

CULTURED CUISINE THE ART OF MUSEUM EATERIES

Many museums are trading in their classic cafeterias and snack bars for artfully designed restaurants with cuisine that caters to foodies. New York City boasts several acclaimed museum eateries; perhaps the most famous is Danny Meyer's chic the Modern overlooking the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden at the

Museum of Modern Art. And other cities in the Northeast region have cashed in on the high-end museum restaurant trend.

"It's an honor to be serving food at one of the city's most prestigious cultural centers," said Stephen Starr, owner of Granite Hill at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and reported proprietor of a

new eatery at the renovated New York Historical Society, which will reopen in early November. "A great meal makes a visit to the Museum an even better day spent in the city."

On your next weekend getaway, here are a few museum spots that are worth the price of admission. — **By Tracy E. Hopkins**

GERTRUDE'S

Baltimore Museum of Art

10 Art Museum Drive, Baltimore, MD • www.johnshields.com/restaurant/rest/gertrudes.html

At his award-winning eatery named after his grandmother, chef, cookbook author and public television host John Shields showcases the fresh, regional coastal cuisine of the Chesapeake Bay. Weekend brunch is popular at the upbeat restaurant overlooking the museum's scenic sculpture gardens. The menu includes sophisticated comfort

food dishes like Egg's Getrude, a version of Egg's Benedict made with broiled crab cakes, poached eggs and tomato on a toasted English muffin with hollandaise sauce. During the summer, patrons purchase light fare from Gertrude's for the museum's outdoor jazz concerts. Museum admission is free.

GRANITE HILL

Philadelphia Museum of Art

2600 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA • www.philamuseum.org/granitehill

Granite Hill's elegant vibe complements the museum's fine art collections. The bright and airy space has walls adorned with original art and serves novel twists on French café fare, including a warm salmon Nicoise salad, an herb-roasted turkey club with house-made kettle chips and crème brûlée French toast. Granite Hill also features menu items inspired by the museum's major exhibitions, such as the \$35 prix fixe Rembrandt menu. Museum admission is free for members, \$16 for adults, \$12 for students and free for children 12 and under.



AMUSE

Virginia Museum of Fine Art

200 North Blvd; Richmond, VA • www.vmfa.state.va.us/Amuse/

Amuse opened as part of the Virginia Museum of Fine Art's multi-million dollar renovation and expansion. The modern, Ikea-esque restaurant features fresh, locally sourced cuisine. The menu changes monthly and at press time offered plenty of options for vegetarians including local squash bisque with tarragon carrot puree, chilled red borscht with lemon chive sour cream and local vegetable and Twin Oaks tofu pad Thai with Virginia peanuts, cilantro and lime. A festive cocktail list (the Richmond Sour is made with Maker's Mark Bourbon, lemon and lime, simple syrup and a float of red wine) will keep Amuse's buzz going. Museum admission is free.



THE SOURCE WASHINGTON, D.C.

Newseum

575 Pennsylvania Avenue; Washington, D.C. • www.wolfgangpuck.com/restaurants/fine-dining/3941

The Source is Wolfgang Puck's first fine dining restaurant in the nation's capital. The three-level, Asian fusion eatery with floor-to-ceiling windows resides at the Newseum, an interactive museum dedicated to the news. In the ground floor bar and lounge, guests nosh on a traditional Japanese Izakaya menu featuring sushi and sashimi and noodles and dumplings; and the upstairs dining room menu features

upscale Asian-inspired dishes like "Hong Kong Style" steamed wild king salmon and lacquered Chinese duckling with lo mein noodles and star Anise-infused Bing cherries. The modern restaurant boasts a wine list with more than 300 bottles and nearly a dozen varieties of sake. Museum admission is \$21.95 plus tax for adults, \$17.95 plus tax for seniors and free for children six and under.