-month-old dining room are jalapeño cheese grits made with roasted jalapeños, Jack cheese and Parmesan, and truffled squash, a combination of colorful summer squashes stewed with tomatoes, fresh herbs and white truffle oil. All of the sides are served in adorable mini cast-iron pots.

■ Sides, \$5. 545 E. Thompson Blvd., Ventura, (805) 652-7070.