



A LOT OF DASH, A BIT OF DAZZLE

The USA's capital city may not have the magic of its naughty sister New York, but as the seat of the country's power – and the repository of some of its most impressive political, architectural, scientific and cultural Americana – it casts a spell all of its own. By Daniel Scheffler



FROM LEFT:
Busboys and Poets,
brie pannini

and statesmen, including John, Robert and Edward Kennedy.

WHERE TO SLEEP

The Hay-Adams (800 16th St, NW)

Just across the street from the Presidential residence, this stately establishment charms with its rich history and unofficial slogan that “nothing is overlooked but the White House”. It’s named for former Secretary of State John Hay and historian Henry Adams, who lived with their wives in Romanesque homes on the same site in 1884. These two families and their architect, Henry Hobson Richardson, became close friends and called themselves “Five of Hearts”. Their homes attracted writers and intellectuals such as Mark Twain and Theodore Roosevelt. And this ethos continues today.

www.hayadams.com

OPENING SOON

The Graham Georgetown (1075 Thomas Jefferson St, NW)

Previously the Hotel Monticello, the Graham Georgetown is currently in the final stages of a face-lift and opens this month. With a nod to previous Georgetown resident and telephone inventor Alexander Graham Bell, it will retain its historical ethos, but include modern luxuries such as a rooftop bar, a sleek cocktail lounge, fine dining options and a state-of-the-art fitness area.

www.monticellohotels.com

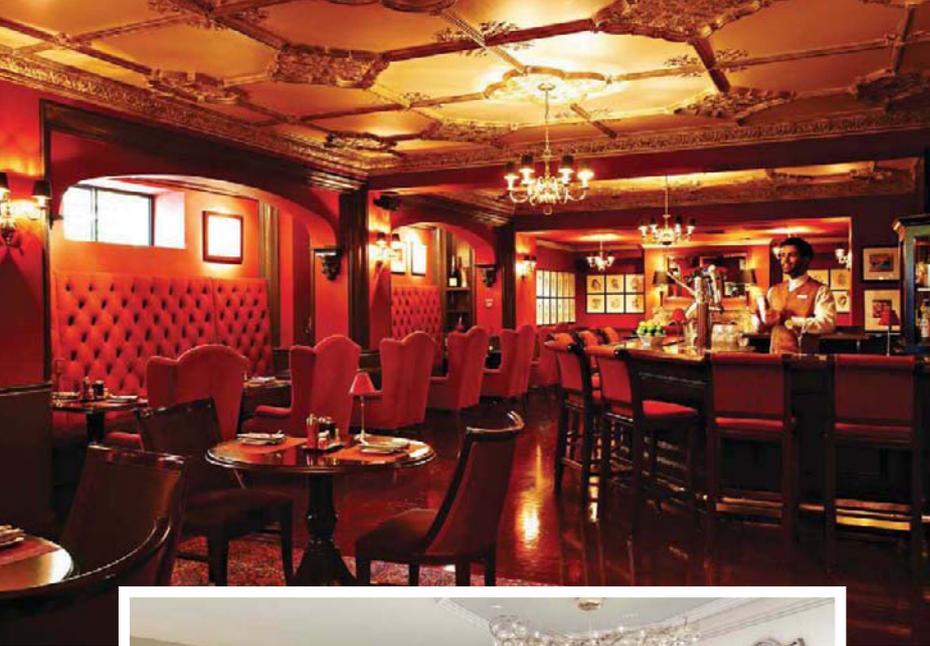
The Capella Georgetown Washington DC (1050 31st St, NW)

Another April opening is Georgetown’s luxury Capella Washington DC, the result of a \$45 million renovation to the ➤

Founded in 1791 by first American President George Washington, the city exists under the federal rule of the District of Columbia, yet doesn’t form part of any state in the country. This offbeat jurisdiction could be one of the reasons it attracts creatives and intellectuals like *New York Times* Chief National Correspondent Mark Leibovich, Alan Davidson, former Director of Public Policy at Google and controversial British writer Christopher Hitchens, who died last year.

Washington also boasts exclusive Georgetown University, the Smithsonian Institute, the world-renowned John F Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts, the National Symphony Orchestra, the Washington National Opera and the Washington Ballet.

The White House and the Capitol, with their gracious architecture, are entrenched as the nation’s most cherished symbols of freedom and patriotism. And for a sombre, but stirring perspective of the country’s heritage, Arlington Cemetery contains the graves of the USA’s most illustrious soldiers, jurists



“Washington DC is one of the most exclusive hospitality markets in the country, due to the people, the energy and the sophistication of the clientele.”

– Camilo Miguel Jr, Mast Capital CEO

former American Trial Lawyers’ Association building. The hotel has a guests-only rooftop pool and bar and a 70-seater Grill Room, which will feature artisanal meats and seafood under the eye of Swedish chef Jakob Esko. If you’re a whisky connoisseur, pop into The Rye Bar for rare brands.

www.capellahotels.com

GETTING TO KNOW THE LOCALS

Knowing how to find more than the guidebooks offer is best left to the natives. Accordingly, Creative Director Pum Lefebure and CEO Jake Lefebure, both of Design Army (www.designarmy.com), share their “Best of Washington, DC” directory. This husband-and-wife team have worked with brands like the Washington Ballet, Adobe and Disney.

H STREET (NE)

This unique neighbourhood offers new and exciting shopping, food and nightlife. It’s called the “Atlas District” and is just a 10-minute walk from Union Station.

- > Go through the roll-up aluminum garage door to Taylor Gourmet (1116 H St) to discover a delicatessen and Italian market with Philadelphia-style sandwiches built in this former barbershop.

- > Grab a drink at the H Street Country Club (1335 H St). It’s DC’s only indoor mini golf course and bar and comes with shuffleboard, skeeball and board games.
- > Reserve a table at Smith Commons (1245 H St). This three-storey bistro and bar’s menu extends from lobster to lasagne.
- > Biergarten Haus (1355 H St) is a great German tavern with live music, a large outdoor seating area and many authentic beers on tap.
- > For the sweet-toothed, Dangerously Delicious Pies (1339 H St) specialises in flavours such as berry, apple and pecan nut.

14TH STREET (NW)

Hosting one of the main bridges crossing the Potomac River into Virginia, this transportation hub offers activities that include shopping, eating and fun.

- > Stop by Showroom 1412 (1412 14th St), where you’ll unearth custom furniture from around the USA, as well as superb vintage finds.
- > For women’s and men’s fashion, you simply can’t beat Redeem (1734 14th St).
- > Enjoy wine by the glass at Cork Wine Bar (1720 14th St) after a long day of sightseeing. ➤

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP: Off the Record Bar in the Hay-Adams; Showroom 1412; The Graham lobby



- > Jam to the sounds of pop and rock bands at the 9:30 Club (815 V St) or the performing arts at Studio Theatre (1501 14th St).
- > For trendy clothing and footwear, visit Miss Pixies (1626 14th St) and Ginger Root Design (1530 U St).

SHOPPING IN HISTORIC GEORGETOWN (NW)

A stroll down M Street, located in the historic, multi-cultural district of Georgetown, yields everything a retail junkie desires.

- > Cady's Alley includes Kafe Leopold (3315 M St) a delightful German bakery and restaurant with great coffee and sandwiches.
- > Boffi & Maxalto Georgetown Showroom (3265 S St) features Italian kitchen and bathroom items, while Design Within Reach (3306 M St) offers contemporary furniture.
- > Across the way is Relish (3312 Cady's Alley), offering hip women's fashion and accessories, including brands such as Jil Sander and Balenciaga.

THE NATIONAL MALL

- > If you're in DC during the Annual Cherry Blossom Festival (20 March-14 April), go to the US Botanic Garden (100 Maryland Ave, SW), where you can marvel at 26 000 plant and flower species from around the world.
- > Grab fresh sandwiches, gourmet pizza and salads at Pavilion Café in the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden (4th and Constitution Aves, NW). The outdoor seating enables you to view the spectacular fountain in the centre of the garden.
- > For modern art and unique architecture, visit the Hirshhorn Museum (700 Independence Ave, SW).
- > For the kids, the Smithsonian Castle and Carousel (1000 Jefferson Drive, SW) offers fun activities and ice-cream stands nearby.

OUTDOORS IN DC

- > Explore Roosevelt Island. To reach it, walk across Key Bridge from Georgetown to Arlington, Virginia. It's a great site for hiking and offers a view of Virginia on one side and the Georgetown waterfront on the other. There's also a large statue of Teddy Roosevelt in the centre of the island.

FROM LEFT: Boffi & Maxalto in Georgetown; Pum and Jake Lefebure of Design Army

- > Eastern Market (225 7th St, SE) is DC's oldest continually operated fresh food market. Located in the historic Capitol Hill neighbourhood, it offers fresh food and handmade arts and crafts.

FUNKY DIVERSIONS

- > For the past eight years, Busboys and Poets (2021 14th St, NW) – which describes itself as “a community where racial and cultural connections are consciously uplifted” – has attracted an eclectic stream of writers, activists, thinkers and dreamers. The perfect spot to sample the subculture of the city.
- > What appears to be the Addams family's lounge is actually the 18th Street Lounge (1212 18th St, NW), where vibrant culture and conversation commingle. With live music and special jazz nights, it's a great place to enjoy DC's nightlife. 🌈



Way to Go

SAA operates daily direct flights from OR Tambo International in Johannesburg to Dulles International, Washington DC. Visit: www.flysaa.com