

When it reopens this month after a \$305 million renovation and expansion, the **San Francisco Museum of Art** will be the largest modern art museum in the country, with 145,000 square feet of interior gallery space. Here's how the art-world behemoth stacks up against its competitors. (MAY 14)



Left to right: a bloody Mary at The Normal Diner in Tempe; The Normal's retro counter; the Little Goat Diner's Asian Style Breakfast Tasty Thing



## Designer Diners

The great American greasy spoon gets a 21st-century makeover

### U.S. HISTORY

At Ingo's Tasty Diner, opened last year in Santa Monica, fast-moving waiters and waitresses take orders from customers in horseshoe booths and at a curved counter that dates to 1946. An 18-foot-tall vertical neon sign over the awning says, simply, "RESTAURANT."

The appearance may be old-school, but the fare is merely "diner-inspired": Leg of lamb is served thinly shaved, gyro-style, with harissa yogurt and dirty jus; Kennebec fries come with lacto-fermented hot sauce; and the BLT is made with Nueske's bacon, gem lettuce, heirloom tomatoes, Maine lobster, and remoulade. The meat is sustainable and hormone-free, and a giant blackboard lists the pedigree of the local wines, beers, and produce.

**"Diners have been around so long, they've adapted to the times," says Richard Gutman, author of *American Diner: Then & Now*. "The diner has been the chameleon. The simplest things, if done well, can be a big hit. Sometimes the obvious is exactly what you want."**

The Normal Diner, in Tempe, Arizona, moved into an old IHOP in fall 2014, transforming the

space with retro touches like vintage dishware, a wall installation of 8-track tapes, and pulpy paperbacks used to deliver the bill to your table. The menu wittily remixes classic diner fare: Fried chicken is served with red velvet waffles, while milkshakes come in "adult" flavors like bourbon cream pie and Fireball gelato.

In Chicago, Stephanie Izard—the first female winner of *Top Chef*—followed up her James Beard Award-winning *Girl & the Goat* with the casual, midcentury-inspired Little Goat Diner, right across the street.

"We have a few fun dishes that maybe aren't diner classics but fit with our theme of providing comfort food any time of day," says Izard, who grew up chowing down in Connecticut diners with friends. Guests can order the Kimchee & Bacon & Eggs & Pancakes Asian Style Breakfast Tasty Thing (which is just what it sounds like) or This Little Piggy Went to China (which includes a sesame cheddar biscuit, sunny eggs, Szechuan pork sausage, gooseberries, and chili-garlic-chive sauce) from the "Cereal Killers" breakfast menu. —LORA SHINN