



## **WASHINGTON, D.C. LOCAL GUIDE: WHERE TO EAT, WHAT TO DO**

### **Getting Around**

Metro is the system of subways and busses that connects the city. However, when you hear people talking about “Metro,” they are almost always referring to the subway system. You should be aware that neither the busses nor the fare card machine for the subway take pennies. You can view schedules online at <http://www.wmata.com>. Fares for Metro start at \$1.35 per ride, with 25 cent rail-to-bus transfers. Bus fares are \$1.25, and bus-to-bus transfers are free. Be sure to pick up a transfer slip at the start of your ride. In addition, it is common courtesy to stand on the right side of escalators to allow others to walk on the left.

You can also ride the red Circulator bus, which picks up right in front of the Convention Center. Routes are limited, but the fare is only \$1, and transfers from Metro rail or bus are also valid on the Circulator. For more information, go to <http://www.dccirculator.com>.

Be aware that the city is broken up into four quadrants, with the U.S. Capitol building at its epicenter: Northwest, Southwest, Northeast, and Southeast. The convention center is in the Northwest (NW) quadrant.

### **Where to Eat**

Washington plays host to some great restaurants, and plenty of not-so-great restaurants as well. Luckily, there are plenty of websites that can help a visitor tell the difference between the two. Check out the Washingtonian magazine online, the Washington Post online, and the user-written website [DonRockwell.com](http://DonRockwell.com) for some of the best reviews.

In addition to calling ahead for a reservation, many D.C. restaurants allow you to make reservations online at [Opentable.com](http://Opentable.com) (free registration required). In DC and Montgomery County, MD, all bars and restaurants are smoke-free, with smoking allowed on patios at the owner’s discretion.

### **Near the Convention Center**

**Five Guys (\$)** is a local burger chain that is expanding into other Mid-Atlantic states. The wait here can be a bit long because they make your burger when you order it. A regular burger contains two patties, so if you want a single-patty burger, be sure to order a “Little Hamburger.”

Although many of the Chinese restaurants in Chinatown have closed, there are still several good Chinese restaurants in that neighborhood. **Full Kee (\$)** and **Eat First (\$)** look like your typical Chinese restaurants, but if you examine the menu a little closer, you’ll find things like oyster casserole or jellyfish. If you’re not feeling adventurous, you can always order such favorites as Kung Pao chicken. **Chinatown Express (\$)** has some of the best noodles and dumplings in town. You can watch the chef prepare the noodles in the window as you walk by.

In addition, the Chinatown/Gallery Place area also has several chain restaurants, including **Potbelly Sandwich Works (\$)**, **Fuddruckers(\$)**, and **Legal Seafoods (\$\$)**.

If you’re in town during the week, be sure to check out area happy hours. For example, **Poste Moderne Brasserie (\$-\$\$)** in the Hotel Monaco is also very convenient to the convention center. Truffled fries and a lavender margarita make a great snack!

Within walking distance from the Convention Center is **Corduroy (\$-\$-\$)**, on the second floor of the Four Points Hotel. With its emphasis on seasonal ingredients, Corduroy is definitely one of the city’s top restaurants. If the soft-shell crab is on the menu, don’t miss the opportunity to try one of the mid-Atlantic’s best known dishes. Reservations are recommended, and are available via Open Table.

### **A Hidden Treasure**

You may be surprised to find that there aren’t a whole lot of casual lunch restaurants located near the National Mall. That’s why it’s worth it to head over to the National Museum of the American Indian, and have lunch in the **Mitsitam Café (\$-\$\$)**. Traditional foods of the various native peoples are featured, and while the price may seem a little high, the quantity and quality of the food more than makes up for it.

### **What to Do**

There are lots of museums in the DC area, many of which are free. Most **Smithsonian** museums are open daily from 10 am to 5:30 pm, with the following exceptions. The **National Zoo** opens its grounds from 6 am to 8 pm, but the buildings are open from 10 am to 6 pm. The **Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture** is a short walk away from the convention center, and is open daily from 11:30 am to 7 pm. The **Natural History Museum** is open from 10 am to 7:30 pm, unless there is a special event scheduled. You should also be aware that the very popular **American History Museum** is closed for extensive renovations. All of the Smithsonian museums are free.

One of the best non-Smithsonian museums includes the **National Building Museum**. The building itself was constructed in the late 1880s as a government building, and is widely considered to be an engineering marvel. The exhibits focus mostly on design, architecture, construction, and urban planning. This museum is also free.

While the **Holocaust Memorial Museum** is also free, you may find it worthwhile to pay a small service charge from Tickets.com, rather than arriving early and hoping to get tickets, which do run out during the busy summer months.

The area directly north of the Convention Center is a historic area known as Shaw. You can take a self-guided walking tour of Shaw, and other DC neighborhoods, by following the signs posted around the neighborhood or by downloading a trail map from **Cultural Tourism DC**'s website: <http://www.culturaltourismdc.org/>

Washington does have its fair share of people-watching spots as well. The most popular of these is probably **Dupont Circle**, where you can sit by the fountain and watch street musicians or chess players of all ages. Keep in mind, however, that in order to get to this green space, you will have to walk across several lanes of traffic, which is one of the most complicated traffic flows in the city. Follow the pedestrian traffic signals, despite the fact that you may see people crossing against the light. There are lots of shops and restaurants in that area too, so it's a good place to find souvenirs.

The Washington Post website has a "City Guide" section, which highlights some of the events happening around the area, as well as a guide for visitors. You can pick up some of the free newspapers, like the Washington City Paper, if you want a thorough idea of all the things that there are to do in Washington.

### **Restaurant Listings:**

#### **Key (entrée, per person)**

\$\$\$-\$21 and up

\$\$-\$11-\$20

-\$10 and under

#### **Chinatown Express**

746 Sixth St., NW

202-638-0424

#### **Corduroy**

1201 K St. NW -- Four Points Hotel

202-589-0699

#### **Eat First**

609 H St. NW, Washington, DC

202-289-1703

**Five Guys Chinatown**

808 H Street, NW

202-393-2900

**Fuddruckers**

734 Seventh St. NW

202-628-3380

**Full Kee**

509 H St. NW

202-371-2233

**Legal Seafoods-Chinatown**

704 Seventh St

202-347-0007

**Mitsitam**

4th St. and Independence Ave., SW

202-633-1000

**Poste Moderne Brasserie**

555 Eighth St.

202-783-6060

**Potbelly Sandwich Works**

726 Seventh St. NW

**Activity Listings:**

**Dupont Circle**

Metro: Dupont Circle

**National Building Museum**

401 F St. NW

202-272-2448

Metro: Judiciary Square

**National Zoo**

3001 Connecticut Ave. NW

202-673-4800

Metro: Woodley Park

**Natural History Museum**

10th Street and Constitution Avenue NW

202-633-1000

Metro: Smithsonian

**Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture**

Eighth and F streets NW

202-633-1000

Metro: Gallery Place/Chinatown

**United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

401 F St. NW

202-272-2448

Metro: Smithsonian

--Laura Gonzales

Librarian, DC Public Library