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The Best of Washington, D.C.

I love my city. I love flying into National Airport and looking out the window and seeing the landscape below me of monuments and memorials standing there so strong and immovable, and unmistakable. I love the view of Washington from the Potomac River, when you're aboard one of the riverboats chugging past Georgetown, the Kennedy Center, the Lincoln Memorial. I love the fact that the people standing behind you in line to tour the U.S. Capitol might be from Phoenix and the people standing in front of you might be from Barcelona, and you are all there to learn about the democratic process, and its history, in America. I love the way the illuminated Capitol dome stands out against the night sky. I like the sounds of different languages being spoken everywhere you go in the city. I love every single production performed at the Folger Shakespeare Library's Elizabethan Theatre. I love the bar at the Jefferson Hotel and the outdoor café at the Jurys Washington Hotel. I love the goings-on at Dupont Circle—for that matter, I love that there is always something going on at Dupont Circle, sometimes an impromptu bongo performance, sometimes a political demonstration. I love the sight and preponderance of big bulky federal buildings, most of them attractive, like the Treasury Building and the National Archives, some of them not, like the FBI Building. I love the National Park Service rangers, who always give me a quick straight answer every time I ask them something, and I've asked them a lot of questions over the years (sample: what's the distance between the Capitol and the White House?; answer: 3 miles). I love the Bonnard paintings in the Phillips Collection. I love the crab imperial at Johnny's Half Shell, the State of the Union chili at the Red Sage Border Café, and the carrot-apricot fritters with pistachio sauce at Zaytinya. I love to ice skate at the National Gallery Sculpture Garden in winter and listen to live jazz there in summer. I love my city, Washington, D.C. Here are some suggestions of things I love to do, that you might, too.

1 Frommer's Favorite D.C. Experiences

- **Sipping Afternoon Tea at the Top of Washington National Cathedral.** On Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons at 1:30pm, you can tour the world's sixth largest cathedral, then indulge in tea, scones, and lemon tarts served on the seventh floor of the West tower, whose arched windows overlook the city and beyond to the Sugarloaf Mountains in Maryland. It's \$22 per person; reserve as far in advance as possible (☎ 202/537-8993). See p. 213.
- **Visiting the Lincoln Memorial After Dark.** A must. During the day, be prepared to run interference with hordes of schoolchildren and tour groups; at night, the experience is amazing. See p. 181.
- **Taking a Monument and Memorials Walking Tour.** Have a hearty breakfast, then take the Metro to Foggy Bottom, and when you exit

turn right on 23rd Street NW and follow it to Constitution Avenue NW. Cross the avenue, make a left, walk past Henry Bacon Drive, and follow the signs to the Vietnam and Lincoln memorials; cross Independence Avenue and follow the cherry tree-lined Tidal Basin path to the FDR Memorial and further to the Jefferson Memorial; and finish your tour at the Washington Monument (if you're here after May 29, 2004, you'll be able to tour the new National World War II Memorial, too). This is a long but beautiful hike; afterward, head up 15th Street NW for a strength-restoring meal at one of the many excellent downtown restaurants. See chapters 6 and 7.

- **Rambling Through Rock Creek Park.** A paved bike/walking path extends 11 miles from the Lincoln Memorial to the Maryland border. You can hop on the trail at many spots throughout the city—it runs past the National Zoo, behind the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Woodley Park, near Dupont Circle, and across from the Watergate/Kennedy Center complex. You can rent a bike from **Big Wheel Bikes** at 1034 33rd St. NW (☎ 202/337-0254) in Georgetown, and from **Thompson's Boat Center** (☎ 202/333-4861), located on the path across from the Kennedy Center. For a really long bike ride, trek to the Lincoln Memorial, get yourself across the busy stretch that connects the parkway to the Arlington Memorial Bridge, and cross the bridge to the trail on the other side; this path winds 19 miles to Mount Vernon. See chapter 7.
- **Spending the Day in Alexandria.** Just a short distance (by Metro, car, or bike) from the District is George Washington's Virginia hometown. Roam the quaint cobblestone

streets, browse charming boutiques and antiques stores, visit the 18th-century houses and other historic attractions, and dine in one of Alexandria's fine restaurants. See chapter 10.

- **Weighing in Judgment.** If you're in town when the Supreme Court is in session (Oct–late Apr; call ☎ 202/479-3211 for details), you can observe a case argued; it's thrilling to see this august institution at work. See p. 174.
- **Admiring the Library of Congress.** The magnificent Italian Renaissance-style Thomas Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress—filled with murals, mosaics, sculptures, and allegorical paintings—is one of America's most notable architectural achievements. See p. 201.
- **Attending a Millennium Stage Performance at the Kennedy Center.** Every evening at 6pm, the Kennedy Center presents a free 1-hour concert performed by local, up-and-coming, or nationally known musicians. This is a winner. Call the Kennedy Center (☎ 800/444-1324 or 202/467-4600, or check its website at www.kennedy-center.org, to see the schedule of upcoming acts. See p. 247.
- **Spending a Morning on the Mall.** Take the Metro to the Smithsonian station early in the morning (about 8:30am is early enough), when the Mall is magical and tourist-free. Walk toward the Capitol Building along Jefferson Drive to the Smithsonian Information Center (the Castle) and stroll through the magnolia-lined parterres of the beautiful Enid A. Haupt Garden. Return to Jefferson Drive, walk farther east to the Hirshhorn, ducking in, on your way, for a look at the lovely Ripley Garden, before crossing the street

to tour the Hirshhorn's sunken Sculpture Garden. Climb back to street level and cross the Mall to the enchanting National Gallery Sculpture Garden, at Seventh Street and Madison Drive. See chapter 7.

- **Debarking at Union Station.** Noted architect Daniel H. Burnham's turn-of-the-20th-century beaux arts railway station is worth a visit even if you're not trying to catch a train. Dawdle and admire its coffered 96-foot-high ceilings, grand arches, and great halls, modeled after the Baths of Diocletian and the Arch of Constantine in Rome. Then shop and eat: The station's 1988 restoration filled the trilevel hall with everything from Ann Taylor and Crabtree & Evelyn to a high-quality food court and the refined B. Smith's restaurant. See chapters 7 and 8.
- **Enjoying an Artful Evening at the Phillips Collection.** Thursday evenings year-round, from 5 to 8:30pm, you pay \$5 to tour the mansion-museum rooms filled with Impressionist, post-Impressionist, and modern art. Your tour ends up in the paneled Music Room, where you'll enjoy jazz, blues, or other musical combinations performed by fine local musicians, topped off by an artful lecture. It's a popular mingling spot for singles (there's a cash bar and sandwich fare). Call ☎ 202/387-2151 for information. See chapter 7 for complete details on the Phillips Collection. See chapter 9 for more nightlife.
- **Strolling Along Embassy Row.** Head northwest on Massachusetts

Avenue from Dupont Circle. It's a gorgeous walk along tree-shaded streets lined with beaux arts mansions. Built by fabulously wealthy magnates during the Gilded Age, most of these palatial precincts are occupied today by foreign embassies. See chapter 7 for more information.

- **People-Watching at Dupont Circle.** One of the few "living" circles, Dupont's is the all-weather hangout for mondo-bizarre biker-couriers, chess players, street musicians, and lovers. Sit on a bench and be astounded by the passing scene. See chapter 4.
- **Viewing Washington from the Water.** Cruise the Potomac River aboard one of several sightseeing vessels and relax from foot-weary travels. River cruises not only offer a pleasant interval for catching a second wind, they treat you to a marvelous perspective of the city. See chapter 7.
- **Cutting a Deal at the Georgetown Flea Market.** Pick up a latte and spend a pleasant Sunday browsing through the castoffs of wealthy Washingtonians, hand-painted furniture by local artists, and a hodgepodge of antiques and collectibles. Everybody shops here at one time or another, so you never know who you'll see or what you'll find. Wisconsin Avenue NW at S Street NW in Georgetown; open year-round, Sunday from 9am to 5pm. See chapter 8 for more shopping.
- **Shopping at Eastern Market.** Capitol Hill is home to more than government buildings; it's a community of old town houses,

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My God! What have I done to be condemned to reside in such a city!

—A French diplomat in the early days

antiques shops, and the veritable institution, Eastern Market. Here, the locals barter and shop every Saturday and Sunday for fresh produce and baked goods, and flea-market bargains. At Seventh Street SE, between North Carolina Avenue and C Street SE.

- **Ordering Drinks on the Sky Terrace of the Hotel Washington.** Posher bars exist, but none with this view. The experience is almost a cliché in Washington: When spring arrives, make a date to sit on this outdoor rooftop terrace, sip a gin and tonic, and gaze at the panoramic view of the White House, Treasury Building, and monuments. Open from the end of April to October for drinks and light fare, it's located at 515 15th St. NW, at Pennsylvania Ave. NW (☎ 202/347-4499). See p. 90.

- **Chilling to the Sounds of Live Jazz in the Sculpture Garden.**

Friday evenings in the summer at the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden, dip your toes in the fountain pool and chill, as live jazz groups serenade you, from 5 to 8pm. The garden's Pavilion Café sells tapas and wine and beer, by the way. See chapter 7.

- **Ice Skating on the Mall.** The National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden pool turns into an ice-skating rink in winter. So visit the Gallery, finishing up at the Sculpture Garden, where you can rent skates and twirl around on the ice, admiring sculptures as you go. Treat yourself to hot chocolate and sandwiches at the Pavilion Café in the garden. Seventh Street and Madison Drive. See chapter 7.

2 Best Hotel Bets

- **Best Historic Hotel:** The grande dame of Washington hotels is the magnificent **Renaissance Mayflower**, 1127 Connecticut Ave. NW (☎ 800/228-7697 or 202/347-3000; www.renaissancehotels.com/wash), which, when it was built in 1925, was considered not only the last word in luxury and beauty, but also “the second-best address” in town. Harry S. Truman preferred it to the White House. See p. 94.
- **Best Historic-into-Hip Hotel: Hotel Monaco**, 700 F St. NW (☎ 800/649-1202 or 202/628-7177; www.monaco-dc.com), with its mid-19th-century neoclassical architecture, looks stately and historic. Step inside, though, and you'll marvel over the way the hotel cleverly marries contemporary decor with original, century-and-a-half-old features. See p. 87.
- **Best Location: Willard InterContinental**, 1401 Pennsylvania

Ave. NW (☎ 800/327-0200 or 202/628-9100; www.washington.interconti.com), is within walking distance of the White House, museums, theaters, downtown offices, good restaurants, and the Metro. It's also a quick taxi ride to Capitol Hill. A top contender in the best historic hotel category, as well. See p. 89.

- **Best Place for Hipsters:** It's a toss up between the **Hotel Rouge**, 1315 16th St. NW (☎ 800/368-5689 or 202/232-8000; www.rougehotel.com), where the color red rules in the decor, bloody marys are complimentary in the morning, and Red Bull is found in the in-room minibar; and the **Topaz Hotel**, 1733 N St. NW (☎ 800/424-2950 or 202/393-3000; www.topazhotel.com), where the decor is all New Aged, the complimentary morning drinks are energy potions, and guest room offerings include

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I know of no other capital in the world which stands on so wide and splendid a river. But the people and the mode of life are enough to take your hair off!

—Henry James

- “yoga” rooms, which come with yoga mat and instructional tapes, and “energy” rooms, which come with a piece of exercise equipment and fitness magazines. Each of the hotels has an exotically decorated bar that serves wild drinks and delicious food. See p. 96 and 103.
- **Best Place for a Romantic Get-away:** The posh **Jefferson**, 1200 16th St. NW (☎ 800/235-6397 or 202/347-2200; www.thejeffersonhotel.com), is just enough off the beaten track, but still conveniently downtown, to feel like you’ve really escaped. Because the service, bar, and restaurant (see chapter 6) are outstanding, you have no need to leave the premises. The restaurant has one of the most romantic nooks in the city. Just up the street at 16th and K streets is another excellent choice, the **The St. Regis**, 923 16th St. NW (☎ 800/562-5661 or 202/638-2626; www.stregis.com), with its luxurious guest rooms, an opulent lobby that resembles an Italian palazzo, and a cozy paneled bar. See p. 94 and 95.
 - **Best Moderately Priced Hotel:** **Embassy Suites Hotel Downtown**, 1250 22nd St. NW (☎ 800/EMBASSY or 202/857-3388; www.embassysuitesdcmetro.com), is located downtown, within easy walking distance of the White House, Dupont Circle, and Foggy Bottom. Its rates are a good value for its newly refurbished 2-room suites with kitchenettes. The hotel has its own fitness center, sauna and indoor pool, and serves a complimentary full breakfast and evening reception daily. See p. 103.
 - **Best Inexpensive Hotel:** The **Jurys Normandy Inn**, a boutique hotel at 2118 Wyoming Ave. NW (☎ 800/424-3729 or 202/483-1350; www.jurysdoyle.com), charges \$89 to \$185 for personable service and rooms that are small but charming. Extras like an exercise room, a pool, and a restaurant are available at its sister hotel around the corner. See p. 100.
 - **Best Inn:** The stunning **Morrison-Clark Historic Inn**, 1015 L. St. NW (☎ 800/332-7898 or 202/898-1200; www.morrisonclark.com), housed in two beautifully restored Victorian town houses, has exquisite rooms and a good restaurant. See p. 90.
 - **Best B&B:** **Swann House**, 1808 New Hampshire Ave. NW (☎ 202/265-4414; www.swannhouse.com), is remarkably pretty and comfortable, and in a great neighborhood (Dupont Circle). See p. 102.
 - **Best Service:** The staff at **The Ritz-Carlton**, 1150 22nd St. NW (☎ 800/241-3333 or 202/835-0500; www.ritzcarlton.com), is engaging but not overbearing; service is solicitous and quick, whether you’ve ordered a glass of wine in the lounge or room service. A 24-hour concierge will handle anything you request, and the nightly turndown maid places a freshly baked brownie upon your pillow instead of a mint. Likewise, the **Four Seasons Hotel**, 2800 Pennsylvania Ave. NW (☎ 800/332-3442 or 202/342-0444; www.fourseasons.com), pampers you relentlessly and greets you by name. The

hotel also offers an “I Need It Now” program that delivers any of 100 or more left-at-home essentials (tweezers, batteries, cuff links, electric hair curlers, and so on) to you in 3 minutes, at no cost. See p. 106 and 109.

- **Best for Pets: The Jefferson**, 1200 16th St. NW (☎ **800/235-6397** or 202/347-2200; www.thejeffersonhotel.com), is known for its pet perks, which include pet place mats and toys and treats in the room, information about nearby dog-walking routes and veterinarians, and the availability of pet-walking and pet-sitting services. See p. 94.
- **Best Place to Hide If You're Embroiled in a Scandal:** Lovely as it is, the **Jurys Normandy Inn**, 2118 Wyoming Ave. NW (☎ **800/424-3729** or 202/483-1350; www.jurysdoyle.com), remains unknown to many Washingtonians—a plus if you need to lay low. The neighborhood teems with embassies, in case your trouble is of the I-need-a-foreign-government-to-bail-me-out variety. (And it's a bargain to boot.) See p. 100.
- **Best for Business Travelers:** If money's no object, the **Four Seasons Hotel**, 2800 Pennsylvania Ave. NW (☎ **800/332-3442** or 202/342-0444; www.fourseasons.com), is a standout, offering complimentary sedan service weekdays within the District, high-speed Internet access in every room, and a special wing designed for executives: these rooms are soundproof and each has an office equipped with a fax machine and portable telephones. Transmitters installed throughout the entire hotel afford you wireless connection to the Internet on your laptop, wherever you go in the hotel. Finally, the hotel has started up a “Travel Light” program, which allows guests who stay there frequently to store personal belongings at the hotel; you then find your possessions waiting for you in your room, upon your return. See p. 109.
- Business travelers on a budget should try the **Four Points Sheraton, Washington, D.C. Downtown**, 1201 K St. NW (☎ **888/481-7191** or 202/289-7600; www.fourpointswashingtondc.com). You'll get a great central downtown location near both convention centers, weekday rates as low as \$99, and services that include high-speed Internet access in all rooms, a 24-hour fitness center, and an excellent on-site restaurant for business entertaining. See p. 91.
- **Best Hotel Restaurant:** My vote goes to **Michel Richard Citronelle**, in the Latham Hotel, 3000 M St. NW (☎ **202/625-2150**; www.thelatham.com), for creative French fare. Another top pick is the **Melrose**, in the Park Hyatt, 1201 24th St. NW (☎ **202/419-6755**; www.washington.parkhyatt.com), for New American cuisine. See p. 154 and 152.
- **Best Health Club: The Ritz-Carlton**, 1150 22nd St. NW (☎ **800/241-3333** or 202/835-0500; www.ritzcarlton.com), has the best fitness center in the city. Its two-level, 100,000-square-foot Sports Club/LA boasts state-of-the-art weight-training equipment and free weights, two regulation-size basketball courts and four squash courts, an indoor heated swimming pool and aquatics pool with sun deck, exercise classes, personal trainers, the full-service Splash Spa and Roche Salon, and its own restaurant and cafe. See p. 106.
- **Best Views:** The **Hay-Adams**, One Lafayette Square, 16th and H streets NW (☎ **800/424-5054** or 202/638-6600; www.hayadams.com),

com), has such a great, unobstructed view of the White House that the Secret Service comes over regularly to do security sweeps of the place. See p. 93.

- **Best for Travelers with Disabilities:** The **Omni Shoreham Hotel**, 2500 Calvert St. NW (☎ 800/843-6664 or 202/234-0700; www.omnihotels.com), has 41 specially equipped rooms for guests with disabilities, about half with roll-in showers; vibrating door knockers and pillows, TTYs, and flashing lights to alert guests when fire alarms are sounding (all of these devices are available, but you must ask for them); and the hotel carries copies of disabilityguide.org's *Access Entertainment* guide, which offers detailed information about how to travel

around and enjoy D.C., if you have disabilities. See p. 113.

- **Best for Packages:** The **St. Gregory Luxury Hotel and Suites**, 2033 M St. NW (at 21st St.; ☎ 800/829-5034 or 202/530-3600; www.stgregoryhotelwdc.com), is distinctly lovely, which makes its packages distinctly good values. One example: posted on its website in 2003 was the One Dollar Clearance Sale, which offered you an overnight stay for \$169, with the second night for \$1. The package was available on an ongoing basis, with rates fluctuating between \$169 and \$209, on Friday and Saturday nights, or Saturday and Sunday nights. (If this package is no longer available, look for others on the website.) See p. 102.

3 Best Dining Bets

- **Best Spot for a Romantic Dinner:** **Butterfield 9**, 600 14th St. NW (☎ 202/BU9-8810), woos you with its award-winning cuisine and its romantic, stylized black-and-white photos of handsome men and women dressed in fashions of the 1930s, '40s, and '50s. See p. 124.
- **Best Spot for a Business Lunch:** **La Colline**, 400 N. Capitol St. NW (☎ 202/737-0400), conveniently located near Capitol Hill, has a great bar, four private rooms, high-backed leather booths that allow for discreet conversations, and, last but not least, consistently good food. A perfect spot for the Washington breakfast meeting or fundraiser. And then there's **The Caucus Room**, 401 9th St. NW (☎ 202/393-1300), where there's always a whole lot of handshaking going on. See p. 122 and 124.
- **Best Spot for a Celebration:** **Café Atlantico**, 405 8th St. NW (☎ 202/393-0812), will give you

reason to celebrate even if you didn't arrive with one. The restaurant is pure fun, with charming waiters, seating on three levels, colorful wall-size paintings by Latin and Caribbean artists, fantastic cocktails, and unusual but not trendy South American food (p. 128). Other good choices: **Teatro Goldoni**, 1909 K St. NW (☎ 202/955-9494); and **Kinthead's**, 2000 Pennsylvania Ave. NW (☎ 202/296-7700). See p. 140 and 153.

- **Best Decor:** The **Taberna del Alabardero**, 1776 I St. NW (☎ 202/429-2200), is so elegant and Old World, with its red-tufted banquettes green-satin covered chairs, and ornate wall decorations. (Consider this another contender in the "Most Romantic" category.) See p. 138.
- **Best View:** The awning-covered sidewalk at **Les Halles**, 1201 Pennsylvania Ave. NW (☎ 202/347-6848), is open in summer, enclosed in winter—a fine spot for

viewing the sights along Pennsylvania Avenue all year-round. The dining room at **Charlie Palmer Steak**, 101 Constitution Ave. NW (☎ 202/547-8100), offers views of the Capitol, much better in winter than in summer, though. See p. 133 and 119.

- **Best Wine List:** At **Michel Richard Citronelle**, in the Latham Hotel, 3000 M St. NW (☎ 202/625-2150), the extensive, 8,000-bottle wine cellar is on display behind glass in the dining room. If you're serious about wine, come here; but check your wallet first. Citronelle is one of the city's most expensive restaurants and wines with three-digit prices predominate. The food is excellent. See p. 154.
- **Best for Kids: Famous Luigi's Pizzeria Restaurant**, 1132 19th St. NW (☎ 202/331-7574), serves up some of the best pizza in town, in an already rowdy atmosphere. The long menu also features kids' favorites, like spaghetti and meatballs. Plus, the place is loud and indestructible. See p. 141.
- **Best American Cuisine: Cashion's Eat Place**, 1819 Columbia Rd. NW (☎ 202/797-1819), is as welcoming as can be. Chef-owner Ann Cashion serves creative American food with a homey touch—she's unafraid to put onion rings next to something like a finely grilled black bass filet. Desserts are prepared with care. See p. 143.
- **Best Chinese Cuisine: Tony Cheng's Seafood Restaurant**, 619 H St. NW (☎ 202/371-8669), in the heart of Chinatown, specializes in Cantonese, Szechuan, and Hunan cuisine, like the roasted duck on display in a case in the dining room. If you want to enjoy you surroundings as well as the food, head to Dupont Circle's **City Lights of China**, 1731 Connecticut Ave. NW (☎ 202/265-6688). See p. 136 and 149.
- **Best French Cuisine:** Top of the line and extremely expensive is **Gerard's Place**, 915 15th St. NW (☎ 202/737-4445), which boasts the only Michelin two-star chef working in the United States: Gerard Pangaud, whose cooking expertise is considered an art form (p. 125). Also consider **Michel Richard Citronelle**, in the Latham Hotel in Georgetown, 3000 M St. NW (☎ 202/625-2150), where Richard ebulliently works in his open kitchen, creating sumptuous, constantly changing dishes (p. 154). For French classics, with a hint of southwestern France influence, dine at **Bistrot D'OC**, 518 10th St. NW (☎ 202/393-5444), where dishes like cassoulet and filet mignon pepper steak are on the menu. For Parisian atmosphere, bistro food and spirit, try **Bistrot du Coin**, 1738 Connecticut Ave. NW (☎ 202/234-6969). See p. 128 and 149.
- **Best Italian Cuisine:** Roberto Donna's **Galileo**, 1110 21st St. NW (☎ 202/293-7191), does fine Italian cuisine best, preparing exquisite pastas, fish, and meat dishes with savory ingredients. Also see listing below for "Best of the Best." **Tosca**, 1112 F St. NW (☎ 202/367-1990), is another winner, serving fine and unusual dishes derived from the chef's northern Italian upbringing. At **Obelisk**, 2029 P St. NW (☎ 202/872-1180), chef-owner Peter Pastan crafts elegantly simple and delicious food in a pleasantly spare room. See p. 136, 132, and 146, respectively.
- **Best Seafood:** You could eat at **Kinthead's**, 2000 Pennsylvania Ave. NW (☎ 202/296-7700), every day and never go wrong. See p. 153.



Site Seeing: The Best Washington Websites

- **www.washingtonpost.com:** This is the *Washington Post's* site, a most helpful source for up-to-date information on restaurants, attractions, shopping, and nightlife (as well as world news).
- **www.washington.org:** The Washington Convention and Tourism Corporation operates this site, which gives a broad overview of what to see and do in D.C., and provides travel updates on security issues. Click on "Visitors Guide" for tips on where to stay, dine, shop, and sightsee.
- **www.washingtonian.com:** The print magazine of the same name posts some of its articles here, including "What's Happening," a monthly guide to what's on at museums, theaters, and other cultural showplaces around town, and a directory of reviews of Washington restaurants. The magazine really wants you to buy the print edition, though—for sale at bookstores, drugstores, and grocery stores throughout the area.
- **www.fly2dc.com:** In addition to its extensive information about airline travel in and out of Washington (and ground transportation from each airport), this site also offers fun articles about restaurants and things to do in D.C. The monthly print magazine version, "Washington Flyer," is available free at Washington National and Dulles airports.
- **www.opentable.com:** This site allows you to make reservations at some of the capital's finest restaurants.
- **www.dcaccommodations.com:** This nicely designed site recommends hotels suited for families, women, sightseers, or business travelers.
- **www.hotelsdc.com:** Capitol Reservations, a 20-year-old company, represents more than 100 hotels in the Washington area, each of which has been screened for cleanliness, safety, and other factors. You can book your room online.
- **www.bnbaccom.com:** For those who prefer to stay in a private home, guesthouse, inn, or unfurnished apartment, this service offers more than 80 for you to consider.
- **www.si.edu:** This is the Smithsonian Institution's home page, which provides information about visiting Washington and leads you to the individual websites for each Smithsonian museum.
- **www.kennedy-center.org:** Find out what's playing at the Kennedy Center and listen to live broadcasts through the Net.

- **Best Southern Cuisine:** At **Vidalia**, 1990 M St. NW (☎ 202/659-1990), chef Jeff Buben calls his cuisine "provincial American"—it's a euphemism for fancy fare that includes cheese grits and biscuits in cream gravy. See p. 140.
- **Best Mexican Cuisine:** **Lauriol Plaza**, 1835 18th St. NW (☎ 202/387-0035), isn't completely

Mexican (it's also Salvadoran and Cuban). But it's all delicious and well priced, and worth standing in line for, since the restaurant does not take reservations. For more contemporary, more sophisticated Mexican cuisine, try **Andale**, 401 7th St. NW (☎ 202/783-3133). See p. 144 and 132.

- **www.mountvernon.org:** Click on “Visitors’ Guide” for daily attractions at Mount Vernon and a calendar of events, as well as information on dining, shopping, and school programs. For a sneak preview, click on “Mount Vernon Tour” to see images of the master bedroom, dining room, slave memorial, and the Washingtons’ tomb.
- **www.nps.gov/nacc:** This National Park Service site includes links to some dozen memorials and monuments. Among the links: the Washington Monument, Jefferson Memorial, National Mall, Ford’s Theatre, FDR Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, and Vietnam Veterans Memorial.
- **www.house.gov:** Once you’re in the U.S. House of Representatives site, click on “Visiting D.C.” to learn more about touring the Capitol building. From here, click on “The House Chamber,” where you can get a view of the chamber where the House meets and learn whether the House is in session. The site also connects you with the Web pages for each of the representatives; you can use this site to e-mail your representative.
- **www.senate.gov:** In the U.S. Senate site, click on “Visitors Center” for an online virtual tour of the Capitol building and information about touring the actual Senate Gallery. It takes a few seconds for the images to download, but it’s worth the wait to enjoy the panoramic video tour. Also, find out when the Senate is in session. The site connects you with the Web pages for each of the senators; you can use this site to e-mail your senator.
- **www.whitehouse.gov:** Click on “History & Tours” to learn about visiting the White House and upcoming public events. You’ll find all sorts of links here, from a history of the White House, to archived White House documents, to an e-mail page you can use to contact the president or vice president.
- **www.metwashairports.com:** Ground transport, terminal maps, flight status, and airport facilities for Washington Dulles International and Ronald Reagan Washington National airports.
- **www.bwiairport.com:** Ground transport, terminal maps, flight status, and airport facilities for Baltimore-Washington International Airport.
- **www.wmata.com:** Timetables, maps, fares, and more for the Metro buses and subways that serve the Washington, D.C., metro area.

- **Best Steakhouse: The Prime Rib,** 2020 K St. NW (☎ 202/466-8811) is considered by steakhounds in-the-know to be the top place for top cuts of beef. Also consider **The Palm,** 1225 19th St. NW (☎ 202/293-9091). Still going strong after 32 years, this classy joint serves some of the best beef in town,

despite some awesome competition. See p. 137.

- **Best Spanish Cuisine:** No contest here. The elegant **Taberna del Alabardero,** 1776 I St. NW (☎ 202/429-2200), is famous for its paellas, as well as tapas. See p. 138.

- **Best Pizza:** At **Pizzeria Paradiso**, 2029 P St. NW (☎ 202/223-1245), peerless chewy-crustied pies are baked in an oak-burning oven and crowned with delicious toppings; you'll find great salads and sandwiches on fresh-baked focaccia here, too. If you like thick, old-fashioned pizzas, head to **Luigi's**, 1132 19th St. NW (☎ 202/331-7574). See p. 150 and 141.
- **Best for Vegetarians:** The chef's wife is vegetarian, so **Equinox**, 818 Connecticut Ave. NW (☎ 202/331-8118), always offers at least one fine vegetarian entree each evening, and accompanies meat and seafood entrees with absurdly delicious vegetable side dishes. Also consider the **Bombay Club**, 815 Connecticut Ave. NW (☎ 202/659-3727), whose menu features one whole page of vegetarian main courses. See p. 139 and 140.
- **Best Healthy Meal:** At **Legal Sea Foods**, 2020 K St. NW (☎ 202/496-1111), follow up a cup of light clam chowder (made without butter, cream, or flour) with an entree of grilled fresh fish and vegetables and a superb sorbet for dessert. It's fabulous guilt-free dining. The restaurant has several other locations throughout the area. See p. 141.
- **Best Late-Night Dining:** For comfortable surroundings and good old American cuisine, try the **Old Ebbitt Grill**, 675 15th St. NW (☎ 202/347-4801), whose kitchen stays open until 1am on weekends. Open even later is **Ben's Chili Bowl**, 1213 U St. NW (☎ 202/667-0909); until 4am on weekends, until 2am other nights. See p. 134, and 142.
- **Best for a Bad Mood:** At **Al Tiramisu**, 2014 P St. NW (☎ 202/467-4466), the waiters, the owner, the conviviality, and the Italian food gently coax that smile back onto your face. See p. 147.
- **Best Brunch:** Go to **Georgia Brown's**, 950 15th St. NW (☎ 202/393-4499), Sunday from 10:30am to 2:30pm to enjoy live jazz and a part buffet/part a la carte menu featuring such dishes as biscuit-batter French toast with maple-pecan syrup, country ham, buttermilk-fried chicken, omelets made to order, and a host of other items. This brunch (\$23.95 per person) is popular, so be sure to make a reservation. See p. 130.
- **Best for Preheater Dinner:** Head for **701**, at 701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW (☎ 202/393-0701). How could you do better than 701's \$24.95 three-course bargain and its prime location (right around the corner from the Shakespeare Theatre and a few blocks from the National and Warner theaters)? More expensive, but still a deal, is **Marcel's**, 2401 Pennsylvania Ave. NW (☎ 202/296-1166), preheater dinner: For \$42 you might dine on arugula salad, pan-seared salmon, and crème brûlée. Marcel's even throws in free shuttle service to the Kennedy Center. See p. 131 and 151.
- **Best for "Taste of Washington" Experience:** Eat lunch at **The Monocle**, 107 D St. NE (☎ 202/546-4488), and you're bound to see a Supreme Court justice, congressman, or senator dining here, too. For some down-home and delicious Washington fun, sit at the counter at **Ben's Chili Bowl**, 1213 U St. NW (☎ 202/667-0909), and chat with the owners and your neighbor over a chili dog or plate of blueberry pancakes; the place is an institution, and open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. See p. 122 and 142.

• **Best of the Best:** Few can deny that Roberto Donna's **Laboratorio del Galileo**, inside the restaurant Galileo, 1110 21st St. NW (☎ 202/331-0880), is a sublime experience. In this private dining

area enclosed by glass, Donna prepares a 10- to 12-course tasting menu and entertains the 30 diners lucky enough to have snagged a table. See p. 137.