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ÉPICERIE TO OPEN NEW CAFÉ AT THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN – LAGUNA GLORIA

*Opening spring 2019, **Épicerie at The Contemporary** will bring chef-owner Sarah McIntosh's sophisticated French-Cajun comfort food to the beloved, fourteen-acre art-in-nature museum site, as part of The Contemporary Austin's transformation of the Laguna Gloria visitor experience.*

OCTOBER 30, 2018, Austin, Texas – On March 21, 2018, The Contemporary Austin broke ground on Phase I of its Master Plan for the fourteen-acre Laguna Gloria—home to the Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park, the Art School, and the Driscoll Villa. Today, Executive Director and CEO Louis Grachos, together with chef and restaurateur Sarah McIntosh, are pleased to announce that McIntosh will launch a new concept—**Épicerie at The Contemporary**—as a key part of this transformation.

Situated right at the entrance to the iconic property, **Épicerie at The Contemporary** will feature fresh fare suited for eating on site or taking to-go. Signature **Épicerie** favorites, like the porchetta and pastrami sandwiches, the salmon and kale salad, and the restaurant's broad selection of fine cheeses and charcuterie, will be on hand. A variety of new soups, salads, and sandwiches will be available, including baked goods, a coffee program, and wine and beer. Additionally, **Épicerie's** new grocery line, consisting of packaged coffee, jams, chutneys, pickles, fermented goods, spice blends, and cookie mixes, will be available. Picnic packages, consisting of all of the above, will be available in limited-edition Laguna Gloria picnic bags. Along with McIntosh, **Épicerie at The Contemporary** will be helmed by General Manager Chloe Kennedy and Chef de Cuisine Keith Abate.

Guests will be invited to order at a walk-up window and may then enjoy their meal, snack, or drink within one of two gracious, shaded terraces, or find a picnic spot throughout the wooded sculpture park. The new café will be housed in a compact, modern steel and glass structure currently under construction. This building, together with the new visitor center and museum shop, pergolas, and renovated restroom facilities, was designed by Trahan Architects of New Orleans. Landscape architects Reed Hilderbrand of Boston—who were hired in 2013 to design the full Laguna Gloria Master Plan—designed the terraces, walkways, and gardens surrounding the new entrance and café.

“In building a menu for Épicerie at The Contemporary, I’ve thought a lot about the sculpture park’s visitors and the students of the Art School at Laguna Gloria who attend classes over and over again. I was an art major in college, so this really does come full circle for me,” McIntosh said. “A light bite, a cup of coffee, or a bottle of wine split by two is the perfect accompaniment to a day strolling the sculpture park grounds. The second location of Épicerie was much debated, and when this opportunity came up, we knew it made sense.”

Café hours and full menu are still in development.

“Enhancing the experience of our visitors is one of the top priorities for Phase I of the Laguna Gloria Master Plan, and a vibrant café is a key part of that,” said Louis Grachos. “I could not be more thrilled to be working with Sarah and her expert team. With Épicerie Café and Grocery in Rosedale, she has proven to be an incredibly insightful businessperson, anticipating what her guests really want from a neighborhood eatery and then delivering on those needs with expert skill in the kitchen and in the back office. I expect she will bring the same combination of shrewd business sense, thoughtful consideration of audience, and wonderful cooking to Épicerie at The Contemporary. I look forward to being both her partner and one of her best customers.”

ABOUT SARAH MCINTOSH AND ÉPICERIE

Growing up in Shreveport, La., chef and owner of Épicerie, Sarah McIntosh, has always had a fondness for blues and soul music, Louisiana State University football, and the culture of food in the southern and Cajun cuisine-rich state. Her family was very much food-oriented, and celebrations were often met with great food and wine. With the ability to express creativity in a culinary profession, McIntosh was inspired to take her passion to the next level.

McIntosh developed her culinary skills at Le Cordon Bleu Culinary School in Austin, Texas, where she graduated first in her class. She worked at Thomas Keller’s renowned Bouchon and Ad Hoc in Yountville, Calif., and served as the sous chef at Austin’s now-closed Olivia restaurant, in addition to a few other small restaurants during her ten-year tenure in kitchens.

Eventually, she brought her own vision of an uncomplicated café and grocery in one with Épicerie, which roughly translates to “grocer’s shop” in French and is popular in various parts of Europe and Louisiana. With the restaurant, McIntosh brings the simplicity of delicious French-Louisiana fare that she became so familiar with growing up in Louisiana, while providing the perfect neighborhood spot for those living in the Rosedale area. Patrons can always expect something new and fresh from McIntosh. From her mouth-watering boudin to the house-made seasonal pasta, one will never tire of her ever-evolving menu.

Between running a successful restaurant and raising a family, McIntosh still finds time to partake in hobbies, which include gardening and throwing crawfish boils and other parties.



Photograph: Annie Ray

The Contemporary Austin

épicerie AT THE CONTEMPORARY

LAGUNA GLORIA MASTER PLAN – PHASE 1

Since fall 2013, The Contemporary Austin’s leadership has collaborated with recognized landscape architects Reed Hilderbrand to design a Master Plan for Laguna Gloria. Awarded the 2017 Excellence Award in Analysis and Planning from the Boston Society of Landscape Architects, the Master Plan will revitalize the native landscape at Laguna Gloria and improve visitor accessibility, inviting the serendipitous discovery of art and nature.

Designed by Trahan Architects, the new structures planned for Phase I will occupy a compact footprint at the entrance to Laguna Gloria. Incorporating steel and concrete into a minimalist design, the texture, materials, and shapes of the structures will complement the existing architecture at the site.

In addition to the Boston landscape architecture firm Reed Hilderbrand and New Orleans–based Trahan Architects, the museum is engaging Beck Group of Austin as general contractor, with project management by Austin’s Benz Resource Group in consultation with the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and Nelsen Partners of Austin.

THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN

As Austin’s only museum solely focused on contemporary artists and their work, The Contemporary Austin offers exhibitions, educational opportunities, and events that start conversations and fuel the city’s creative spirit. Known for artist-centric projects and collaborations, The Contemporary invites exploration in both its urban and natural settings—downtown at the Jones Center on Congress Avenue, lakeside at the Laguna Gloria Campus (including the Betty and Edward Marcus Sculpture Park, the Art School, and the historic Driscoll Villa), and around Austin through the Museum Without Walls program.

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Images courtesy Reed Hilderbrand and Trahan Architects.