

# BIPARTISAN ELECTION SPECIAL!



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The  
Results  
Are In!  
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# Best of 2012



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You  
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**You voted for them. We wrote about them.**  
Inside, you'll find readers' picks for the best of everything D.C. has to offer – choices so popular, even these two guys can agree on them.



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**When in the course** of human events it becomes necessary to decide which things in our nation's capital are better than other things, Express runs a Best Of issue. We asked you, the people, to nominate and vote for your favorite restaurants, bars, attractions, people and more (*clearly* the most important election this year). The result is an expression of pure democracy: 34 pages of winners that even Obama and Romney can agree on.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BRIAN TAYLOR

**Written By:** Katie Aberbach, Emma Beck, Christyn Enser, Rudi Greenberg, Vicky Hallett, Beth Marlowe, Lori McCue, Shauna Miller, Holly J. Morris, Kristen Page-Kirby, Morgan Schneider, Holley Simmons and Fiona Zublin



## Dining

### SEAFOOD

#### Hank's Oyster Bar

If we had any doubts about the legitimacy of the "urban beach food" genre, Hank's Oyster Bar put them to rest long ago. Chef-owner Jamie Leeds packs her three locations with stand-out seafood dishes. Raw oysters on the half-shell are a must-order, as are the fried oysters (and other fried seafood specialties, for that matter). Fish entrees rotate seasonally, and you can count on some regular meat and veggie options if you're not a piscivore. The newest incarnation of Hank's, which opened on Capitol Hill over the summer, is home to cocktail guru Gina Chersevani's Eddy Bar. K.A. multiple locations; hanksoysterbar.com.

**2ND | BlackSalt:** 4883 MacArthur Blvd.; 202-342-9101, blacksaltrestaurant.com.

**3RD | Pearl Dive:** 1612 14th St. NW; 202-319-1612, pearldivedc.com. (U Street)

### VEGETARIAN

#### Busboys & Poets

**Explore DC** No matter what your dietary needs, you'll find something substantial and delicious at Busboys & Poets (and it's not just hummus). The menu at the four locations is generous to vegetarians, vegans and gluten-free diners — perfect for such a community-minded business. Sure, you'll find meatloaf and Hawaiian pizza on the menu, but even carnivores are likely to be tempted by non-meat items. Pesto lasagna? Grilled brie panini? Kalamata olive, tomato, spinach and feta pizza? Obviously, everybody wins here. K.A. multiple locations; busboysandpoets.com.

**2ND | Amsterdam Falafelshop:** 2425 18th St. NW; 202-234-1969, falafelshop.com. (Woodley Park) **3RD | Java Green/Cafe Green:** 1020 19th St. NW; 202-775-8899, javagreen.net. (Farragut North)

### DINING | SPECIALTY

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### THAI

#### Thai Tanic

Disregard Thai Tanic's cheesy name, some say. We say, embrace it! The kitsch factor is just one reason to love this cozy Logan Circle spot (and its newer Columbia Heights sister, Thai Tanic II). Other reasons: The kitchen's not afraid of spice, which enlivens standards such as pad thai; vegetarian options abound; and inventive cocktails beckon. K.A. locations in Logan Circle and Columbia Heights; thaitanic.us.

**2ND | Beau Thai:** 1700 New Jersey Ave. NW; 202-536-5636, beauthaidc.com. (Shaw) **3RD | Thai X-ing:** 515 Florida Ave. NW; 202-332-4322, thaix-ing.com. (Shaw)



## Best of 2012



## INDIAN

## Rasika

Ashok Bajaj's restaurant remains the reigning champ (four years and counting) in our Best Indian category. What keeps it on top? Consistency, says executive chef Vikram Sunderam. And the palak chaat, the addictive crispy spinach appetizer cited in just about every review ever written about Rasika. The restaurant's airy West End location opened in March to immediate popularity. One dish that was non-negotiable at the new place: You guessed it, palak chaat. "We would have gotten in a lot of trouble" without it, Sunderam jokes. K.A. multiple locations; [rasikarestaurant.com](http://rasikarestaurant.com).

**2ND | Tiffin:** 1341 University Blvd. East, Takoma Park, Md.; 301-434-9200, [tiffinrestaurant.com](http://tiffinrestaurant.com). **3RD | Masala Art:** 4441 B Wisconsin Ave. NW; 202-362-4441, [masalaartdc.com](http://masalaartdc.com). (Tenleytown)

## ETHIOPIAN

## Dukem

A U Street staple, Dukem is D.C.'s favorite place to eat without forks. (Instead, you scoop up food with pieces of soft, slightly sour injera bread.) Try the tibs, a dish of lamb or beef sautéed with onion, rosemary, jalapeno and Dukem's signature sauce. For those ambitious enough to re-create the experience at home, Dukem's market sells Ethiopian spices and that amazing bread. C.E. 1114-1118 U St. NW; 202-667-8735, [dukemrestaurant.com](http://dukemrestaurant.com). (U Street)

**2ND | Ethiopic:** 401 H St. NE; 202-675-2066, [ethiopicrestaurant.com](http://ethiopicrestaurant.com). (Union Station) **3RD | Meskerem:** 2434 18th St. NW; 202-462-4100, [meskeremethiopianrestaurantdc.com](http://meskeremethiopianrestaurantdc.com). (Woodley Park)

## BARBECUE

## Hill Country

This country-blarin' barbecue joint (with a sister restaurant in NYC) takes its culinary 'cues from central Texas. Meat is coated with a dry rub of kosher salt, black pepper and cayenne, then cooked low and slow over wood imported from the Lone Star State. "It just has the sweetest, softest, loveliest smoke," says executive chef Elizabeth Karmel. "That's where the



JAMES M. THRESHER/TWP

## SUSHI

## Sticky Rice DC

Dishes at Sticky Rice have names as intriguing as their ingredients. Try the Drawn-n-Buttered roll (with shrimp, crab and garlic butter), the Billy Goat's Gruff (broiled yellow tail sashimi with goat cheese) or one of the many vegan and vegetarian options. Their signature Sticky Balls (shut up) can be filled with tuna and crab or veggies. And what's a sushi feast without a bucket of tater tots and a cocktail on the side? Asian pear sangria, please! E.B. 1224 H St. NE; 202-397-7655, [stickyricedc.com](http://stickyricedc.com).

**2ND | Sushi Taro:** 1503 17th St. NW; 202-462-8999, [sushitaro.com](http://sushitaro.com). (Dupont Circle) **3RD | Kushi:** 465 K St. NW; 202-682-3123, [eatkushi.com](http://eatkushi.com). (Mt. Vernon Square)

signature flavor comes from." K.A. 410 7th St. NW; 202-556-2050, [hillcountrywdc.com](http://hillcountrywdc.com). (Archives)

**2ND | Rocklands:** multiple locations; [rocklands.com](http://rocklands.com). **3RD | Red Hot & Blue:** multiple locations; [redhotandblue.com](http://redhotandblue.com).

## SOUTH/CENTRAL AMERICAN

## Oyamel

Here you'll find lesser-known Mexican ingredients such as grasshoppers, beef tongue, cactus and huitlacoche (corn truffle, a sort of plant fungus that's often eaten in tortilla-based dishes like quesadillas). Oyamel takes its devotion to Mexican culture so seriously that it's already looking ahead to this Dec. 21, the date ancient Mayans calculated as the end of time.

Mark your calendar. K.A. 401 7th St. NW; 202-628-1005, [oyamel.com](http://oyamel.com). (Archives)

**2ND | El Tamarindo:** 1785 Florida Ave. NW; 202-328-3660, [eltamarindodc.com](http://eltamarindodc.com). (Dupont Circle) **3RD | Ceiba:** 701 14th St. NW; 202-393-3983, [ceibarestaurant.com](http://ceibarestaurant.com). (McPherson Square)

## MIDDLE EASTERN

## Zaytinya

Our little Zaytinya is all grown up! Celebrating its 10th anniversary this month, the Greek/Turkish/Lebanese small-plates restaurant continues to please. The menu changes seasonally; stand-outs available year-round include hunkar begendi (Turkish braised lamb shank) and kibbeh (Lebanese beef

and bulghur wheat fritters). "There's no fusion in what we do," says head chef Michael Costa. "Most of the modernizing we do is aesthetic." K.A. 701 9th St. NW; 202-638-0800, [zaytinya.com](http://zaytinya.com). (Gallery Place)

**2ND | Lebanese Taverna:** multiple locations; [lebanesetaverna.com](http://lebanesetaverna.com). **3RD | Cava Mezze Grill:** multiple locations; [cavagrill.com](http://cavagrill.com).

## PIE

## Dangerously Delicious Pies

This H Street NE shop and food truck (@ThePieTruckDC) have enabled Washingtonians to indulge in the fantasy of eating pie for every single meal. In this no-longer-unrealistic world of pastry bliss, you might enjoy a spinach-goat cheese quiche for breakfast, pork BBQ pie for lunch and steak chili pie for dinner. Leave room for dessert! There's a slice of the Baltimore Bomb (vanilla chess, topped with Charm City's signature Berger cookies) with your name on it. K.A. 1339 H St. NE; 202-398-7437, [dangerouspiesdc.com](http://dangerouspiesdc.com).

**2ND | Baked & Wired:** 1052 Thomas Jefferson St. NW; 202-333-2500, [bakedandwired.com](http://bakedandwired.com). **3RD | Pie Sisters:** 3423 M St. NW; 202-338-7437, [piesisters.com](http://piesisters.com).

## CUPCAKE

## Baked &amp; Wired

There have been many legendary matchups throughout history: David vs. Goliath; Harry Potter vs. He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named; Teddy vs. the Presidents; Baked & Wired vs. Georgetown Cupcake. Georgetown's other favorite bakery has at last dethroned the pink-packaging behemoth on M Street, without a slingshot, a magic spell or a fake Phillie Phanatic. Try the Texas Sheetcake, a chocolate cupcake gilded with frosting while still warm, and the Flapjack, a maple-brown-butter cupcake topped with candied bacon. M.S. 1052 Thomas Jefferson St. NW; 202-333-2500, [bakedandwired.com](http://bakedandwired.com).

**2ND | Georgetown Cupcake:** multiple locations; [georgetowncupcake.com](http://georgetowncupcake.com). **3RD | Sticky Fingers:** 1370 Park Road NW; 202-299-9700, [stickyfingersbakery.com](http://stickyfingersbakery.com). (Columbia Heights)

SELF-PROMOTION



## Best App

Explore D.C., a free iPhone app from The Washington Post, is a guide to the city's best attractions, big and small. If a Best Of winner has an Explore D.C. icon beside its name, you can find out more about it in the app. Read up on the National Grove of State Trees at the National Arboretum, the history of baseball in D.C., hidden monkey paintings at the National Gallery of Art and Abraham Lincoln's last known descendant. You'll never be bored at a tourist attraction again. Download Explore D.C. today from the App Store.

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## DINING | CASUAL

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## BURGER

## Five Guys

D.C.'s obsession with Five Guys is the result of a simple equation: a fully customizable menu multiplied by more area locations than we care to count. It's America's loss that our homegrown fast-food chain hasn't yet reached the ubiquity of McDonald's nationwide. At two patties thick (the default option) and with 15 free topping options (there are 250,000 possible combinations), the Five Guys burger is a juicy, messy meal that makes a Big Mac look like a small fry. R.G. multiple locations; fiveguys.com.

**2ND | Ray's Hell Burger:** 1725 Wilson Blvd., Arlington; rayshellburger.com. (Rosslyn) **3RD | Good Stuff Eatery:** multiple locations; goodstuffeatery.com.

## PIZZA

## 2Amys

Blisters usually mean hard work and/or a need to rethink one's footwear. The blisters on 2Amy's Neapolitan pizzas' crusts signal hard work and an oven that reaches 900 degrees F. Before entering the furnace, the dough rises for 36 hours. "It has a lot of time to relax and work really slowly into lots of flavor," co-owner Peter Pastan says. Finished pies sport simple classic toppings — fresh mozzarella, pepperoni, olives and peppers, to name a few. M.S. 3715 Macomb St. NW; 202-885-5700; 2amypizza.com.

**2ND | Matchbox:** multiple locations; matchboxchinatown.com. **3RD | Pete's New Haven Style Apizza:** multiple locations; petesapizza.com.



REAGAN KEREKIS/EXPRESS

## SANDWICH

## Taylor Gourmet

This is where President Obama sat down in May to break bread and talk economics with small-business owners, including the shop's leading men, David Mazza and Casey Patten. We can see why: Even if the sandwiches can't single-handedly save the economy, they surely are inspiring. The gold standard is the Pattinson Avenue: roasted pork, broccoli rabe and provolone. Sesame-sprinkled hoagies are Taylor's signature, so if you don't have a need for seed, best reach for one of their six salads. M.S. multiple locations; taylorgourmet.com.

**2ND | SUNdeVICH:** 1314 19th St. NW; sundevich.com. (Dupont Circle) **3RD | Jetties:** multiple locations; jettiesdc.com.



TWP

## BRUNCH

## Founding Farmers

Of the lesser-known inalienable rights, the pursuit of brunch reigns supreme. Founding Farmers offers a weekend spread worth chasing, with red velvet and carrot cake pancakes and bacon that can be glazed four ways. Made-to-order beignets (\$8) are supposed to serve two to three — on the assumption that the one who orders them cares to share. (We make no such assumptions.) Come federal holidays, the weekend brunch extends into Mondays, meaning you might have to put more "exercise" into exercising your rights.

M.S. 1924 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 202-822-8783, wearefoundinfarmers.com. (Farragut West)

**2ND | Tabard Inn:** 1739 N St. NW; 202-331-8528, tabardinn.com. (Farragut North) **3RD | Busboys & Poets:** multiple locations; busboysandpoets.com.

## BAKERY

## Baked &amp; Wired

This Georgetown standard has been around since 2001, before neighborhood rival Georgetown Cupcake was even a sprinkle in its founders' eyes. Co-owner Teresa Velazquez is always trying to improve the recipes, she says, because "to me, nothing is really ever good enough." Branch out beyond the 22 cupcake varieties to delights such as "hippie crack" (granola) and "muffins" (cupcakes without frosting). The Honey Badger, a brownie iced with chocolate and a brown-butter-and-pecan fudgelike frosting, is dangerously habit-forming. Even Velazquez was hooked after her first bite: "I said, 'Oh my God, that's the best brownie I've ever tasted.'" Agreed. M.S. 1052 Thomas Jefferson St. NW; 202-333-2500, bakedandwired.com.

**2ND | The Sweet Lobby:** 404 8th St. SE; 202-544-2404, sweetlobby.com. (Eastern Market) **3RD | Sticky Fingers:** 1370 Park Road NW; 202-299-9700, stickyfingersbakery.com. (Columbia Heights)



## SALAD

## Sweetgreen

This locally grown chain has sprouted 11 locations in the region, all the while amassing as many devotees as it has salad permutations. Locavores will delight in knowing where their kale or apples were harvested, and thirsty herbivores who prefer to swig a salad can try a Sweetpress juice for \$6 or \$7. Shrimp, chicken and tofu are the primary proteins on offer, and bacon lovers can ask for extra sprinkles. M.S. multiple locations; sweetgreen.com

**2ND | Chop't:** multiple locations; choptsalad.com. **3RD | Cosi:** multiple locations; getcosi.com.

## LATE-NIGHT BITE

## Ben's Chili Bowl

Washington, you wouldn't have it any other way. Since 1958, Ben's has been one of the city's favorite eateries at any time of day. But there's nothing quite like fighting the late-night crowd for the snap and spice of Ben's iconic chili-drenched half-smoke. Open until 4 a.m. on weekends, Ben's also benefits from its proximity to U Street's





## Best of 2012

Continued from page B5

many bars and rock clubs, making it a pit stop for music fans, bands and garden-variety drunk people. R.G. 1213 U St. NW; 202-667-0909, benschilibowl.com. (U Street)

**2ND | The Diner:** 2453 18th St. NW; 202-232-8800, dinerdc.com. (Woodley Park)

**3RD | Amsterdam Falafelshop:** 2425 18th St. NW; 202-234-1969, falafelshop.com. (Woodley Park)

### INDIE COFFEE SHOP

#### Tryst Coffeehouse

With specialty beans, an artistic vibe and a “no corporate coffee” motto, this beloved Adams Morgan hangout has all the ingredients of a hipster paradise — except a hipster-heavy clientele. All sorts worship at Tryst’s copper-plated counter and lounge in its couches and armchairs. Stick around long enough and you can add a boozy kick to your latte, as Tryst moonlights as a bar. If the place didn’t close (between midnight and 3 a.m., depending on the day), we’d be hard-pressed to find a reason to leave. M.S. 2459 18th St. NW; 202-232-5500, trystdc.com. (Woodley Park)

**2ND | Big Bear Cafe:** 1700 1st St. NW; Bigbearcafe-dc.com. **3RD | Peregrine Espresso:** locations in Eastern Market, MidCity and Union Market; peregrineespresso.com.

### FROZEN TREAT

#### FroZenYo

D.C.ers are DIY when it comes to dessert. FroZenYo gives customers their own bucket-size cup (you pay by weight) and lets them go wild. Sixteen rotating yogurt flavors offer the freedom to create your own delicious (or disgusting) dessert. Ever mixed maple bacon doughnut yogurt and peppermint yogurt? Now you can! Top your concoction with crushed-up Kit Kats, mochi, Cinnamon Toast Crunch or many other options. FroZenYo is what you make of it. B.M. multiple locations; frozenyo.com.

**2ND | Pitango Gelato:** multiple locations; pitangogelato.com. **3RD | Pleasant Pops:** 1781 Florida Ave. NW; 202-558-5224, pleasantpops.com. (U Street)



### NEW RESTAURANT

#### Toki Underground

Toki Underground is actually on the second floor. The contradictions don’t end there at this uber-hip H Street noodle house. A wood-beam ceiling tops a restaurant that’s a riot of graffiti and anime wallpaper, while Taiwanese-style ramen in a traditional “tonkotsu” broth gets topped with five-spice fried chicken, homemade sriracha sauce and other creative touches from Taipei-born chef Erik Bruner-Yang. He says he’s “honoring the tradition of making ramen,” while pleasing our modern palates. E.B. 1234 H St. NE; 202-388-3086, tokiunderground.com.

**2ND | The Pig:** 1320 14th St. NW; 202-290-2821, thepigdc.com. **3RD | Mintwood Place:** 1813 Columbia Road NW, 202-234-6732, mintwoodplace.com. (Woodley Park)

### DINING | ELEGANT

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### CHEF

#### Jose Andres

It’s tough to keep up with the boundlessly energetic Spaniard who brings us so many gastronomic wonders at his Think Food Group restaurants. If Andres is not in his own kitchens here in D.C., he’s lecturing at Harvard about the “science of soft matter,” hanging out with star chef Anthony Bourdain or representing America abroad as a U.S. “culinary ambassador.” His latest adventure: reopening his avant-garde, tasting-menu-only restaurant, Minibar, on Nov. 2 in a new, larger space (9th and E streets NW). K.A. jose.madeinspain.com.

**2ND | Mike Isabella** of Graffiato (707 6th St. NW; 202-289-3600, graffiatodc.com) and Bandolero (3241 M St. NW; 202-625-4488, bandolerodc.com). **3RD | Ris LaCoste** of Ris: 2275 L St. NW; 202-730-2500, risdc.com.



Jose Andres has an open invitation to cook in our kitchen.

### PLACE TO GO TO IMPRESS SOMEONE

#### Komi

Chef Johnny Monis masterminds Komi’s \$135 prix-fixe meal, which marches menuless from the kitchen and includes upward of 15 courses. Expect no shortage of surprises in the carousel of modern Greek small plates, which may include slow-roasted baby goat with pita and tzatziki, or foie gras and Wagyu beef-tongue gyro. Reservations are capped at parties of four to preserve an intimate feel and can be made only a month in advance. Komi is also closed on Sundays and Mondays, so getting that elusive reservation might impress your date even more than the dining experience itself. M.S. 1509 17th St. NW; 202-332-9200, komirestaurant.com.

**2ND | Rasika:** multiple locations; rasika.restaurant.com. **3RD | Proof:** 775 G St. NW; 202-737-7663, proofdc.com. (Gallery Place)



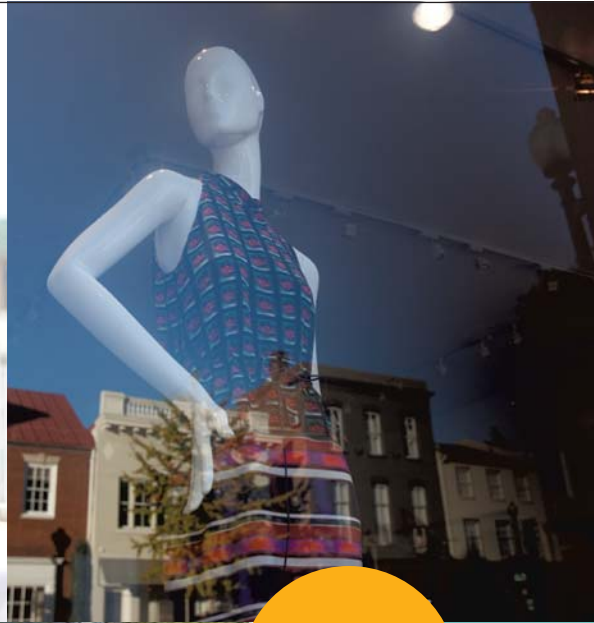
### PLACE TO GO WITH SOMEONE ELSE PAYING

#### Inn at Little Washington

If your date’s pockets are deep, demand a visit to the area’s most notoriously expensive restaurant, where chef Patrick O’Connell serves locally sourced classic French cuisine with a modern twist. Dinner starts at \$158 per person for a six-course meal midweek, excluding beverages, taxes and tip; a high roller can easily spend a few grand. To get your money’s worth, request a behind-the-scenes kitchen tour (it’s gratis for diners). K.A. 309 Middle St., Washington, Va.; 540-675-3800, theinnatlittlewashington.com.

**2ND | Komi:** 1509 17th St. NW; 202-332-9200, komirestaurant.com. (Dupont Circle) **3RD | Citronelle:** temporarily closed; 3000 M St. NW; citronelledc.com.





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## GET THE SCOOP

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For more information on Georgetown's events, go to [www.georgetowndc.com](http://www.georgetowndc.com) and stay updated by subscribing to the official weekly newsletter on all things Georgetown, the **Georgetown BIDness**.



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Hans Burgkmair I and Jost de Negker, *Emperor Maximilian I on Horseback* (detail), 1508/1516, chiaroscuro woodcut, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Rosenwald Collection

## Imperial Augsburg Renaissance Prints and Drawings, 1475–1540

West Building through December 31

Don't miss this Sunday's lecture by exhibition curator Gregory Jecmen at 2:00 p.m. in the East Building Auditorium. Catalogue signing follows.

The exhibition was organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington. It is supported in part by a generous grant from the Thaw Charitable Trust.

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## Best of 2012



## DINING | MOBILE

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Economics

## FOOD TRUCK (SWEET)

## Pleasant Pops

This ice cream truck for grown-ups serves sophisticated flavors — try honey lavender or Mexican chocolate — at farmers markets all over town. B.M. [pleasantpops.com](http://pleasantpops.com) and [@pleasantpops](https://twitter.com/pleasantpops).

**2ND** | **Curbside Cupcakes:** 202-495-0986, [curbsidecupcakes.com](http://curbsidecupcakes.com) and [@curbsidecupcake](https://twitter.com/curbsidecupcake). **3RD** | **Dangerously Delicious:** 202-398-7437, [dangerouspiesdc.com](http://dangerouspiesdc.com) and [@thepietruckdc](https://twitter.com/thepietruckdc).

## FOOD TRUCK (SAVORY)

## Red Hook Lobster Pound

Order a lobster roll Connecticut-style (poached in butter) or Maine-style (in lemon mayo), or tuck into a shrimp roll or whoopie pie. B.M. 202-341-6263, [redhooklobsterdc.com](http://redhooklobsterdc.com) and [@lobstertruckdc](https://twitter.com/lobstertruckdc).

**2ND** | **Fojol Bros:** [fojol.com](http://fojol.com), [@fojlbros](https://twitter.com/fojlbros). **3RD** | **TaKorean:** [takorean.com](http://takorean.com), [@takorean](https://twitter.com/takorean).

## FARMERS MARKET

## Eastern Market

**Explore DC** Pick up fish, flowers or fancy cheeses in the South Hall six days a week. On weekends the market sprawls onto the sidewalks, where farmers hawk produce and artists sell their quirky wares. C.E. 225 7th St. SE; 202-698-5253, [easternmarket-dc.org](http://easternmarket-dc.org). (Eastern Market)

**2ND** | **Dupont Circle Farmers Market:** 20th Street NW between Massachusetts and Connecticut avenues; 202-362-8889, [freshfarmmarkets.org](http://freshfarmmarkets.org). (Dupont Circle) **3RD** | **Mt. Pleasant Farmers Market:** 3200 Mount Pleasant St. NW; [mtpfm.org](http://mtpfm.org). (Columbia Heights)



## Nightlife



## BAR GAMES

## H Street Country Club

The main attraction here is the D.C.-themed putt-putt course, where you're allowed to sip scotch while whacking balls at a wee Lincoln Memorial. There's also skee-ball, shuffleboard and an Xbox Kinect. The food is unpretentious Mexican, and on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, you get a free round of minigolf with dinner. F.Z. 1335 H St. NE; 202-399-4722, [thehstreetcountryclub.com](http://thehstreetcountryclub.com).

**2ND** | **Buffalo Billiards:** 1330 19th St. NW; 202-331-7665, [dc.buffalobilliards.com](http://dc.buffalobilliards.com). (Dupont Circle) **3RD** | **Rocket Bar:** 714 7th St. NW; 202-628-7665, [rocketbardc.com](http://rocketbardc.com). (Gallery Place)

EDITOR'S  
PICKBest Place  
To Vote  
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Dollars

Cast a "vote" at Policy when you order the red Pomegra "Mitt" Mojito or the blue Basil "Barack" Berry from now until election. (Note: Vote not official.)



## BARTENDER

Chad Spangler,  
Founding Farmers

The secret to running a good bar, says Chad Spangler of Founding Farmers, is consistency. (We say a killer smile doesn't hurt either.) Spangler, who tends bar six nights a week, pours from the most complex cocktail menu in town, the brainchild of mixologist Jon Arroyo. "When you're dealing with big drinks that are teetering on balance," he says, "even adding an extra half-teaspoon of something can change the flavor profile." Spangler ensures that your Queen's Park Swizzle, Organic Cucumber Delight or Nice Coat! tastes exactly the same every time. B.M. 1924 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 202-822-8783, [wearefoundingfarmers.com](http://wearefoundingfarmers.com). (Farragut West)

**2ND** | **Gina Chersevani:** Hank's Oyster Bar: multiple locations; [hanksoysterbar.com](http://hanksoysterbar.com). **3RD** | **Rhyd Davies:** Black Squirrel: 2427 18th St. NW; 202-232-1011, [black-squirrel-dc.com](http://black-squirrel-dc.com). (Woodley Park)

HAPPY HOUR &  
COCKTAIL MENU

## Policy

Though the corporate-cool decor might turn off those looking for a cozy neighborhood bar, Policy has all the necessary ingredients for a relaxed evening with friends: a long happy hour (5-8 p.m. Tue.-Fri., 2:30-7 p.m. Sat.) with low prices and decent food. You can get all manner of upscale small plates and complex, interesting drinks for \$5 each. The cocktail menu is full of weird discoveries, including the sweet bourbon Kentucky Ninja and a terrifying concoction called the Absinthe Drip. F.Z. 1904 14th St. NW; 202-387-7654,



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## Best of 2012



Continued from page B9

policydc.com. (U Street)

## HAPPY HOUR

**2ND | Hank's Oyster Bar:** multiple locations; hanksoysterbar.com.  
**3RD | Lima Lounge:** 1401 K St. NW; 202-789-2800, limaloungedc.com. (McPherson Square)

## COCKTAIL MENU

**2ND | Founding Farmers:** 1924 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 202-822-8783, wearefoundingfarmers.com. (Farragut West)  
**3RD | The Passenger:** 1021 7th St. NW; 202-393-0220, passengerdc.com. (Mt. Vernon Square)

## SPORTS/GAY BAR

## Nellie's Sports Bar

Every night at Nellie's there's a different activity — poker, drag bingo, trivia. Or you can just sit and take in a game at D.C.'s only gay sports bar, which boasts a thriving community of regulars, beer by the bucket, a beat-the-clock happy hour where beers get more expensive every hour, and a spacious, friendly rooftop to while away warm autumn nights. You can catch Redskins and United games as well as NASCAR, golf and "The Golden Girls." A popular post-game haunt for amateur athletes, it's a good place to meet fit young folks freshly triumphant from the field. F.Z. 900 U St. NW; 202-332-6355, nellieessportsbar.com. (U Street)

## SPORTS BAR

**2ND | Buffalo Billiards:** 1330 19th St. NW; 202-331-7665, dc.buffalobilliards.com. (Dupont Circle)  
**3RD | Public Bar:** multiple locations, publicbar.co. (Dupont Circle)

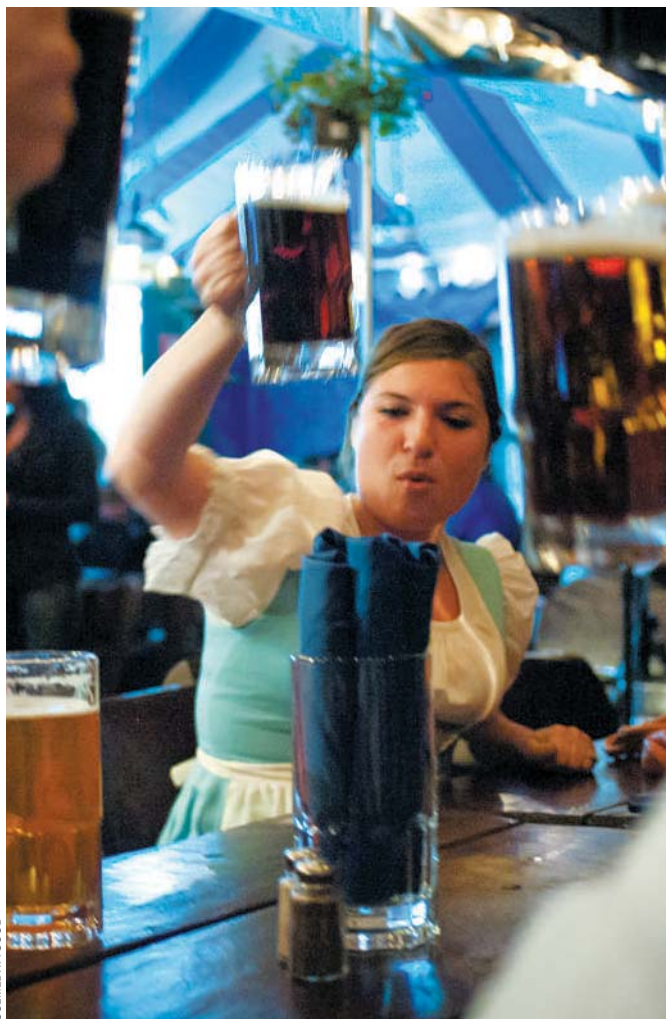
## GAY BAR

**2ND | Town Danceboutique:** 2009 8th St. NW; 202-234-8696, towndc.com. (Shaw)  
**3RD | Cobalt:** 1639 R St. NW; 202-232-4416, cobaltdc.com. (Dupont Circle)

## DIVE BAR

## Wonderland Ballroom

Wonderland boasts the best of a classic D.C. bar — intense trivia



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## OUTDOOR DRINKING

## Biergarten Haus

You never know how large a liter actually is until someone plops a liter of beer in front of you and expects you to drink it all. This is nearly everyone's introduction to Biergarten Haus. The patio goes on forever and bears as much resemblance to rural Germany as Disney's Frontierland bears to the Old West. But you're not there for authenticity, you're there for happy hour. And then you're there past happy hour, because you forgot how to walk. F.Z. 1355 H St. NE; 202-388-4085, biergartenhaus.com.

**2ND | Poste:** 555 8th St. NW; 202-783-6060, postebrasserie.com. (Gallery Place)  
**3RD | Standard:** 1801 14th St. NW; standarddc.com. (U Street)

nights, bathroom graffiti that references local politics — without the "I work for a senator" pick-up lines. The counters aren't too sticky, and the rail drinks taste like the bartenders are rationing ginger ale for fear of a shortage. There's brunch on weekend mornings to soothe your

hangover (or start a new one, with \$11 bottomless mimosas). F.Z. 1101 Kenyon St. NW; 202-232-5263, thewonderlandballroom.com. (Columbia Heights)

**2ND | The Pug:** 1234 H St. NE; thepugdc.com.  
**3RD | Dan's Cafe:** 2315 18th St. NW; 202-265-0299.

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Thursday, November 15. 8PM

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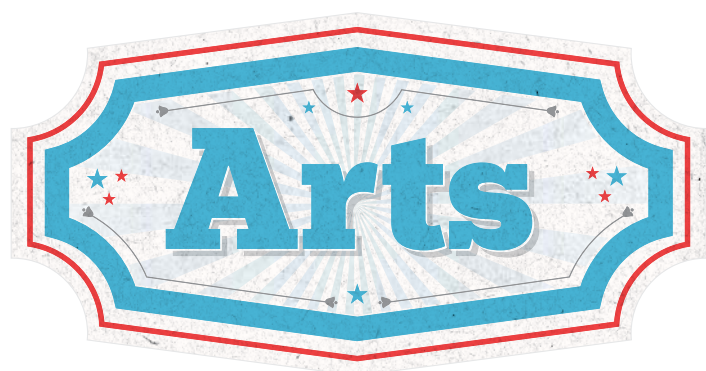
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## MUSEUM

**National Gallery of Art**

The NGA's collections run from hands-down classic to mind-bogglingly modern. Warm up your inner art historian in the West Building with a Da Vinci or a Van Gogh. Head to the East Building to ponder the avant-garde. Nerd bonus: Traveling between the buildings takes you through a "Twilight Zone"-esque underground installation called "Multiverse." It's not the only work that will make you feel like you've entered another dimension. We're looking at you, Sol LeWitt. M.S. 4th Street and Constitution Avenue NW; 202-737-4215, nga.gov. (Archives)

**2ND | Newseum:** 555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 888-639-7386, newseum.com. (Archives) **3RD | Hirshhorn:** Independence Avenue and 7th Street SW; 202-633-1000, hirshhorn.si.edu. (L'Enfant Plaza)

## READINGS

**Politics and Prose**

When husband and wife Bradley Graham and Lissa Muscatine bought P&P in 2011, they knew running it would be a balancing act. "We wanted to preserve it as the iconic and treasured institution it had become," said Muscatine. "We also needed to make sure it was relevant and modern in the ways it needed to be to survive." New offerings (such as this winter's trip to India's Jaipur Literature Festival) now accompany the always-smart slate of author appearances. Nobel Prize-winner Orhan Pamuk reads on Nov. 19. F.Z. 5015 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-364-1919, politics-prose.com. (Van Ness)

**2ND | Busboys & Poets:** multiple locations; busboysandpoets.com. **3RD | Library of Congress:** 101 Independence Ave. SE; 202-707-5000, loc.gov. (Capitol South)

## GALLERY

**Hillyer Art Space**

The Hillyer is one of the best places to spend First Fridays, the gallery crawl in which all of Dupont's art spaces put out wine and crackers. A \$5 cover will get you live music, art shows that are weird enough to satisfy but not so weird that you have no idea what they're about, and the chance to rub elbows with D.C.'s young and beautiful. Go during the day to check out the socially progressive, sometimes interactive work without the crowds. F.Z. 9 Hillyer Ct. NW; 202-338-0680, artsandartists.org/hillyer.html. (Dupont Circle)

**2ND | Long View Gallery:** 1234 9th St. NW; 202-232-4788, longviewgallerydc.com. (Mt. Vernon Square) **3RD | Gallery Plan B:** 1530 14th St. NW; 202-234-2711, galleryplanb.com. (U Street)

## THEATER (BIG)

**Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts**

This category is like Goliath vs. Optimus Prime: The Kennedy Center is six theaters. Other spaces are dwarfed by such real estate and the quantity of world-class performances it accommodates. Touring Broadway shows stop here, as do such hard-core theater-nerd companies as Druid Theatre Company (now presenting "Druid Murphy," a three-play cycle about Irish emigration). The Millennium Stage hosts a free show every day at 6 p.m. Also free: a stroll on the terrace overlooking the Potomac. F.Z. 2700 F St. NW; 202-467-4600, kennedy-center.org. (Foggy Bottom)

**2ND | Arena Stage:** 1101 6th St. SW; 202-488-3300, arenastage.org. (Waterfront) **3RD | Shakespeare Theatre Company** (Sidney Harman Hall): 610 F St. NW; 202-547-1122, shakespearetheatre.org. (Gallery Place)



COURTESY WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY

## THEATER (SMALL)

**Woolly Mammoth Theatre**

Big plays make early stops at this 265-seat theater. "Clybourne Park," staged at Woolly in 2010, won a Pulitzer in 2011 and a Tony in 2012. Mike Daisey workshopped "The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs" here; he'll debut another original monologue, "American Utopias," at Woolly next spring. "Our job is to be out on the front edges of the American theater looking for that next exciting voice, that next aesthetic innovation," says managing director Jeffrey Herrmann. F.Z. 641 D St. NW; 202-393-3939, woollymammoth.net. (Archives)

**2ND | Folger Theatre:** 201 East Capitol St. SE; 202-544-7077, folger.edu/theatre. (Capitol South) **3RD | Atlas Performing Arts Center:** 1333 H St. NE; 202-399-7993, atlasarts.org.

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## MOVIE THEATER

**Landmark E Street Cinema**

E Street's well-chosen selection of indies, foreign films and revival pics attracts the nerdiest film fans in the city. (We mean that in the most positive of ways.) Also, cellphones never work in this underground location, so the urge to kill in-movie texters vanishes. K.P.K.

555 11th St. NW; 202-452-7672, landmarktheatres.com. (Metro Center)

**2ND | Arlington Cinema & Drafthouse:** 2903 Columbia Pike, Arlington; 703-486-2345, arlingtondrafthouse.com. **3RD | AFI Silver Theater:** 8633 Colesville Road, Silver Spring; 301-495-6700, afi.com/silver. (Silver Spring)





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## Best of 2012



### AMATEUR SPORTS LEAGUE

#### Happy Hour Kickball

There's no stopping everyone's favorite childhood recess game turned boozy, after-work sport, which powered past the girls on roller skates for the win. With a summer season that runs from April to July and a fall season from August to November, you have multiple opportunities to try out this four-time defending Best Of champion. It helps that the Bethesda-based Happy Hour Kickball family includes dodgeball (January to March), softball (April through June) and bowling (March through April) leagues, proving that any game that was fun when you were a kid is still just as fun. R.G. [happyhourkickball.com](http://happyhourkickball.com).

**2ND** | **DC Rollergirls:** [dcrollergirls.com](http://dcrollergirls.com).

**3RD** | **DC Bocce League:** [dcbocce.com](http://dcbocce.com).

### SPORTS VENUE

#### Nationals Park

**Explore DC** Winning is contagious. Either that or you guys really love the food at Nationals Park. With eternal favorite — and 2012 Best Of winner — Ben's Chili Bowl occupying concession space along with the ever-popular Hard Times Cafe and Shake Shack, we're not surprised Nats Park repeated as D.C.'s top sports venue. Throw in scenic views of the Capitol and the fan-favorite Presidents Race, and you've got a combination that's hard to beat. R.G. 1500 S. Capitol St. SE; 202-675-6287, [washington.nationals.mlb.com](http://washington.nationals.mlb.com). (Navy Yard)

**2ND** | **Verizon Center:** 601 F St. NW; 202-628-3200, [verizoncenter.com](http://verizoncenter.com). (Gallery Place)

**3RD** | **RFK Stadium:** 2400 East Capitol St. SE; 202-587-5000. (Stadium-Armory)



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### COLLEGE TEAM

#### University of Maryland Terrapins

We're going to assume it was the University of Maryland football team's pride jerseys — which, for better or worse, prominently display the Maryland state flag — that helped the Terrapins eke out a victory over the Georgetown Hoyas for favorite college team this year. It certainly couldn't have been the football team itself, whose performance of late has been dismal, nor the men's basketball team, which missed the postseason for the second-straight year last season. Maybe the women got out the vote: Maryland's field hockey team won a national championship in 2011, as did the women's lacrosse team in 2010. R.G. [umterps.com](http://umterps.com).

**2ND** | **Georgetown Hoyas:** [guhoyas.com](http://guhoyas.com). **3RD** | **George Washington University Colonials:** [gwsports.com](http://gwsports.com).

### D.C. TEAM/ATHLETE/COACH

#### D.C. Team: Nationals Athlete: Bryce Harper Coach: Davey Johnson

It should come as no surprise that the Nationals disposed of their Best Of 2012 opponents as decisively as they did the rest of the National League en route to a remarkable 98-win season and their first division title since arriving in D.C. in 2005. Not only did the Nats snatch the Best D.C. Team title from the NHL's locked-out Capitals, but 20-year-old rookie phenom Bryce Harper (Best Athlete) and 69-year-old manager Davey Johnson (Best Coach) also dominated the voting. Harper edged out that other hot rookie, Redskins starting quarterback Robert Griffin III, while perennial winner Alex Ovechkin fell to third place. Johnson, meanwhile, in his first full year behind the Nationals' bench, handily defeated Redskins coach Mike Shanahan. If only the Nats could have done the same to the Cardinals. The Nationals' playoff run ended in a soul-crushing Game 5 defeat, but they still gave Washington fans the most exciting season of baseball since 1933. And that's worth cheering for. R.G.

#### D.C. TEAM

**2ND** | **Washington Capitals**

**3RD** | **Washington Redskins**

#### ATHLETE

**2ND** | **Robert Griffin III**

**3RD** | **Alex Ovechkin**

#### COACH

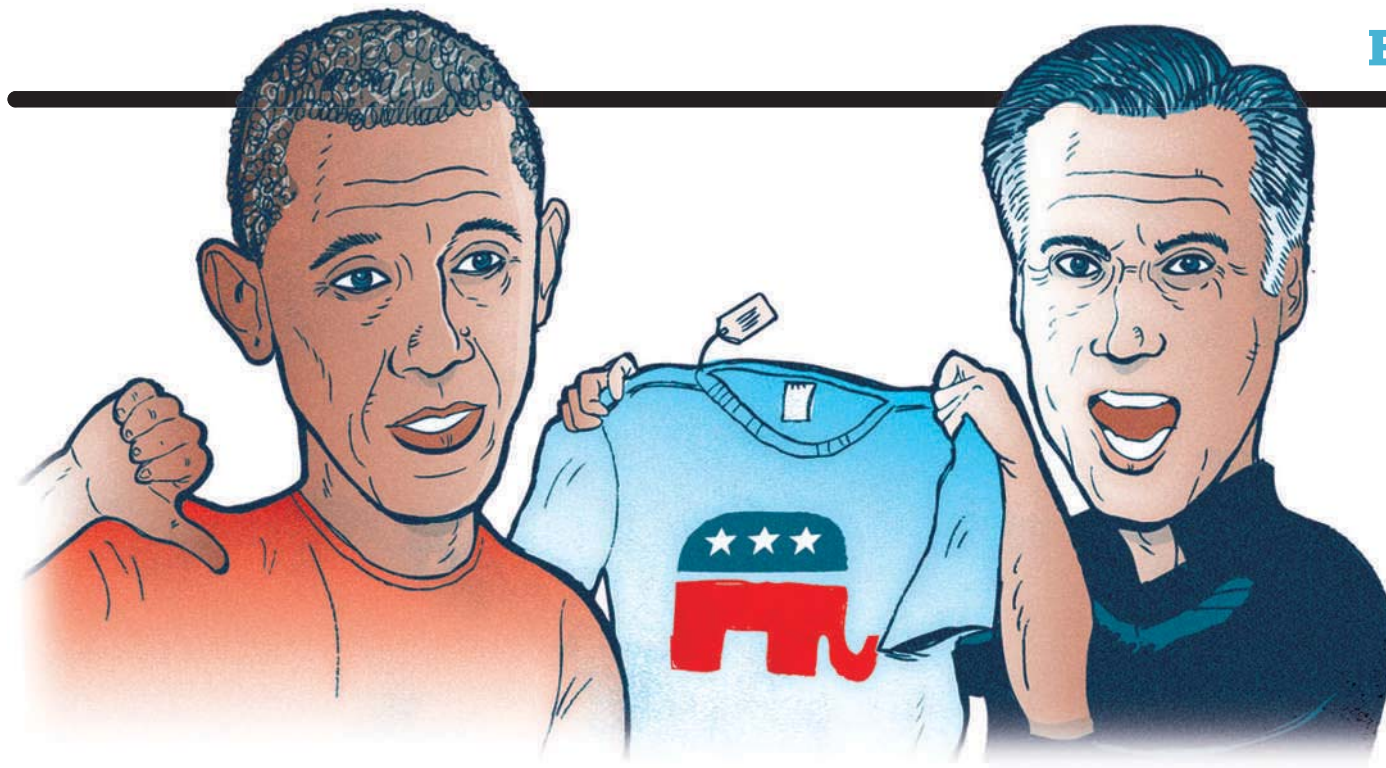
**2ND** | **Mike Shanahan**

**3RD** | **Ben Olsen**





## Best of 2012



## Shopping

## GIFT SHOP

**Pulp**

Like falling headfirst into a humungous Christmas stocking, Pulp — now in its 10th year — engulfs you in trinkets and thingamabobs. The D.C.-themed gifts will make even the most serious wonks chuckle, while heartfelt and humorous greeting cards will help you convey exactly what you're feeling. When asked what makes for the perfect gift, manager Raven Bradburn says, "Anything with a positive message. Or something so silly you can only think of one person for it." H.S. 1803 14th St. NW; 202-462-7857, pulp-dc.com. (U Street)

**2ND | National Building Museum Gift Shop:** 401 F St. NW; 202-272-2448, nbm.org. (Judiciary Square) **3RD | Chocolate Moose:** 1743 L St. NW; 202-463-0992, chocolatemooseedc.com. (Farragut North)

## LOCAL HARDWARE STORE

**Logan Hardware**

DIY-ers and construction workers alike feel right at home at Logan Hardware.

With more than 25,000 items in stock and staffers who go out of their way to help (one salesman escorted us to the second floor just to make sure we found the proper brass hook), it's a locally owned, big-box alternative for your small-scale home improvement projects. Housed since 2003 in what was once a car dealership on P Street, this member of the Ace Hardware network remains a neighborhood favorite. H.S. 1416 P St. NW; 202-265-8900.

**2ND | Frager's Hardware:** 1115 Pennsylvania Ave. SE; 202-543-6157, fragersdc.com. (Eastern Market) **3RD | Community Forklift:** 4671 Tanglewood Drive, Edmonston, Md.; 301-985-5180, communityforklift.com.

## SPECIALTY FOOD STORE

**Cowgirl Creamery**

The first Cowgirl Creamery was born in 1997 in a tiny old barn about an hour north of San Francisco. The founders have D.C. roots, though: "The owners are originally from the D.C. area, so they wanted to set up a shop where they came from," says Adam Smith,

## EDITOR'S PICK

**Best Spot To Freshen Up Your Patriotism**

Do you have mints proclaiming your intention to vote for Romney or Obama? You need them. Don't be deterred by the tourists and pick some up at Honest Abe's Souvenir Shop in Penn Quarter. 1000 F St. NW; 202-783-0505, honestabessouvenir.com. (Metro Center)

## SHOPPING | MISC.

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manager of the D.C. retail shop. You'll find 60 to 80 varieties of cheese, including the slightly spicy Devil's Gulch and a triple-cream dream known as Mt. Tam. The shop is more than just curds. "We have beer, wine and sandwiches during the day and pour-over coffee in the mornings," Smith says. H.S. 919 F St. NW; 202-393-6880, cowgirlcreamery.com. (Gallery Place)

**2ND | Schneider's of Capitol Hill:** 300 Massachusetts Ave. NE; 202-543-9300, cellar.com. (Union Station) **3RD | Rodman's:** 5100 Wisconsin Ave. NW; 202-363-3466, rodmans.com. (Friendship Heights)

## PET STORE

**Metro Mutts**

District doggies and their obedient owners have loved Metro Mutts since 2009. Run by two husband-and-wife duos, the pet paradise caters to both canines and felines. In addition to all-natural chow from Versus and eco-

friendly toys from Cycle Dog, both Capitol Hill locations offer dog walking and pet sitting for when you need a little time away from your best friend. H.S. multiple locations; metromuttsdc.com. (Union Station)

**2ND | The Big Bad Woof:** multiple locations; thebigbadwoof.com. **3RD | Doggy Style Bakery, Boutique and Pet Store:** 1825 18th St. NW; 202-667-0595, doggiestylebakery.com. (Dupont Circle)

## VINTAGE STORE

**Miss Pixie's**

It's hard to choose our favorite aspect of this 14th Street NW home goods store. It could be the quirky portraits for sale, the rare Hollywood Regency sofas you can score or the free mini-chocolate chip cookies Miss Pixie (aka Pixie Windsor) herself bakes fresh every morning. The shop replenishes its stock on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, so every week brings new finds. Expect items on the mod side of 20th-century style: "My favorite eras are the '60s and '70s," says Windsor. "We also do a lot of industrial and mid-century pieces." H.S. 1626 14th St. NW; 202-232-8171, Misspixies.com.

**2ND | Annie Creamcheese:** closed, alas! **3RD | PollySue's Vintage Shop:** 6915 Laurel Ave., Takoma Park, Md.; 301-270-5511, pollysues.com. (Takoma)

## HOME STORE

**Community Forklift**

Resourceful DIY-ers adore this 34,000-square-foot warehouse of donated building materials and housewares. Set designers, too, we hypothesize — where else are you going to find a 1930s toilet? The Salvage Arts section, stocked with affordable vintage lab glass, light fixtures, blacksmith tools and more, makes the appalling prices of 1950s potato-chip tins on Fab and Etsy even more appalling. Forklift gives you a week to pick up your haul, so there's time to borrow a long-suffering friend's truck. H.J.M. 4671 Tanglewood Drive, Edmonston, Md.; 301-985-5180, communityforklift.com.

**2ND | Home Rule:** 1807 14th St. NW; 202-797-5544, homerule.com. (U Street) **3RD | Home Goods:** multiple locations; homegoods.com.



## Best of 2012



## SHOPPING | CLOTHING

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COME OUT AND PLAY



ELVERT BARNES

## WOMEN'S CLOTHING

## Proper Topper

If the popularity of this Dupont boutique is any indication, little is a big hit. Owner Anna Fuhrman jam-packs her tiny store from floor to ceiling with quirky home goods, cooking curiosities and, obviously, hats from leading milliners around the world. But you'd be remiss to overlook the feminine dresses, tops and bottoms from such fancy-pants designers as Tracy Reese and Yoana Baraschi, which make up about one-third of the store's stock. H.S. 1350 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-842-3055, [proPERTOPPER.com](http://proPERTOPPER.com). (Dupont Circle)

**2ND | Nana:** 3068 Mt. Pleasant St. NW; 202-667-6955, [nanadc.com](http://nanadc.com). (Columbia Heights) **3RD | Violet Boutique:** 2439 18th St. NW; 202-621-9225, [violetdc.com](http://violetdc.com). (Woodley Park)

**Secondi:** 1702 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-667-1122, [secondi.com](http://secondi.com). (Dupont Circle)

[universalgear.com](http://universalgear.com).

## ACCESSORIES

## Lou Lou Boutique

If you've never been to Lou Lou Boutique, you may feel a bit overwhelmed on your first visit. (And how have you been getting dressed every morning?) The Virginia-born accessories shop, which has locations in the District and Maryland, is drenched in sophisticated baubles, bangles and rings in every color of the rainbow. Trying on the goods is encouraged and will make you feel like you're playing an adult version of Pretty Pretty Princess. H.S. multiple locations; [loulouboutiques.com](http://loulouboutiques.com).

**2ND | Proper Topper:** 1350 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-842-3055, [proPERTOPPER.com](http://proPERTOPPER.com). (Dupont Circle) **3RD | Charm:** 2910 M St. NW; 202-298-0420, [charmgeorgetown.com](http://charmgeorgetown.com).

## MEN'S CLOTHING

## Streets of Georgetown

You see them everywhere: men in khakis and button-down shirts. While there's nothing wrong with this tried-and-true look, Streets of Georgetown is out to revamp men's style in D.C. one trim-fitted blazer at a time. Look for suits from Hickey Freeman, polos inspired by golf great Bobby Jones, and prep ties from Hart Schaffner Marx. For fellas who aren't speaking our sartorial language, think of it as a mix between J. Crew and Brooks Brothers. H.S. 1254 Wisconsin Ave. NW; 202-295-9098, [streetsclothier.com](http://streetsclothier.com).

**2ND | Lost Boys:** 1033 31st St. NW; 202-333-0093. **3RD | Universal Gear:** 1529 14th St. NW; 202-319-0136,

## CONSIGNMENT STORE

## Current Boutique

Imagine an impeccably dressed friend opening the doors to her closet and telling you, "Have at it!" That's what a trip to Current Boutique feels like. The resale shop, born in Clarendon and now with three more locations, sells new and gently worn brand-name dresses, work wear and accessories. "We look for quality items with good construction made with natural fabrics," says owner Carmen Lopez. Expect gems such as DVF wrap dresses, Anthropologie sweaters and flirty frocks from Alice + Olivia. H.S. multiple locations; [currentboutique.com](http://currentboutique.com).

**2ND | Mustard Seed:** 7439 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda; 301-907-4699, [mustardseedshop.com](http://mustardseedshop.com). (Bethesda) **3RD |**

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# B.I.O.

BY INVITATION ONLY: UPCOMING WEDDINGS & UNIONS

Nice couples. Nice stories.  
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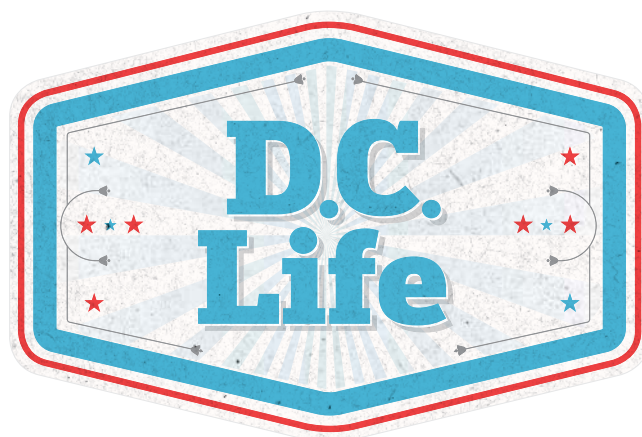


express

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If you'd like to see your wedding or commitment ceremony in B.I.O., send your favorite informal photograph (wacky is fine, but no formal engagement photos, please), plus your names and ceremony date to [weddings@readexpress.com](mailto:weddings@readexpress.com). Please contact us at least one month before your ceremony. We'll get back to you with questions.





## D.C. LIFE | COMMUTING

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## BIKE LANE

## 15th Street NW

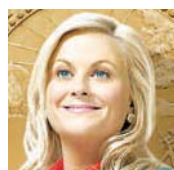
As long as idiots haven't parked their cars in it, this two-way track offers cyclists a speedy trip through downtown. The separation from automobile traffic makes it especially popular, according to the city's transportation department, which has counted as many as 355 riders per hour whizzing through the intersection of 15th and P streets NW. The lane will get serious competition this fall when a similar, albeit one-way, track is installed on L Street. It'll be painted green, but it's 15th that may be envious. V.H.

**2ND | Pennsylvania Avenue 3RD | East Capitol Street**

## BUS LINE

## Circulator

The 42 inspired a romantic rock song this year — Rene Moffatt's "Route 42" — but still came in second behind the city's Circulator buses. It's not a completely fair fight: The fleet of red coaches travels five routes and covers a huge

EDITOR'S  
PICKBest  
Depiction  
Of D.C.  
Culture in  
Popular  
Culture

Plenty of programs — including Showtime's "Homeland" and ABC's "Scandal" — purport to represent our city. But we have been most impressed by NBC's "Parks and Rec," which actually filmed here and seems to pay the most attention to what it's like to live here. See characters eat from a food truck, get stuck in motorcade traffic and try to manage self-important Hill interns. We've all been there.



swath of territory. It also couldn't have hurt that while fares for Metrobuses (including the 42) were raised to \$1.60 in July, it's still just a buck to hop on the Circulator. V.H.

**2ND | 42 3RD | X2**

## METRO LINE

## They're All Bad

We asked Metro riders to choose a favorite line, but the overwhelming response was loud and clear: "They're all bad." That's not surprising. You're pretty much guaranteed to have a stressful commute no matter which line you take. Red riders have put up with an out-of-service Dupont exit and closed stations. Blue Liners feel abandoned during Rush Plus. Everyone deals with hot cars, odd odors and perpetual weekend track work. If anything can unite a

city known for its partisan divide, it's complaining about Metro. V.H.

**2ND | Red Line 3RD | Green Line**

## METRO STATION

## Gallery Place

Folks must like getting crushed, because a station that's become notorious for overcrowding landed the most votes. Its appeal more likely comes from what's aboveground at Gallery Place — namely, the city's most bustling entertainment district. That, or there are a heck of a lot of fans of that rainbow light art near the station's 7th and H Street exit (its official name: "The Glory of the Chinese Descendants"). V.H.

**2ND | Union Station 3RD | Dupont Circle**

## D.C. LIFE | SOCIAL

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## PLACE TO MEET PEOPLE

## Eastern Market

**Explore DC** If you've got 576 friends on Facebook and still spend your Friday nights watching reruns of "The Big Bang Theory," it's time to make some real-life buddies. Eastern Market combines all the food groups (fruit, vegetables, meat, pastries, soaps and jewelry), thus attracting the coolest people in the District. Just ask how you can use that heirloom pumpkin you just bought and you've got five recipes and three friends. K.P.K. 225 Seventh St. SE; 202-698-5253, easternmarket-dc.org. (Eastern Market)

**2ND | Kramerbooks and Afterwords:**

1517 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-387-1400, kramers.com. (Dupont Circle) **3RD | Wonderland Ballroom:** 1101 Kenyon St. NW; 202-232-5263, thewonderlandballroom.com. (Columbia Heights)

## DATE SPOT

## Georgetown Waterfront

When dinner and a movie just won't cut it, Express readers turn to the Georgetown Waterfront. In the park, you can meander down paths and pretend you're not in a city at all. Washington Harbour, the commercial food-drink-fun complex, offers dining, steps that lead right down to the Potomac, and a come-on-in-the-water's-fine fountain where you and your date can play like kids in a lawn sprinkler. K.P.K. Georgetown, D.C.; georgetownwaterfrontpark.org.

**2ND | Zaytinya:** 701 Ninth St. NW; 202-638-0800, zaytinya.com. (Gallery Place)

**3RD | POV at the W Hotel:** 515 15th St. NW; pointofviewdc.com. (Metro Center)





## Best of 2012

Continued from page B19

### PLACE TO SEE FAMOUS PEOPLE

#### Georgetown

"Look, Honey! George Will!" won't quicken any US Weekly addict's pulse. Wannabe-paparazzos should stake out Georgetown, where that scruffy dude in a baseball hat and sunglasses could be Brad Pitt. Suggested stalking locations include Café Milano, where George Clooney is a repeat customer, and Bourbon Steak, at which Robert Redford and Adam Levine (who let him in?) dined this spring. Mick Jagger and fashion designer L'Wren Scott were seen at Filomena in February, and Drake and his entourage were spotted out shopping in June. K.P.K. Georgetown, Washington, D.C.

**Old Ebbitt Grill:** 675 15th St. NW; 202-347-4800, ebbitt.com. (Metro Center)

**POV at the W Hotel:** 515 15th St. NW; pointofviewdc.com. (Federal Triangle)



### VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

#### DC Central Kitchen

Since its founding in 1989, DC Central Kitchen has been fighting hunger on multiple fronts. The charity sends 5,000 meals a day to local homeless shelters, after-school programs and other destinations; offers training for culinary jobs; delivers produce to stores in D.C.'s food deserts; and serves fresh, healthy meals to low-income D.C. schoolkids. K.P.K. 425 2nd St. NW; 202-234-0707; dccentralkitchen.org. (Judiciary Square)

**2ND | Food and Friends:** 219 Riggs Road NE; 202-269-2277, foodandfriends.org. (Fort Totten) **Hope 3RD | Connections for Cancer Support:** 5430 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda; 301-493-5002, hopeconnectionsforcancer.org. (Bethesda)

### D.C. LIFE | LEARNING

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## NEWSEUM

### ART CLASSES

#### Capitol Hill Arts Workshop

The course list at CHAW reminds us how much we wanted to take all these classes in college but didn't because we thought Journalism 101 would lead to a stable career. It's good to know it's not too late! "We get quite accomplished artists and people who have never put brush to paper," says director Jill Strachan. Beading and fabric dying in "Beautiful Fiber Arts" or bookmaking in "Bound and Scored" both sound like solid resume boosters. L.M. 545 Seventh St. SE; 202-547-6839, chaw.org. (Eastern Market)

**2ND | Art Jamz:** 1742 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-709-8078, artjamzdc.com. (Dupont Circle)

### LANGUAGE CLASSES

#### Alliance Francaise Washington

Google Translate is of limited value when you're in Paris and really need to pee or discuss existentialism. Learn the language of love from Alliance Francaise, which offers training for babies (as young as 12 months), kids, teens and adults. Courses have adorable names like Phonétique (a look at the French accent) and Perfectionnement! (a brush-up course). Registration is still open for several fall classes. H.J.M. Alliance Francaise Washington: multiple locations; francedc.org.

**2ND | Spanish Black Belt:** multiple locations; spanishblackbelt.com.



DAYNA SMITH/TWP

### COOKING CLASSES

#### LivingSocial 918 F Street

"Connecting with local chefs and cooking with other people is part of what LivingSocial is about," says Alex Michael, general manager of entertainment for the coupon giant's culinary venture. The one-off classes cover such topics as brunch cooking, cupcake baking and paella making; one upcoming offering is ominously titled "Sausage Making Class + Beer." Guest chefs — Sandra Panetta of Sweetbites food truck and Jaleo's Ramon Martinez are two — make the \$60 to \$100 price tag more than worth it. Classes are held in a state-of-the-art, 44-seat kitchen with TV monitors so everybody can see the chefs work their magic. L.M. 918 F St. NW; 202-695-8938, 918fstreet.com (Metro Center)

**2ND | CulinAerie:** 1131 14th St. NW; 202-587-5674, culinaerie.com. (McPherson Square) **3RD | Hill's Kitchen:** 713 D St. SE; 202-543-1997, hillskitchen.com. (Eastern Market)

### D.C. LIFE | ONLINE

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### NEIGHBORHOOD BLOG

#### Prince of Petworth

Dan Silverman balks at the notion that his blog serves as a guide to D.C. life. "I see myself more as a facilitator," he says. "The residents themselves are the guides and ambassadors." Silverman launched PoP in 2006 and has since made it his full-time job. ("I work seven days a week. If I'm sick, I work.") He doesn't limit himself to covering his own neighborhood: PoP includes news from all over the District, whether the topic is real estate, transit or adorable animals. R.G. princeofpetworth.com

**2ND | DCist:** dcist.com **3RD | Borderstan:** borderstan.com

### FOOD BLOG

#### What Micky Eats

The blog's name neatly summarizes its content: a chronicle of everything D.C. resident Micky (who chooses to keep her real name private) eats. What makes Micky stand out is her everywoman approach. She doesn't rely on flashy photos or trendy foodie-speak; her blog is "just my personal opinion about what I like to eat." She's hoping to branch out into recreating restaurant dishes with advice from the chefs who created them. R.G. whatmickyeats.blogspot.com.

**2ND | Bitches Who Brunch:** bitcheswhobrunch.com. **3RD | Dining in D.C.:** diningindc.net.

Continued on page B23



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Continued from page B20

## TWEETER

## Lisa Shapiro

@DiningInDC, an outgrowth of Lisa Shapiro's blog of the same name ([diningindc.net](http://diningindc.net)), keeps fans abreast of D.C. food news, specials and events, as well as Shapiro's own culinary adventures. Follow her for pictures of her meals ("Tomato braised Montauk Fluke Filet with soft polenta" from Equinox *does* sound good) or food-related tips (silica gel packets prevent pumpkins from getting moldy). R.G.

**2ND** | @ThBlackSquirrel **3RD** | @ClotureClub

## D.C.-RELATED TUMBLR

## Texts From Hillary

Stacy Lambe and Adam Smith were drinking vodka at Nellie's this past April, discussing the sudden popularity of a photo of the secretary of state wearing shades on a military plane while busy with her BlackBerry. "What's she actually doing in the photo? Who is she texting?" Lambe wondered. Smith suggested a tumblr, and a meme was born. Their first post: "Hey Hil, Whatchu doing?" Obama asks. "Running the world," Clinton replies. B.M. texts from [hillaryclinton.tumblr.com](http://hillaryclinton.tumblr.com)

**2ND** | #WheninDC: [whenindc.tumblr.com](http://whenindc.tumblr.com) **3RD** | DCGayz: [thedcgayz.tumblr.com](http://thedcgayz.tumblr.com)

## POLITICAL BLOG

## Politico.com

D.C. likes it politics like it likes its burgers: fast and juicy. Politico is both. The Arlington-based political website is known for blazing-fast newsbreaks and well-sourced scoops, which have helped it make a splash on Capitol Hill and beyond. We should probably point out that Politico is really a collection of blogs, plus lots of articles. But readers nominated it for "best political blog" so ... semantics. B.M.

**2ND** | Wonkette: [wonkette.com](http://wonkette.com) **3RD** | Famous D.C.: [famousdc.com](http://famousdc.com)



RON COGSWELL

## PUBLIC ART

## "The Awakening"

The metal giant clawing his way out of the sand at National Harbor has been a beloved local landmark since 1980. Purists will argue that he was more beloved when he occupied Hains Point in East Potomac Park, where he alarmed unsuspecting joggers and bore the luster of a hidden treasure known only to locals. The old dude's put up with a lot — besides being moved to National Harbor in 2008 (and posing for photos with countless children), he was hit twice by cars at his prior location. H.J.M. National Harbor, Md.

**2ND** | Before I Die (14th St.): 14th and Q streets NW. (U Street) **3RD** | Mama Ayesha's Restaurant Presidential Mural: 1967 Calvert St. NW; 202-232-5431, [mamaayeshas.com](http://mamaayeshas.com). (Woodley Park)

## D.C. LIFE | RANDOM

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## MONUMENT

## Lincoln Memorial

What can we say about this that hasn't been said in past Best Of issues? Here's a little something: There's a cave underneath the memorial, complete with stalactites, stalagmites and rats. If you were allowed down there, you'd see graffiti left by the original construction workers. Notoriously obese former president William Howard Taft was one of their favorite subjects. K.A. Lincoln Memorial Circle SW; [nps.gov/linc](http://nps.gov/linc). (Foggy Bottom)

**2ND** | Jefferson Memorial: 900 Ohio Dr. SW; [nps.gov/thje](http://nps.gov/thje). **3RD** | FDR Memorial: Ohio Drive SW and West Basin Drive SW; [nps.gov/fdrm](http://nps.gov/fdrm).



PHOTO CREDIT

## UNDERRATED TOURIST ATTRACTION

## National Arboretum

If it grows in D.C.'s climate, it probably has a home in the Arboretum, a 446-acre "living museum" of plants. Catch some rays at the National Capitol Columns; the freestanding sandstone pillars were once part of the U.S. Capitol. The miniature trees in the National Bonsai and Penjing Museum (penjing is the Chinese precursor to bonsai) are exalted examples of an ancient art form and also too cute for words. Rachel Kaufman 3501 New York Ave. NE; 202-245-2726, [usna.usda.gov](http://usna.usda.gov).

**2ND** | FDR Memorial: Ohio Drive SW and West Basin Drive SW; [nps.gov/fdrm](http://nps.gov/fdrm). **3RD** | National Building Museum: 401 F St. NW; 202-272-2448, [nbm.org](http://nbm.org). (Judiciary Square)

## POLITICAL CELEBRITY

## Michelle Obama

In what might be the closest race in Express Best Of history, first lady Michelle Obama edged out her husband by just two votes. This win caps off a great year for Mrs. O: In 2012, she celebrated the second anniversary of her campaign to end childhood obesity, nailed her convention speech and beat talk show host Ellen DeGeneres in a pushup competition. Now that's putting the "first" in first lady. L.M.

**2ND** | Barack Obama **3RD** | Hillary Clinton

## VIRAL VIDEO ABOUT DC

## Sh\*t People in D.C. Say

We love viral videos in D.C., because we're all sitting at our desks all day. "Sh\*t People in D.C. Say" was funny for the reason everyone thought their individual "Sh\*t whoever Says" was funny — specifics. We go to Shake Shack too! And enjoy brunch! And order D.C. Brau! And think Eckington is the new Bloomingdale! One thing they got wrong: Nobody ever admits to eating Jumbo Slice sober. F.Z.

**2ND** | Arlington: The Rap **3RD** | Welcome to DC





## Best of 2012

# Fitness



TWP

### PARK

#### Rock Creek Park

Now 122 years young, Rock Creek Park is still the ultimate sanctuary for folks who want to escape into nature close to home. If you're not adventurous enough to wander around on your own (and risk a solo run-in with white-tailed deer), you can take a ranger-led hike. The park, which bisects the city, also offers tons of children's programming, such as a weekly invitation for budding astronomers ages 4 through 8 to check out the night sky from the only planetarium in the National Park Service system. V.H. [nps.gov/rocr](http://nps.gov/rocr)

**2ND** | Meridian Hill Park: [nps.gov/mehi](http://nps.gov/mehi).  
**3RD** | Lincoln Park: [nps.gov/cahi](http://nps.gov/cahi).

### SPECIALITY GYM

#### CrossFit Dupont

CrossFit's Workout of the Day is brutal no matter where you do it. Smiles can lighten the load of those barbells, though, which is why the members of this CrossFit affiliate work hard to make it seem easy. There are T-shirts that say, "It's not conditioning. It's getting sexy," and there's a unicorn mascot. But they take their kettlebell swings, muscle-ups and burpees just as seriously as any other box. V.H. 2200 California St. NW; 202-797-0021, [crossfit-dupont.com](http://crossfit-dupont.com).

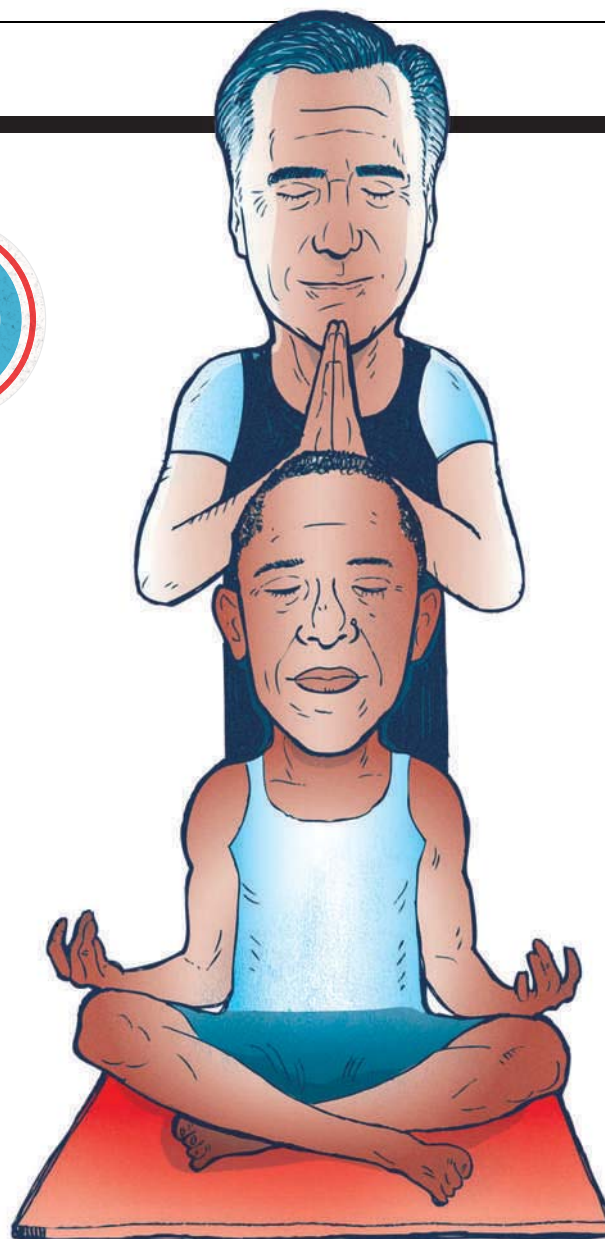
**2ND** | FIT Personal Training: 1633 Q St. NW; 202-255-7814, [fit-dc.com](http://fit-dc.com). **3RD** | Fuse Pilates: 2008 Hillyer Place NW; 202-525-3767, [fusepilates.com](http://fusepilates.com).

### GYM

#### Balance Gym

Balance is so gung-ho about growing a different kind of fitness culture that co-owner Mark Crick actually bought a farm. The new West Virginia outpost, which hosted hiking and tubing retreats this summer, is part of the local chain's quest to find inventive ways to whip folks into shape. Expect even more movement over the next few months as Balance vacates its original Kalorama location and expands dramatically at both Thomas Circle and Glover Park to accommodate more members and more classes. V.H. multiple locations; 202-730-0003, [balancegym.com](http://balancegym.com).

**2ND** | Vida Fitness: multiple locations; [vidafitness.com](http://vidafitness.com). **3RD** | Washington Sports Clubs: multiple locations; [mysportsclubs.com](http://mysportsclubs.com).



MARGE ELY/EXPRESS

### BIKE SHOP

#### BicycleSPACE

"Many places sell bikes and then people just leave them in closets," says BicycleSPACE manager Jordan Mitelman, who couldn't imagine anything worse. The shop is obsessed with organizing social outings — often to tunes blasting out of a boom box and culminating with baked goods. One of its monthly full-moon rides this summer attracted nearly 900 riders, and there are plans to channel that energy into a cycling advocacy organization. V.H. 1019 7th St. NW; 202-962-0123, [bicyclespacedc.com](http://bicyclespacedc.com).

**2ND** | City Bikes: multiple locations, [citybikes.com](http://citybikes.com). **3RD** | The Bike Rack: 1412 Q St. NW; 202-387-2453, [thebikerackdc.com](http://thebikerackdc.com).

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### POOL

#### Wilson Aquatic Center

Sniping continues over which configuration is better, but whether the city's premier pool is set up as 50 meters or 25 yards, it's one attractive body of water. The setup changes regularly; the one constant is the stream of masters teams, high school programs and recreational swimmers who fill the lanes. Youngsters go crazy for the aquatic center's kiddie pool, equipped with jets and other surprises. The best part is the price: free for District residents. V.H. 4551 Fort Drive NW; 202-730-0583, [dpr.dc.gov](http://dpr.dc.gov).

**2ND** | Capitol Skyline: 101 St. SW; 202-488-7500, [capitolskyline.com](http://capitolskyline.com). **3RD** | VIDA Penthouse Pool Club: 1612 U St. NW; 202-939-2563, [penthousepoolclub.com](http://penthousepoolclub.com).

### YOGA STUDIO

#### Yoga District

It's always happy hour at Yoga District, where the faces are friendly and the price — just \$10 a class — is right. "Instead of neighborhood bars, we're neighborhood yoga studios," says founder Jasmine Chehrazai, who opened a fifth location in April. In case you're worried the do-gooder chain is becoming a corporate behemoth, Chehrazai disclosed the financials online, showing that half of every dollar is spent on teacher pay and the rest on fulfilling the mission of making yoga more accessible. We'll drink a coconut water to that. V.H. multiple locations; 202-265-9642, [yogadistrict.com](http://yogadistrict.com).

**2ND** | Bikram Yoga Capitol Hill: 410 H St. NE; [bikramyogacapitolhill.com](http://bikramyogacapitolhill.com). (Union Station) **3RD** | Flow Yoga Center: 1450 P St. NW; 202-462-3569, [flowyogacenter.com](http://flowyogacenter.com). (Dupont Circle)



# LIVE FROM THE NEWSEUM! IT'S 'SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE'!

When the campaign season starts to get too serious, "Saturday Night Live" is always ready to lighten the mood, whether it's lampooning candidates or inviting them to poke fun at themselves on air. "Every Four Years," the Newseum's exhibit on campaigns and the media, includes election-related artifacts and clips from the show – making for a refreshing, and hilarious, break from politics as usual.

Angel Brown, Silver Spring, Md., in the Every Four Years: Presidential Campaigns and the Press exhibit.

**SATURDAY, OCT. 27**

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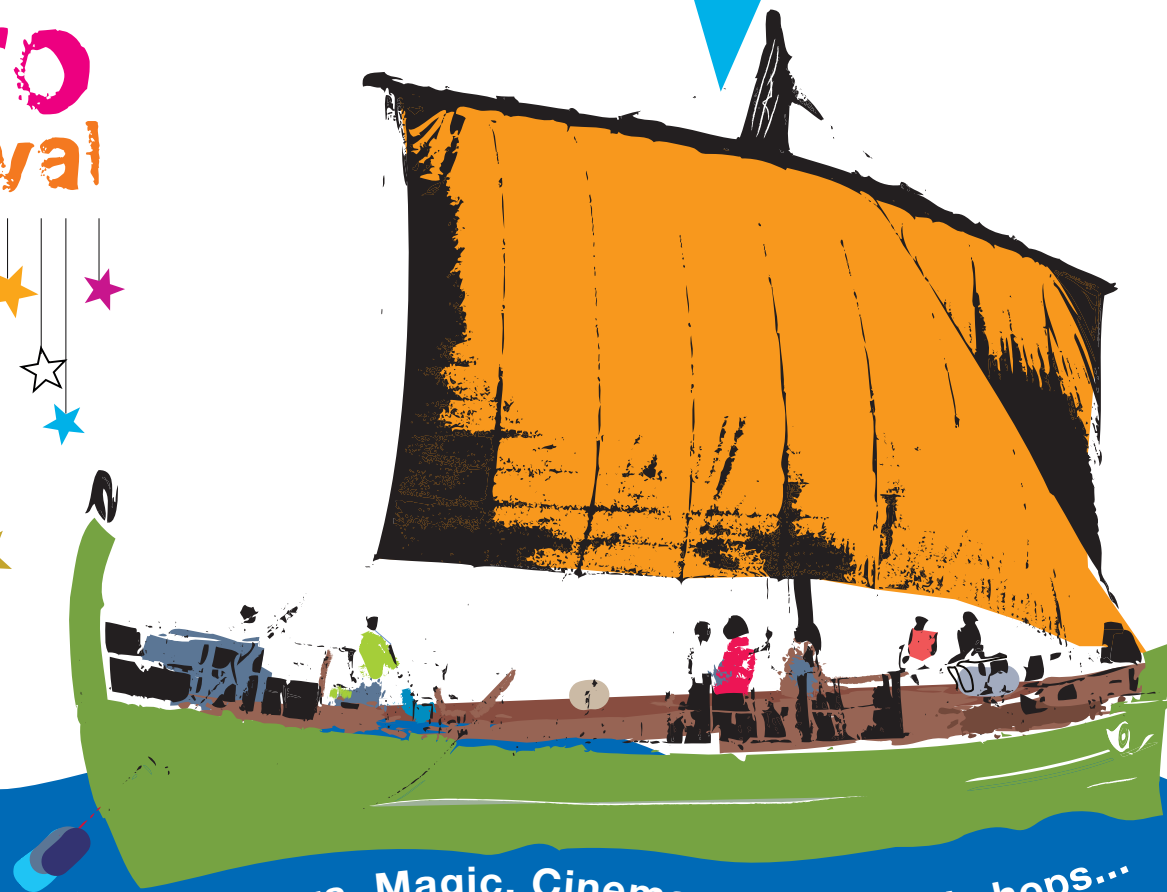
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## Best of 2012



### MANSCAPING

#### The Art of Shaving

It all started when founders Myriam Zaoui and Eric Malca sought a solution for abrasions Malca suffered while shaving. After developing a miracle pre-shave oil, the duo sold their car and used the money to open the first Art of Shaving store, on Lexington Avenue in Manhattan in 1996. Now they have a book deal and more than 66 retail outlets under their belts, including the D.C. branch. It's a hit among Washington's hirsute for barber services that include straight-razor shaves, beard trims and head shaves. H.S. multiple locations; retail. [theartofshaving.com](http://theartofshaving.com).

**2ND | Grooming Lounge:** multiple locations; [groominglounge.com](http://groominglounge.com). **3RD | Bliss Spa:** 515 15th St. NW; 202-661-2416, [blissworld.com](http://blissworld.com). (Metro Center)

### HAIRCUT

#### Bang Salon

Whether you walk into Bang Salon with a picture you ripped out of a magazine or just an idea of what your ideal haircut looks like, you're bound to walk out with exactly what you wanted. The full-service salon, with three District locations, has a staff that listens intently to clientele and dishes out hip haircuts, updos, colors and spa treatments with a side of pleasant chitchat. The only thing better than the cuts are the prices: Trims and styling range between \$34 and \$39 with a junior stylist. H.S. 1519 15th St. NW; 202-588-5555, [bangsalon.com](http://bangsalon.com). (Dupont Circle)

**2ND | Bubbles Salon:** multiple locations; [bubblesforhair.com](http://bubblesforhair.com). **3RD | PR at Partners Salons and Spas:** multiple locations; [pratpartners.com](http://pratpartners.com).

EDITOR'S  
PICK



**Best Place  
To Get  
Gussied  
Up for the  
Inaugural**

No matter who wins in November, there will be parties in January. Get your updo from Immortal Beloved's experts in vintage glam. 1457 Church St. NW; 202-588-5555, [immortalbeloveddc.com](http://immortalbeloveddc.com).

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### MANI-PEDI

#### Mimosa Salon

Few things bring more joy to a woman than hearing "Go pick out a nail polish color," especially when it's uttered at Mimosa Salon. Manis and pedis are small indulgences that have been bringing big smiles at this D.C. favorite since 1987. Why is Mimosa Salon so popular? "We pay more attention to client service and we make sure to build good relationships," manager James Thai says. "It's what keeps people coming back." That, and the free champagne, wine and soda, plus the unlimited mimosas on Sunday. H.S. 1706 Connecticut Ave. NW; 202-232-6900, [mimosadc.com](http://mimosadc.com). (Dupont Circle)

**2ND | Bliss Spa:** 515 15th St. NW; 202-661-2416, [blissworld.com](http://blissworld.com). (Metro Center) **3RD | Capitol Nail Salon:** 201 Massachusetts Ave. NE; 202-543-0989. (Union Station)

### SPA

#### Spa World

Imagine the most out-of-this-world spa you've ever been to. Now multiply that by infinity and you might have an idea what Spa World is like. This over-the-top relaxation mecca spans more than 50,000 square feet. It's open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, though you'll need more than one all-day pass (a mere \$35) to sample all the services. We recommend a refreshing visit to the ice room. H.S. 13830-A10 Brad-dock Road, Centreville, Va.; 703-815-8959, [spaworldusa.com](http://spaworldusa.com).

**2ND | Elizabeth Arden Red Door Spas:** multiple locations; [reddoorspas.com](http://reddoorspas.com). **3RD | The Spa at Mandarin Oriental:** 1330 Maryland Ave. SW; 202-554-8588, [mandarinoriental.com](http://mandarinoriental.com). (Smithsonian)



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## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### GUYS AND DOLLS

#### A MUSICAL FABLE OF BROADWAY

Based on a Story and Characters of Damon Runyon  
Music and Lyrics by Frank Loesser  
Book by Jo Swerling and Abe Burrows  
Karl Kippola, director  
October 18-20, & 26-27 at 8 p.m.  
October 20, 21 & 27, 2 p.m.

### THE GORENMAN PIANO PROJECT: SCHUBERT EDITION

October 27, at 8 p.m.

### JERZY SAPIEYEVSKI: NEWCENTURYMUSICCLUB

A concert-conversation about and beyond the moods of music  
October 28, 5 p.m.

### AU JAZZ ORCHESTRA: FALL FOR JAZZ

Joshua Bayer, conductor  
November 2, at 8 p.m.

### AU SYMPHONIC BAND IN CONCERT: RETROSPECTIVES

Marc Boensel, conductor  
November 3, at 3 p.m.

### DANCE CHOREOLAB: NEXT STEPS

Christopher K. Morgan, artistic director  
November 7, at 8 p.m.

### GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS

Written by David Mamet  
Javier Rivera, director  
Produced by special arrangement with  
Samuel French, Inc., New York City  
November 8-10, 8 p.m.  
November 10, 2 p.m.

### AU CHAMBER SINGERS: THE ART OF TRADITION CHORAL MUSIC OF RUSSIA AND THE UNITED STATES

Daniel Abraham, conductor  
November 10, at 8 p.m.  
November 11, at 3 p.m.

### AMERICAN UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA IN CONCERT: ENCOUNTERS

November 15 & 16, 8 p.m.

### AU WORKSHOP: ON TIME

Noah Getz, conductor  
November 18, at 3 p.m.

### AU CHORUS: SING A NEW SONG

Laura M. Petravage, conductor  
November 30, & December 1, at 8 p.m.

## SAVE THE DATE APRIL 4, 2013 6:30PM

In honor of Sylvia and Harold Greenberg, the 10th Anniversary Celebration of the Greenberg Theatre, "Art as the Heart," will take place on April 4 before and after the opening night performance of Cabaret, the first production that was presented in the theatre. Cabaret will be presented April 6-8 in the Greenberg Theatre.

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Best of 2012



## KIDS' CLASSES

**Capitol Hill Arts Workshop**

Kids with fingerpaints make cute fridge candy. "Color Theory for Preschoolers" makes kids who can judge that fridge candy and find it wanting. Children in CHAW's classes "are learning not only to do art, but also to be able to talk about it," says executive director Jill Strachan. Each eight-class session costs \$152; target audiences range from 3-year-olds to sixth-graders. Topics include music, sculpture, graphic design and Harry Potter. The fall session has already begun; check the website for winter class updates. K.P.K. 545 7th St. SE; 202-547-6839, chaw.org. (Eastern Market)

**2ND | Imagination Stage:** 4908 Auburn Ave., Bethesda; 301-280-1660, imaginationstage.org. (Bethesda) **3RD | DCJCC:** 1529 16th St. NW; 202-777-3200, washingtondcjcc.org. (Dupont Circle)

## KIDS' CLOTHING STORE

**Monkey's Uncle**

Going shopping for kids is often fun. Going shopping WITH kids is often not. The consignment store Monkey's Uncle, which carries clothes for buns-just-out-of-the-oven on up to teenagers, keeps kids occupied while Mom or Dad

EDITOR'S PICK

**Place to Realize Presidents Are People Too**

In the National Portrait Gallery's Hall of Presidents, the haunted eyes and generous paunches of past POTUSes show that even Rulers of the Free World had nightmares and sweet teeth. 8th and F streets NW; 202-633-8300, npg.si.edu. (Gallery Place)



## KID-FRIENDLY RESTAURANT

**Pete's New Haven Style Apizza**

It's not a surprise that a pizza joint won this category. What is surprising is that Pete's Apizza is not a cardboard-crust, cartoon-mouse-dominated pizza joint. The three locations use tons of locally sourced ingredients: All the beef and pork come from area farms, and the



antipasti platters change with what's available seasonally. The kitchen avoids processed foods at all costs; even the sodas are made with real cane sugar. Smaller portions of spaghetti and ravioli dishes are available for those 10 and under, but who needs a kids' menu when the main dish pleases everyone? K.P.K. multiple locations; petesapizza.com.

**2ND | Argonaut:** 1433 H St. NE; 202-250-3660, argonautdc.com.

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shops. Personal service also reigns. "If I know one mom is gaga for Mini Boden and we get some in, I'll give her a call," co-owner Jay Keegan says. K.P.K. 321 7th St. SE; 202-543-6471, monkeysuncleonthehill.com. (Eastern Market)

**2ND | Dawn Price Baby:** multiple locations; dawnpricebaby.com.

## KIDS' MUSEUM

**National Air and Space Museum**

The top three museums in this category prove that kids are interested in stuff that makes noise, stuff that can eat them and stuff they can knock down. Space won, because space is awesome. The museum is free; if you want to shell out, you can enjoy an IMAX movie, a show in the planetarium (there's one film featuring political touchstone Big Bird) or a flight simulator. K.P.K. Independence Avenue and 6th Street SW; 202-633-2214, airandspace.si.edu. (L'Enfant Plaza)

**2ND | Museum of Natural History:** 10th Street and Constitution Avenue NW; 202-633-1000, mnhs.si.edu. (Federal Triangle) **3RD | National Building Museum:** 401 F St. NW; 202-272-2448, nbm.org. (Judiciary Square)

Christopher K. Morgan &amp; Artists

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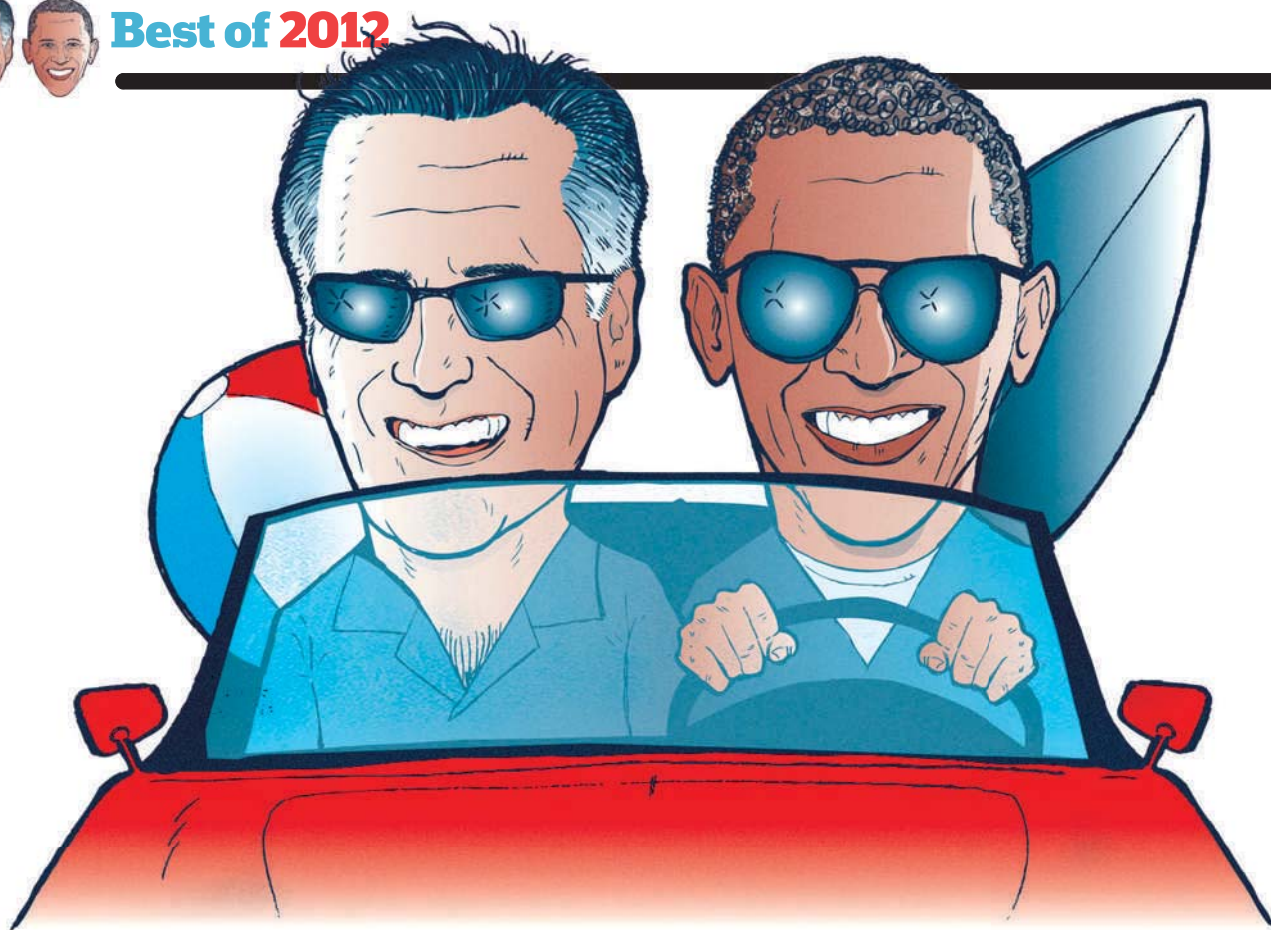
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## Best of 2012



# Worth the Drive

### ROAD TRIP

#### Shenandoah National Park

Pure driving pleasure awaits those who fight their way beyond 495 and onto Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park. The 105-mile drive through the Blue Ridge Mountains takes about three hours at the 35-mile-per-hour speed limit. What's your hurry, anyway? The park offers gorgeous views, plus camping and hiking. If you plan to conquer the popular Old Rag Mountain, bring good gear and read up on the route — it's the park's most dangerous hike. S.M. See [nps.gov/shen](http://nps.gov/shen) for park entrances.

**2ND** | Philadelphia **3RD** | Charlottesville, Va.

### BALTIMORE ATTRACTION

#### National Aquarium

Those who fork over \$21 to \$30 per ticket are rewarded with a three-hour tour of exhibits such as Jellies Invasion (yikes!), Dolphin Discovery (aww!) and Animal Planet Australia (g'day!). The biggest draw, of course, is Shark Alley, a 225,000-gallon, ring-shaped tank offering 360-degree views of America's favorite aquatic predator, plus some stingrays. S.M. 501 East Pratt St., Baltimore; 410-576-3800, [aqua.org](http://aqua.org).

**2ND** | Baltimore Inner Harbor: East Pratt and Light streets, Baltimore; [baltimore.org](http://baltimore.org). **3RD** | Oriole Park at Camden Yards: 333 West Camden St., Baltimore; 410-685-9822, [baltimore.orioles.mlb.com](http://baltimore.orioles.mlb.com).



PHOTO: JEFFREY M. HARRIS/ISTOCK



LUCIAN PERKINS/TWP

### VINEYARD

#### Sugarloaf Mountain Vineyard

This Maryland winery's pinot grigio and cabernet sauvignon were the first East Coast wines to be served at the Kennedy Center, says owner Jim McKenna. "We take wine seriously, but not ourselves," he says. "We're not wine snobs." House winemaker Benoit Pineau is a third-generation pro: His father is a winemaker in Tours, France, and his grandfather made vino near the Bordeaux region. Sugarloaf prides itself on keeping prices reasonable; McKenna recommends the sweet white "Stomp" (\$14.95) or "EVOE!," a clove-and-fig-scented red (\$38.95) as takeaways. S.M. 18125 Comus Road, Dickerson, Md.; 301-605-0130, [smvwinery.com](http://smvwinery.com).

**2ND** | Barboursville Vineyard: 17655 Winery Road, Barboursville, Va.; 540-832-3824, [barboursvillwine.net](http://barboursvillwine.net). **3RD** | Bluemont Vineyard: 18755 Foggy Bottom Road, Bluemont, Va.; 540-554-8439, [bluemontvineyard.com](http://bluemontvineyard.com).

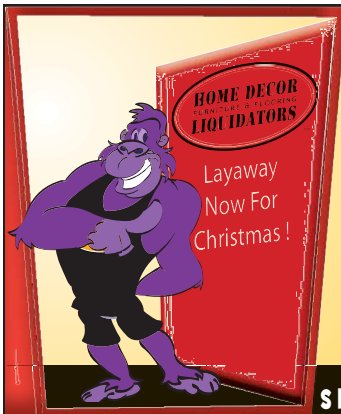
### BEACH

#### Outer Banks, N.C.

The beaches of the OBX are wild, clean and relatively unpopulated (compared to Ocean City, Md., at least). The five-hour drive is more than worth it to experience the ocean and rolling dunes in their natural state, with nary a boardwalk or daily beach pass in sight. The off-season, while chilly, is one of the most romantic and quiet times to grab a bunch of blankets and make the trip south. S.M. [outerbanks.org](http://outerbanks.org).

**2ND** | Rehoboth Beach: Rehoboth, Del. **3RD** | Ocean City, Md.





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\$129 EA. PC. FULL  
\$145 EA. PC. QUEEN  
\$126 EA. PC. KING

## SLEEP ULTRA 15-Yr. Ltd. Warranty

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**Good!** 12" x 12" starting at **69¢** sq.ft.

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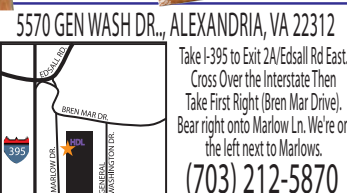
12" x 12" starting at **89¢** sq.ft.

## Self-Stick Tile

12" x 12" from **39¢** sq.ft. **Foam Plus Underlay** 100 sq.ft. Roll **\$14.99**

## 3-Pc. Rug Set

2x3 • 2x6 • 5x8 **\$59.99**



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