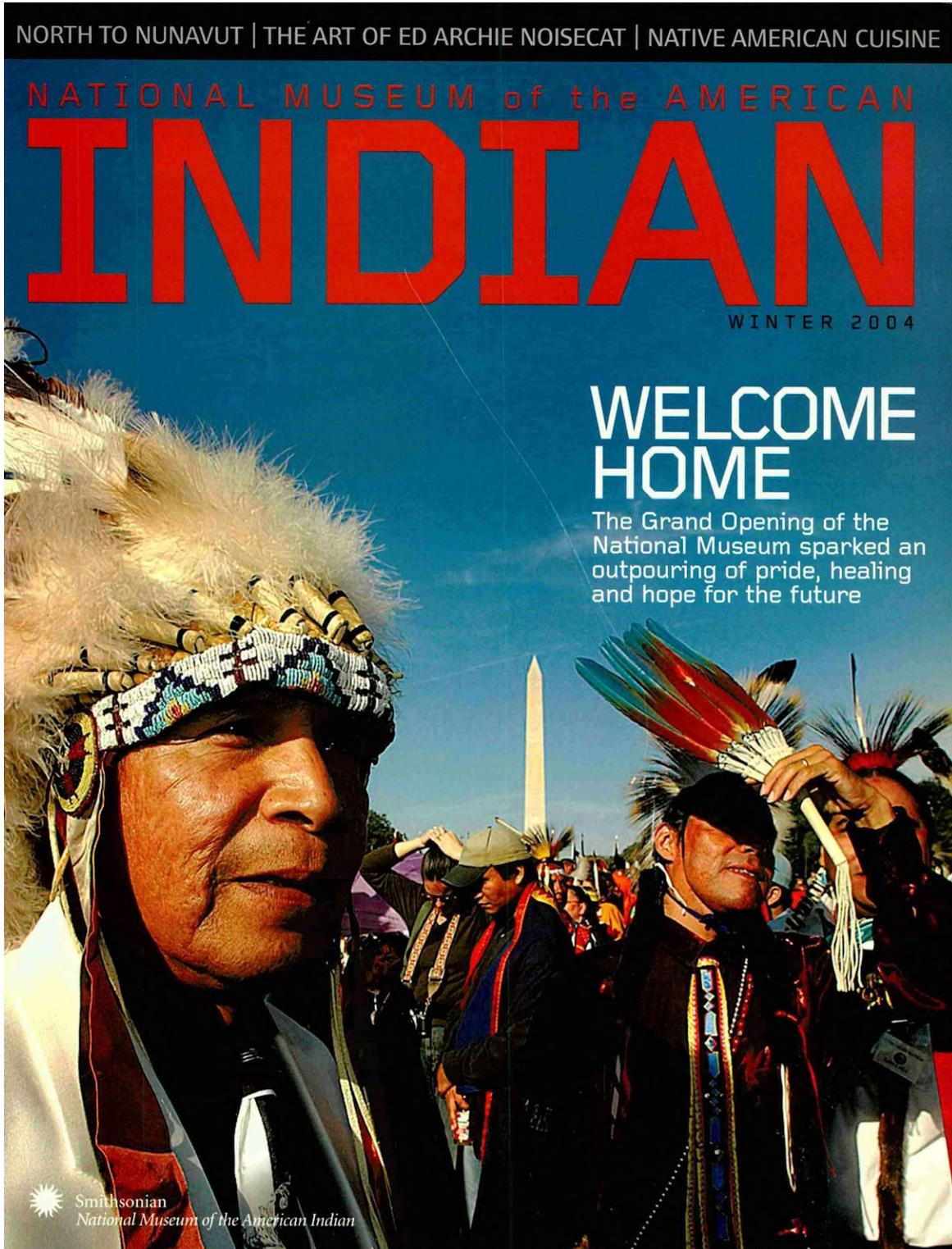


[Smithsonian Publications NMAI Mitsitam Café Full Article](#)

Excerpt highlights, text and images from cited articles:



CONTENTS WINTER 2004

9 Grand Day

More than 80,000 people came to the Mall on the grand opening day of the National Museum of the American Indian. Twenty-five thousand Native Americans and other supporters joined the Native Nations Procession, the largest gathering of Native peoples in recent history.

22 Washington Sees Red

Immediately following the grand opening ceremony, more than 300 participants from 500 tribes and Native communities from throughout the Western Hemisphere began the First Americans Festival. Buffy Sainte-Marie and Rita Coolidge headlined the opening night concert hosted by Charlie Hill. Daily concerts, dance performances, storytelling, instrument and regalia-making demonstrations occurred simultaneously over the six-day festival.

29 Step Inside

Steve Maxwell guides us through the Native Modernism exhibit, the Rasmuson Theater, the Our Universes exhibit, Our Peoples and Our Lives galleries, and the Lelawi Theater at the Mall Museum. Visitors use high-speed computer access to research Native topics, all while overlooking the U.S. Capitol building. Robert C. Lautman photographs the major exhibits inside the textured limestone walls.

40 Mitsitam Café

Salmon seasoned with juniper and roasted on a cedar plank already is one of the favorite entrées at the new Mitsitam Café writes Lindsey Morton. The new café at the National Museum of the American Indian serves authentic Native American food.

COVER PHOTO: CP/ABACA PRESS (OLIVIER DOULIERY)
CONTENTS PHOTO: MARK FINKENSTAEDT



MIT SITAM

BY LINDSEY MORTON

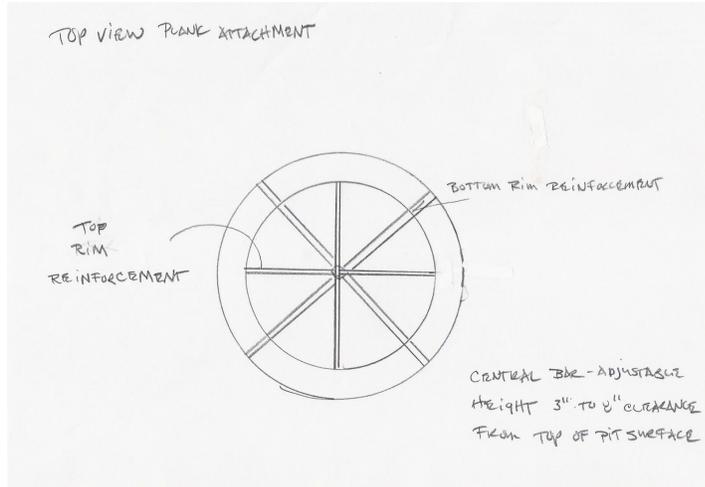


Generous window space allows visitors to enjoy the cascading waterfall while they relax at the Mitsitam Café. The NMAI's unique restaurant offers foods from both North and South America every day in a Native marketplace atmosphere.

PHOTO: ROBERT C. LAUTMANN

THE NAME OF THE MALL MUSEUM'S CAFÉ IS DERIVED FROM A PISCATAWAY AND DELAWARE WORD THAT MEANS "LET'S EAT" - AND VISITORS WILL BE DRAWN TO DO

JUST THAT. SALMON SEASONED WITH JUNIPER and roasted on a cedar plank in an open-air fire pit already is one of the favorite mouthwatering entrées available to visitors at the National Museum of the American Indian's Mitsitam Café. Serving authentic Native American foods from regions spanning the Western Hemisphere and preparing them, whenever possible, using Native American cooking techniques, the Mitsitam Café is easing into its role as an educational palate pleaser.



Five distinctive areas of the copper and wood-trimmed café serve food from different geographic regions - Northern Woodlands, South

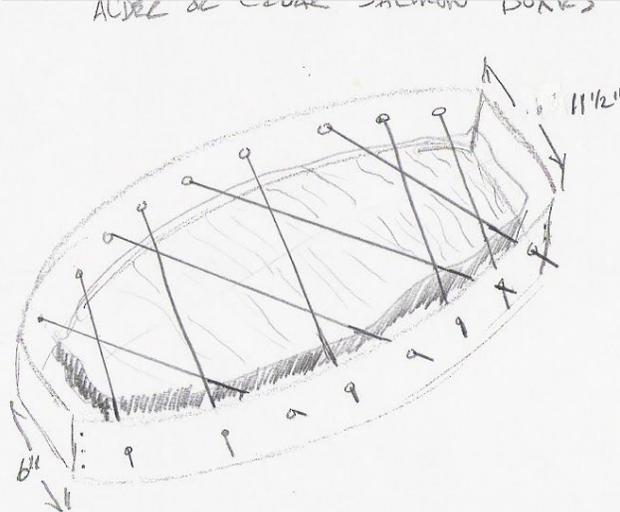
Concept sketches by: Fernando Divina

America, Northwest Coast, Meso America, and the Great Plains. Each offers a changing selection of appetizers, main courses, side dishes, desserts, and beverages. The name of the café is derived from a Piscataway and Delaware word that means "let's eat" - and visitors will be drawn to do just that.

"Because Mitsitam is one restaurant with five menus, it is almost like having five restaurants," ...As the seasons change in Washington, D.C., so, too, does the menu in the Mitsitam Café to reflect the availability of certain regional dishes...

One of the Mitsitam Café's most distinctive factors is its scope and scale. NMAI's restaurant will offer foods from both North and South America to some 1,500 customers every day in a Native marketplace atmosphere.

Alder or Cedar Box with Salmon and Lashing



- 24 inch overall length
- 11 1/2 inch header / top width
- 6 inch base width
- 3 inch side / header / base height
- 1/2 inch thick side / header / base
- 1 inch bottom / back
- 2 inch height for lashing drill holes
- 12" lashing - bamboo skewers, grape vine, mapl



IMU-STYLE SALMON

The coastal peoples of the Pacific Northwest employed leaf- or seaweed-wrapped pit cookery, as did many others, including the Hawaiian, Maya, Inka, and Aztec cultures. Some form of pit cookery was also common to the people of the Iroquois Confederacy, the Great Lakes region, the Mississippian cultures, and the southern coast of North America.

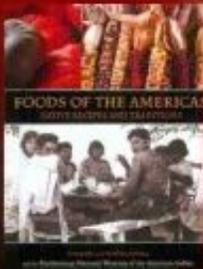
VENISON WITH JUNIPER AND WILD HUCKLEBERRY SAUCE

Hunters from the Rocky Mountains to the Cascades and throughout the Great Lakes and Eastern Woodlands have long prepared game birds, venison, and other types of wild game over a fire of juniper. This modern interpretation combines the ageless harmony of juniper and venison with wild huckleberries and a few 21st-century embellishments. Caribou, elk, moose, antelope, buffalo, duck, pigeon, and beef can be used interchangeably in this dish with fabulous results. Choose fresh, in-season meats from your area. If you have a hunter in the family, venison will surely be available to you in the fall. If not, many specialty meat shops can order it for you.



CHIPPEWA CHILLED MAPLE SYRUP BEVERAGE

This drink is a treat for the diverse peoples who live in the Great Lakes region, where box elders (a type of maple) and sugar maples grow in abundance. The refreshing cooler is a great way to use up the last bit of maple syrup in your jug.



The material above is reprinted from *Foods of the Americas: Native Recipes and Traditions*, by chef Fernando Divina and Marlene Divina who is of Chippewa, Cree, and Assiniboine descent. Published by the National Museum of the American Indian in association with Ten Speed Press, the cookbook highlights indigenous ingredients, traditional recipes, and contemporary recipes with ancient roots. The recipes are complemented by nine illustrated short essays by American Indian writers, who offer personal insights into their communities' culinary traditions.
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To order this and other NMAI titles, visit the NMAI "bookshop" at www.AmericanIndian.si.edu



Mitsitam Press

“Two Washington museums run by the Smithsonian Institution have forged an even deeper connection between menu and mission. At both the Mitsitam Cafe in the National Museum of the American Indian, which opened in 2004, and at the Sweet Home Café inside the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which opened last summer, food is an extension of the collection.”

Kim Severson, NY Times, Museums With Such Good Taste (Meaning the Restaurant, Dear)

“Art and food have been linked forever,” said Susan H. Edwards, the executive director of the Frist Center for the Visual Arts in Nashville, “It’s a changing view of what museums have to offer,” she said. “People want more of a social encounter with art now than an academic experience. Food is another way we are thinking differently about engagement, about how we make cultural connections.”

“People really like it. It’s pretty much regarded as the best museum cafeteria in town,” said Joe Yonan, the Washington Post’s food and travel editor.