



Foodcrawling: Washington, D.C.

By Bridget Shirvell - July 2, 2013



Greg Powers

The nation's capital, Washington D.C., is a hodgepodge of different cultures and cuisines. Walk down one street and you'll find a Peruvian restaurant next door to a French one. The city draws people from around the world for business and politics and the food scene reflects that. In the past decade, D.C. has exploded onto the culinary radar with celebrity chefs opening up restaurants, artisanal producers setting up shop, and food trucks dishing out street food. The result has been a conflux of fresh ingredients interpreted in new ways that reflect the many cultures of the city.

For Latin food lovers there are plenty options. You'll find food trucks to brick-and-mortar restaurants dishing up traditional street food, Latin fusion, and even Argentine *asado*, and just in time for our nation's Fourth of July celebrations, we're throwing out our suggestions for a perfect weekend of eating in Washington, D.C.!

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Poll of the week

What's your favorite no-bake dessert?





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Del Campo

Del Campo by Chef Victor Albisu is one of Washington, D.C.'s newest Latin restaurants. Located near the Verizon Center, this spot boasts *asado*-style *carne* that will make even picky meat eaters swoon. Emphasizing modern takes on Latin classics from Peruvian to Uruguayan to Argentine dishes, the best plates are those that involve meats -- from Tomahawk ribeyes to housemade sausages. If you stop in for lunch the *chivito*, a house specialty, is a hearty sandwich of seared ribeye, ham, olives and fried egg. Other standouts? Any of the ceviches or the perfectly browned *proveleta*. Save room for dessert, the Tres Leches Twinkies (yes, really!) are worth the splurge.

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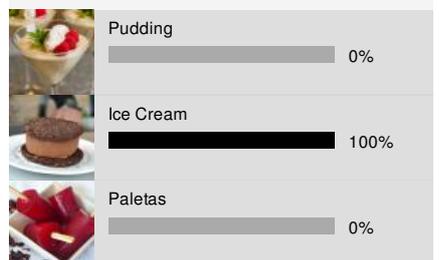
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Bandolero

No trip to D.C., is complete without a visit to the Georgetown area and when in Georgetown it's Bandolero for Mexican! The menu and decor reflect the trendy location. Georgetown is known for its boutique shops with creative aesthetics and Bandolero, with its Day of the Dead inspired interior, is no exception. The suckling pig tacos come with apple and habanero mustard for a creative interpretation of a classic dish. At the raw bar try the tuna taquito, or if you're craving something more traditional, opt for the hangar steak with chimichurri butter. Did I mention the place serves margaritas on tap?

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Oyamel

Spanish Chef Jose Andres has a number of restaurants in D.C., but Oyamel, with its modern bright style and heavy seafood menu is one of our favorites. With five kinds of ceviches, we know that it can be hard to choose, however the *coctél de carmarón y jaiba*, a combination of shrimp and local crab that makes you forget you're in the city and not on the beach, is a must. For something a bit more adventurous, the grasshoppers tacos is a must try, and for a light, refreshing meal, bite into the hearts of palm salad with oranges and avocados.

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Banana Café & Piano Bar

The Banana Café & Piano Bar has quickly become a favorite locals spot. There's plenty of outdoor seating and inside, the brightly painted walls of the main dining area combined with the upstairs piano bar give the place a relaxed and cozy feel. Owner Jorge Zamorano's traditional Cuban food is a big draw. The well portioned *Carnitas Cubanas en Brochette* is a must, with fresh, grilled peppers and onions complement the melt-in-your mouth tender pork. For a unique twist on pizza, the staff recommends the Cuban pizza with *picadillo* and plantains. And we agree!

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	Pudding	0%
	Ice Cream	100%
	Paletas	0%



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Courtesy of Ris, Bridget Shirvell

Ris Restaurant

Come to Ris at lunch for the people watching; you'll find D.C.'s power players here. But the signature scallop margarita alone earns Ris a spot on this list. Is it food, is it a drink? We think it's a bit of both. Shaved tequila ice, lime and avocado mixes with the tender scallops to create the dish. Owner Ris Lacoste suggests eating the scallops while letting the ice melt and drinking the end mixture. Make sure you save room for dessert. Pastry Chef Sean Sasser, who recently joined Ris, has concocted deliciously sweet ways to end your meal including a strawberry rhubarb crisp with basil ice cream.

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Chupacabra

Chupacabra started as a food truck but now exists as a brick and mortar spot selling street food. The *arepas jamon con queso* is a messy option filled with honey ham and gooey cheese stuffed inside thick corn cakes. Not feeling the mess? Need something dairy-free? Try the *pollo sofrito tacos*, which are sold by the piece. Be forewarned: this spot is tiny. While there are three bar stools inside, keep in mind that a few picnic tables are also outside when weather permits.

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Chris Banks, R. Lopez

El Centro D.F.

As one of Richard Sandoval's many Washington, D.C. restaurants, El Centro D.F., you'll find Mexican comfort food served alongside 200 tequila and mezcal selections, making El Centro *the* place to grab an after work drink or two. The agave cocktail with mezcal, chili ginger and hibiscus is a great choice, especially paired with the *carne asada*. You can't go wrong with any of the tacos, and if it's enchiladas you're craving, you don't want to miss them prepared with duck mole.

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