



Prepping for the rush at Canteen. **RIGHT** At brunch, order warm rolls sprinkled with powdered sugar.



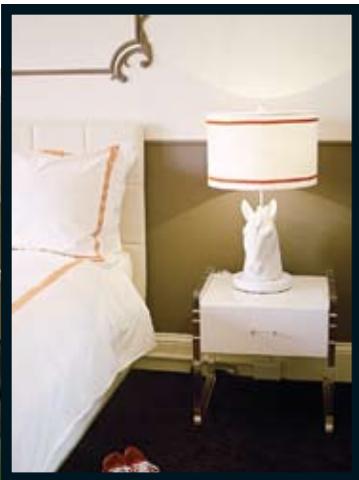
Eat A teeny 20-seat diner gone gourmet, **Canteen** (\$\$\$; closed Mon; 817 Sutter St.; 415/928-8870) has the best brunch in town (Sat–Sun only). Oatmeal with fresh pear and walnuts makes a hearty start. At dinner, perch on a stool at the counter and watch the cooks pull bubbling gratin with yellowfoot mushrooms and crescenza cheese out of the oven. Make a dinner reservation or be prepared to wait; the place has a rabidly loyal following. A couple of blocks west, **Brick** (\$\$; 1085 Sutter St.; 415/441-4232) has a moody interior, dolled-up comfort food, and half-price bottles of wine on Tuesday evenings. Closer to downtown, **Sugar Café** (\$) 679 Sutter St.; 415/441-5678) is good for an anytime break. **>64H**

S.F. under the radar

The long-overlooked TenderNob is ready for its close-up

BY JENNIE NUNN | PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERICKA MCCONNELL

WITH INDIE BOOKSTORES, a slew of urban art galleries, skateboard shops, and a newly revamped hotel designed as a nod to Alfred Hitchcock's 1958 film, *Vertigo*, the TenderNob is ready for the spotlight. The once-sketchy, now-only-slightly-scruffy neighborhood flanked by Nob Hill and the Tenderloin is a stroll away from the action in Union Square and downtown, making it an ideal base for a keeping-it-real city weekend.



LEFT The opening of Hotel Vertigo means you now have a stylish place to crash. **ABOVE** Rooms get a retro look with accents like upholstered headboards.

Sip an Italian soda by the modern fireplace, or drop by after 5 for a glass of bubbly and small bites like tiny mushroom empanadas.

Drink From across the huge walnut bar at **Rye** (688 Geary St.; 415/474-4448), watch co-owners and mixologists Jon Gasparini and Greg Lindgren slide original drinks your way—like the International Sour, with Michter’s straight rye and vanilla liqueur. Or dip into **Cantina** (closed Sun; 580 Sutter St.; 415/398-0195), a romantic cavern illuminated by lanterns made of wooden bird cages. Don’t leave without trying the

Misdemeanor, a spicy but sweet concoction with tequila blanco, green Chartreuse liqueur, crushed pineapple and peppers, lime, and a splash of agave nectar. It’s \$11 well spent.

Stay Set down your suitcase at the new **Hotel Vertigo** (special opening rates from \$109; hotelvertigosf.com or 415/885-6800), with hints of Hollywood style, like orange leather wing chairs, porcelain horse-head table lamps, and croc-patterned bathroom tiles.

Browse Wander out, and you’ll find much to love about your adopted neighbor-

hood. At **Candy Darling** (798 Sutter St.; 415/346-1500), stocked with homemade peanut brittle and truffles, red licorice wheels, and everything in between, watch confectioners Carla Stacho and her mother, Maria, hand-dip orange slices in Guittard chocolate. A few doors down, **Mi** (open Thu–Sat and by appointment; 808 Sutter St.; 415/567-8080) is a chic new trove of motorcycle bomber jackets with multilayered collars recalling modern runway looks from Tokyo. Don't expect to see any labels—each item is one-of-a-kind. For pretty, fresh flowers and finds from French flea markets, stop by **Floréal L'Atelier** (pictured; open Mon–Fri and by appointment; 533 Taylor St.; 415/885-4261). The giant papier-mâché mushrooms by artist Kemit Amenophis are straight out of Alice's *Adventures in Wonderland*.



SoMa's Seventh Street: Another up-and-coming city neighborhood worth a look

When Charles Phan of Slanted Door fame opened **Heaven's Dog** noodle house (\$; 1148 Mission St.; 415/863-6008) near this previously dodgy stretch of SoMa, Seventh Street officially blipped onto our radar. Just a walk from Union Square, the street has been noticed by hip hotelier Joie de Vivre too. In the last several months, the company has transformed three spots into chic, affordable hotels. Take a look and take your pick.

■ Do-gooders will love the eco-friendly **Good Hotel**, with lamps made from recycled water bottles, tables crafted from skateboards, and a house phone that doubles as a hotline to a local charity organization in search of same-day volunteers. From \$99; jdvhoteles.com/hotels/good or 415/621-7001.

■ A block away at the **Carriage Inn**, rooms are outfitted in a deco meets bohemian style, with vintage artwork, glossy chartreuse lacquered dressers, and typewriters from the 1930s. From \$139; carriageinnsf.com or 415/552-8600.

■ Across the street, the **Americania Hotel**, with its retro pop-culture signs and lobby pinball machines, offers perks like a heated outdoor swimming pool and sundeck (for more info, see "The West at its Best," page 18). From \$119; jdvhoteles.com/hotels/americania or 415/626-0200. ■