

DOWNTOWN DC RESTAURANTS

Key to Restaurant and Hotel Map

1. DC Coast

1401 K Street, NW (14th St.) (202) 216-5988

“Ever popular with the movers and shakers”, this “splashy” Downtown New American’s “dramatic” space (done up with beaux arts touches like the mermaid statue near its “busy” bar) buzzes with “power-dining” “excitement” boosted by a “super” “seafood-oriented menu” stocked with “inventive” options designed “to please everyone”; service is “smoothly handled”, and those who coast upstairs can avoid “the din” of the “business lunch” “mob scene.”

(2009 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 23 Service: 22 Cost: \$51

(2008 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 23 Service: 22 Cost: \$51

(2007 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 23 Service: 22 Cost: \$51

2. Tuscana West

1350 Eye Street, NW (13th St.) (202) 289-7300

Upscale Italian Café

3. Starbucks

Coffee Shop

4. Old Ebbitt Grill

675 15th St., NW (bet. F & G Sts.) (202) 347-4801

“With the White House just around the corner”, you’ll “feel like a Washington insider just walking in the door” of this “quintessential” Downtown “powerhouse”, a “bustling” spot with an “upbeat” staff that’s “attentive” to “not just DC royalty” and a “well-rounded” American “menu to fit all tastes and budgets”; it’s a “must-visit for tourists”, and if the dining area’s too “hectic”, just “belly up” to one of the “multiple bars” and drink in the “living history.”

(2009 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 23 Service: 21 Cost: \$39

(2008 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 22 Service: 21 Cost: \$37

(2007 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 22 Service: 21 Cost: \$37

5. Butterfield 9

600 14th St., NW (bet. F & G Sts.) Closed

At this New American, the “sophisticated Downtown dining” is “a treat for the eyes as well as the palate”, from the “beautifully prepared” seasonal plates to the “classy” fashion photos that dress up the “subdued” space; it’s an “impressive” place to take a date or “catch dinner before the theater” (via the prix fixe “deal”), and “if you can’t get a table, sidle up to the small bar”, which offers some of the “best martinis” around and its own “extensive” food menu.

(2009 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 21 Service: 20 Cost: \$53

(2008 rating) Food: 22 Décor: 23 Service: 21 Cost: \$51

(2007 rating) Food: 22 Décor: 23 Service: 21 Cost: \$51

6. Café Du Parc

1401 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (bet. 14th & 15th Sts.) (202) 942-7000

It's "Paris on the Potomac" at the Willard InterContinental's two-tier French "jewel" where "sophisticated" fare is Matched with "courteous" if "unhurried" service in a "bright", "bistro-modern" setting sporting a "delightful" sidewalk café; it's "tres bon" "for a business breakfast" or "pre-National Theatre" bite, though nonpartisans protest there are "lots of tourists" ("café du packed would be more accurate") and an "underwhelming" atmosphere – "c'est la vie."

(2009 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 20 Service: 20 Cost: \$45

(2008 rating) Food: -- Décor: -- Service: -- Cost: \$M

7. Shelly's Bar & Grill

1331 F Street, NW (202) 737-3003

American Bar & Grill

8. Finemondo

1319 F Street, NW (202) 737-3100

A downtown rarity with its "low key" "neighborhood vibe", this "solid Italian" serves "traditional" fare with all the "personality" you'd find "in Rome"; "attorneys coming from their offices" advocate the "great lunch specials", and if some suggest the 'hit-or-miss' menu and "dated" décor could be modernized", the open-to-the-street "bar in the front" is always fine for a drop of wine.

(2009 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 19 Service: 20 Cost: \$37

(2008 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 19 Service: 17 Cost: \$34

(2007 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 19 Service: 17 Cost: \$34

9. M & S Grill

600 13th St., NW (F St.) (202) 347-1500

The "dress-down relatives" of parent McCormick & Schmick's, these "stuffy yet suave" surf 'n' turf Americans offer enough of the "basics" to "satisfy anyone" and host "unbeatable", "low-priced" happy hours; despite "inconsistent service", the "business set" keeps Downtown DC and Reston "very busy", while families and tourists "flock" to Baltimore's Inner Harbor to take in the "awesome" water views.

(2009 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 17 Service: 17 Cost: \$37

(2008 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 18 Service: 17 Cost: \$34

(2007 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 18 Service: 17 Cost: \$34

10. Occidental Grill

1475 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (202) 783-1475

Get "a glimpse" of "old-line Washington" at this "storied" Downtown "classic", and "oasis of civility" where "pictures of politicians" fill the walls and "reliably high-quality" New American steak and seafood is accompanied by and "unbeatable atmosphere"; it's a "favorite" for lobbyists "to get spoiled rotten" and tourists to "soak up" "history", so while a few go-getters groan "passé", the people-watching on the "outdoor patio is great."

(2009 rating) Food: 22 Décor: 23 Service: 23 Cost: \$55

(2008 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 23 Service: 22 Cost: \$54

(2007 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 23 Service: 22 Cost: \$54

11. Maggiano's Corner Bakery – not listed

12. Chef Geoff's

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (bet. E & F Sts.) (202) 464-4461

"Geoff knows his stuff" attest admirers of these "congenial" "neighborhood" "crowd-pleasers" that are home to "solid" New American "classics" with some "interesting twists" and a "killer" "Sunday jazz brunch"; Downtown is "a happening scene" with "lobbying get-togethers" and "terrific happy-hour deals", while Upper NW is more "family-oriented", and despite gripes about "average" food and service, you'll "leave with your stomach and wallet full."

(2009 rating) Food: 19 Décor: 16 Service: 18 Cost: \$36

(2008 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 16 Service: 18 Cost: \$34

(2007 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 16 Service: 18 Cost: \$34

13. Starbuck's

Coffee Shop

14. Aria: not listed

15. Oceanaire Seafood Room

1201 F St., NW (bet. 12th & 13th Sts.) (202) 347-2277

Like a "swanky" "steakhouse for fish lovers", this Downtown branch of the national chain (and its Inner Harbor sibling) has high rollers "hooked" on "gargantuan portions" of "superlative", "fresh-as-can-be" seafood – including the "platonic ideal of crab cakes" – served by "snappy" staffers in "polished" surroundings that channel a "'40s cruise ship" vibe; still, though you'll "always leave full to the gills", it will be "with a significantly lighter wallet."

(2009 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 23 Service: 22 Cost: \$58

(2008 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 23 Service: 22 Cost: \$54

(2007 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 22 Service: 23 Cost: \$54

16. Bluepoint Ocean Grill

1299 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (13th St.) (202) 783-4545

Sunk underground near the National Theatre, this "solid" "addition to Downtown" is a two-story, mahogany-lined fish house that aims to "renew your seafood jones" with a "varied menu" of "nicely spicy" recipes honed by its Arizona and Florida siblings; though some say the "newness is showing", it's gradually getting its hooks into its competitor's patron pool.

(2009 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 20 Service: 20 Cost: \$43

17. PotBelly

E Street, NW

Quick Service Sandwich Shop

18. Les Halles

1201 Pennsylvania Ave., NW (12th St.) (202) 347-6848

A "true taste of Paris" on Pennsylvania Avenue, this "casual", "classic bistro" boasts "hearty French fare" – including "some of the best frites in town" - that fortunately is "now safe to eat again" (read: politically correct); although "the staff can sometimes be truly Parisian too", many think it's a "fine" choice for a "business breakfast" or a "late-night, post-theater" meal on the "lovely" terrace, a "place to sit and watch the passing crowds on a warm summer evening."

(2009 rating) Food: 19 Décor: 17 Service: 17 Cost: \$41

(2008 rating) Food: 19 Décor: 17 Service: 17 Cost: \$40

(2007 rating) Food: 19 Décor: 17 Service: 17 Cost: \$40

19. Elephant Castle

1201 Pennsylvania Ave., NW (12th St.) (202) 347-7707

"Blimey, we're in London – minus the smoke, accents and ancientness" – insist those who appreciate this Downtown "incarnation of a British pub" that's a handy stop "when you're in the mood for a pint" (there are "some interesting beers on tap") or for "affordable dining"; still, the "traditional" grub is only "decent", so "there isn't much difference" between this "wannabe" and the TGI Friday's it replaced – except the "tchotchkes on the walls are British."

(2009 rating) Food: 14 Décor: 16 Service: 16 Cost: \$27

(2008 rating) Food: 13 Décor: 15 Service: 15 Cost: \$25

(2007 rating) Food: 13 Décor: 15 Service: 15 Cost: \$25

20. Luigino Ristotante

1100 New York Avenue, NW

Devotees of this "reliable" Downtown Italian are drawn in by "delizioso pastas" like the "fabulously addictive" house-smoked salmon in pink vodka sauce, all served in a "bright" space that's "nothing fancy" but "business-lunch appropriate"; the location is a bit "out of the way" now that the Convention Center has moved to Mt. Vernon Square, but it remains "convenient for theatergoers" who consider it a "reliable source of satisfying fare."

(2009 rating) Food: 17 Decor: 15 Service: 18 Cost: \$39

(2008 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 16 Service: 17 Cost: \$38

(2007 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 16 Service: 17 Cost: \$38

21. Capital City Brewing Co.

Washington's first Brew pub.

22. Posh

730 11th Street, NW (Bet. G & H Sts.) (202) 393-0975

Definitely a "change from the normal" Downtown scenery, this upsized, "upscale" "supper club" channels a "classy speakeasy" with its deco "fixtures and "Miami " –esque purple – and silver-accented décor; the New American surf n ' turf menu's "not bad", but the party people come here for the mezzanine lounge and "great jazz", DJs and dancing Friday and Saturday nights.

(2009 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 20 Service: 20 Cost: \$45

(2008 rating) Food: - Décor: - Service: - Cost: \$E

23. Xando Cosi

Sandwich & Coffee Bar

24. The Park

920 14th Street, NW (202) 737-7275

Upscale Restaurant and Lounge

25. Ristorante Tosca

New high end Italian Restaurant

26. ESPN Zone????????

555 12th St., NW (E St.) (202) 783-3776

The action never stops at this "noisy" multilevel dining/entertainment complex in the Inner Harbor, a total "sports lovers" zone that redefines sensory overload with its ubiquitous TVs and live jock sitings; while you "don't go for the food", the "huge portions" of burgers, ribs and other American eats can also be has at a new barge on the water.

(2005 rating) Food: 15 Décor: 20 Service: 16 Cost: \$21

27. Fogo de Chao

1101 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (11th St.) (202) 347-4668

“Pace yourself” – it’s a marathon, not a sprint” at this “cavernous” Downtown branch of the “Brazilian all-you-can-take barbecue” chain, a “high-end” “fixed-price” bonanza” dedicated to “overindulging your inner carnivore” with “never-ending” rounds of “superb” “meats “carved tableside” by “roving gauchos”; with a “gourmet salad bar” to “offset the cholesterol count”, it’s “a blast” for groups, but “go hungry to get your money’s worth”; N.B. an offshoot just opened in Baltimore’s Inner Harbor.

(2009 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 20 Service: 24 Cost: \$57

(2008 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 21 Service: 25 Cost: \$54

(2007 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 21 Service: 25 Cost: \$54

28. Lincoln House Restaurant – not listed

29. Xando Cosi

Sandwich & Coffee Bar

30. TenPenh

1001 Pennsylvania Ave., NW (10th St.) (202) 393-4500

This “happening” “Downtown powerhouse” pleases the palate as well as the eyes” courtesy of a kitchen that “makes fusion an art” with a “distinctive”, seafood-leaning lineup of “fascinating” Pan-Asian fare presented in a “high-style” setting; while nitpickers cite “noisy” acoustics, most agree the performance is “in balance” – “delicious food, fun atmosphere, professional service and great drinks” – and is thus “completely captivating.”

(2009 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 23 Service: 22 Cost: \$50

(2008 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 24 Service: 23 Cost: \$48

(2007 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 24 Service: 23 Cost: \$48

31. Hard Rock

999 E St., NW (10th St.) (202) 737-7625

“Been there, done that , bought the t-shirt” sums up most grown ups reactions to this “noisy” rock n’roll shrine in prime tourist territory in DC; but when “teenage birthday parties” provoke visits, some concede that the burgers are “ok” and the “memorabilia” worth seeing at least once.

32. Central Michel Richard

1001 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (11th St.) (202) 626-0015

At Penn Quarter’s latest “it” spot, all-star chef Michel Richard (Citronelle) lends his “signature cheeky style” and “culinary chops” to “haute cuisine packaged for everyone” via a “mouthwatering” New American-French lineup that’s billed as “comfort food gone upscale”; with it’s “informed” service and “smart” looks, it draws “daunting” crowds of bon vivants who exult in “vibrant” scenery, a “hot bar scene” and “super-high quality” that “doesn’t break the bank.”

(2009 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 22 Service: 22 Cost: \$52

(2008 rating) Food: -- Décor: -- Service: -- Cost: \$not listed

33. Ruth's Chris Steakhouse

1801 Connecticut Ave., NW (S St.), (202) 797-0033

These "premier" meat palaces have "the sizzle as well as the steak" serving their "massive", "perfectly cooked" cuts on a hot "platter with melting butter" alongside "wonderful wines" and "generous" sides that could "be meals in themselves"; their "dark, clubby" environs and "dependable service" work for a "special occasion", and notwithstanding critics who question the "value-to-price ratio", most maintain they've "worthy" of the "top-shelf" tabs.

(2009 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 22 Service: 24 Cost: \$61

(2008 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 21 Service: 23 Cost: \$57

(2007 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 21 Service: 23 Cost: \$57

34. Zaytinya Café

701 9th St., NW (G St.) (202) 638-0800

"Magically blending both scene and substance (an accomplishment akin to achieving bipartisan cooperation on the Hill), this Penn Quarter Med-Middle Eastern exudes "edgy class", letting patrons "snack it up big time" on "tantalizing" Greek, Turkish and Lebanese small plates served by a "courteous staff" in a "striking", "soaring" space; since everything from the "little pillows of fluffy hot bread" to the "unique" wines to the "affordable" tabs are a true "delight", you can expect both "crowds and noise", so "make a reservation."

(2009 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 24 Service: 21 Cost: \$41

(2008 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 25 Service: 20 Cost: \$39

(2007 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 25 Service: 20 Cost: \$39

35. McCormick & Schmick's

901 F St., NW (9th St.), (202) 639-9330

For "reel fine" fish "flown in fresh every day" plus an "impressive" "smorgasbord" of other seafood choices, head to this "reliable" "chain with a brain", where "solid service" and a "clubby atmosphere" make it equally suitable "for a business lunch" or a "family celebration"; sure, it's a "predictable" and "expensive "formula", but if you "show up at happy hour", you can expect "wonderful specials" on food and drink.

(2009 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 20 Service: 20 Cost: \$42

(2008 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 20 Service: 20 Cost: \$41

(2007 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 20 Service: 20 Cost: \$41

36. Gordon Biersch Brewery Restaurant

900 F St., NE (9th St.) (202) 783-5454

Downtown professional and MCT ticket-holders find a sophisticated yet casual setting for midday to midnight dining (but 11pm weeknights) at this New American brewery offering an international accented menu along with German-style lagers and fashionable strong drinks; set in a wonderful turn-of-the-century bank building, its ornate ceiling is offset by cream walls; olive leather and marbled columns, which divide the place into bar, lounge, dining room and private spaces.

37. RFD*****

817 7th St., NW (bet. H & I Sts.) (202) 289-2626

There's "always a party going on" at this "club-type" Chinatown Brazilian "extravaganza" where the "fun" is fueled by potent drinks and churrasco (a "parade" of "meats on a sword" "served tableside") is augmented by "tasty" tapas; but despite the "nifty concept", foes aren't loco about the "uneven" food or "slam-bang" service.

(2005 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 19 Service: 16 Cost: \$31

38. Fado Irish Pub

808 7th St., NW (bet. H & I Sts.) (202) 789-0066

"Disney does Ireland" at this Chinatown chain link featuring "attractive", though "a bit clichéd", themed dining rooms (library, cottage, store and lounge) and "basic", "unremarkable" pub fare; so enjoy a "classic pint" of Guinness, "go on Monday s for quiz nights" or join in the "lively" scene that occurs after a game at the nearby Verizon Center; N.B. an offshoot recently opened on Annapolis' West Street.

(2009 rating) Food: 16 Décor: 19 Service: 17 Cost: \$23

(2008 rating) Food: 16 Décor: 19 Service: 16 Cost: \$22

(2007 rating) Food: 16 Décor: 19 Service: 16 Cost: \$22

39. Starbucks

Coffee Shop

40. Qdoba/Giffords Ice Cream

555 11th Street, NW (202-347-7755)

Quick Service Mexican Restaurant/Quick Service Ice Cream Parlor

41. Fuddruckers

Quick service upscale hamburgers

42. Ruby Tuesdays

American "fern Bar" National Chain

43. Legal Seafood's

"If you're a connoisseur of crab or a fan of fish", swim on over to one of these "dependable" outposts of a Boston-based restaurant chain, where the "well prepared", satisfying seafood" includes "superb clam chowder" and raw bar offerings; while "kid-friendly options" prove popular with families, some critics claim the "so-so" food, "hit-or-miss" service and "institutional" ambiance add up to "a formula" that's "not worth the money."

(2009 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 16 Service: 18 Cost: \$37

(2008 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 16 Service: 18 Cost: \$36

(2007 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 16 Service: 18 Cost: \$36

44. The Green Turtle*****

601 F St. (6th St.) (202) 661-5040

With its own "back entrance to MCI", this Penn Quarter cow palace is "slammed" "before or after the game" with loyal Caps fans" cutting their teeth on "austere" steaks "prepared in the traditional manner" matched with "killer martinis"; the opposing team boos "disappointing" beef saying the "sleek" joint is a "shrine to style over substance."

(2005 rating) Food: 19 Décor: 17 Service: 17 Cost: \$46

(2004 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 19 Service: 19 Cost: \$46

45. District ChopHouse & Brewery

509 7th St., NW (bet. E & F Sts.) (202) 347-3434

“Steak, beer and sports” (aka “the luxuries of life”) define the “macho” appeal of this “loud and raucous” Penn Quarter chain link that serves slabs of “pretty fine” meat the “size of Nebraska” plus “incredible” skillet cornbread and “terrific” “house-brewed” suds in “traditional” digs adapted from “an old bank”; sited a hook shot from the Verizon Center, it’s “not as pricey as the big boy” beeferies and so is perfect as “pre-game” central.

(2009 rating) Food: 19 Décor: 18 Service: 17 Cost: \$37

(2008 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 18 Service: 19 Cost: \$37

(2007 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 18 Service: 19 Cost: \$37

46. Austin Grill

750 E St., NW (bet. 7th & 8th Sts.) (202) 393-3776

A “reliable choice” for a “weekly meal out with the kids”, these “funky” Tex-Mex “institutions” feature “kitschy décor” and a “boisterous roadhouse feel” that also appeals to those “designated drinkers” who head here after work for “magnifico margarita’s”; the “decent” eats are “nothing to knock your socks off”, but “neverending” “homemade chips and salsa”, “clearly labeled” vegetarian dishes and a gluten-free menu make it “fun for all.”

(2009 rating) Food: 16 Décor: 15 Service: 16 Cost: \$23

(2008 rating) Food: 16 Décor: 15 Service: 16 Cost: \$22

(2007 rating) Food: 16 Décor: 15 Service: 16 Cost: \$22

47. Jaleo

480 7th St., NW (E St.) (202) 628-7949

Admirers say these “top” tapas “temples” from “celebrity chef” Jose Andres rival “Madrid of Barcelona” with “tons” of “inventive” Spanish nibbles (“the bacon-wrapped dates are divine”), “knockout” sangria and a “colorful”, “bustling” atmosphere that “makes a meal into a party”; though critics cite “spotty” service, “crowded” quarters and tabs that “add up quickly”, most maintain it’s “well worth it”, especially when live music and flamenco dancing add to the “festive” feel.

(2009 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 19 Service: 19 Cost: \$35

(2008 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 20 Service: 19 Cost: \$33

(2007 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 20 Service: 19 Cost: \$33

48. Café Atlántico

405 8th St., NW, (bet. D & E Sts.) (202) 393-0812

“There are no boring dishes” at this “happening” Penn Quarter Nuevo Latino, a “multilevel” fiesta that “snaps and sizzles” with “swoon-worthy” cocktails and “inventive, delicious” edibles (the tableside guacamole is a “must”) that include a pre-theater “bargain” and “superb Latin dim sum” on weekends; “if you can get in”, its six seat, \$120-per –person Minibar is a “well-orchestrated journey” into “molecular gastronomy”, regaling adventurers with “30-plus bite sized courses” in an “unforgettable” “tour de force.”

(2009 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 21 Service: 23 Cost: \$54

(2008 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 22 Service: 21 Cost: \$49

(2007 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 22 Service: 22 Cost: \$49

49. Caucus Room

401 9th St., NW (D St.) (202) 393-1300

"Wood-paneled rooms set the tone" for the "power steakhouse experience" at this New American in the Penn Quarter, where "political and business heavyweights" "give their expense accounts a workout" as "prompt" servers bring on "excellent" beef and an "extensive wine list"; though detractors decry it as a "three-martini" "throwback", it's still a chance to caucus "elbow-to-elbow" with Washington's elite."

(2009 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 21 Service: 21 Cost: \$61

(2008 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 22 Service: 22 Cost: \$61

(2007 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 22 Service: 22 Cost: \$61

50. Teatism

2009 R St., NW (Connecticut Ave.) (202) 667-3827

This trio of very "un-DC" counter-service tearooms offers a "quick and cheap bite without sacrificing taste and health" amid Asian inspired surroundings that can be "serene" or "bustling" depending on the time of day; "dishes as good as they are simple" range from "guilt-inducing to Zen-lightness", and the "variety of food" makes up for the long lines during rush hour"; N.B. the Golden Triangle branch is open on weekdays only.

(2009 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 16 Service: 15 Cost: \$16

(2008 rating) Food: 19 Décor: 16 Service: 15 Cost: \$16

(2007 rating) Food: 19 Décor: 16 Service: 15 Cost: \$16

51. Oyamel

401 7th Street, NW (D St.) (202) 628-1005

"Break the mold" at owner Jose Andres "adventuresome" Penn Quarter Mexican, which "transports diners a few latitudes south" via "marvelous small plates" based on "real-deal" street food ("even grasshopper tacos, if you dare!") plus "authentic" extras like "table side guacamole"; fueled by "market scene videos" projected onto the wall and "fantastic margaritas", the "bright", "vibrant" atmosphere is only dimmed by what some call "spotty" service.

(2009 rating) Food: 22 Décor: 20 Service: 19 Cost: \$38

52. D'Acqua

801 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW (bet. 7 & 9 Sts.) (202) 783-7717

The "catch of the day" "displayed on ice" "testifies to the "absolutely owners Francesco Ricchi (Cesco) and Enzo Febbrano; the "expertly prepared" fish is matched with "smooth" service in a "minimalist", marine-themed space, but while fin fanciers "marvel" at the "delicacy and flavor", doubters dub the setup "d'acward" and the performance "underwhelming" "given the location, price and players."

(2009 rating) Food: 19 Décor: 17 Service: 18 Cost: \$53

(2008 rating) Food: -- Décor: -- Service: -- Cost: \$M

53. 701

701 Pennsylvania Ave., NW (7th St.) (202) 393-0701

Situated "next to the Navy Memorial", this "classy" Penn Quarter New American is a "solid standby" offering "a steal" of a pre-theater menu, a "hip" bar for sipping "well-crafted cocktails" and a patio where you can "people-watch along Pennsylvania Avenue"; new chef Bobby Varua "has done some great things with the menu" (which may outdate the above Food score), and the nightly live music helps to "spice up" the atmosphere.

(2009 rating) Food: 22 Décor: 22 Service: 22 Cost: \$50

(2008 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 22 Service: 23 Cost: \$49

(2007 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 22 Service: 23 Cost: \$49

54. Starbucks

Coffee Shop

55. Capital Grille

601 Pennsylvania Ave., NW(7th St.) (202) 393-0701

Expect “prime dry-aged beef” and “power you can cut with a fork” at these “top tier” chain steakhouses where the “handsome”, “wood paneled” dining rooms hum with “macho” “energy” as a “heavy-hitter crowd” hobnobs over “thick” cuts of “mouthwatering” meat and a “mind-boggling” wine list; the “highly professional staff” “won’t look down on you just because you’re not one of the Congressmen at the next table”, so it’s worth the “pricey” “indulgence.”

(2009 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 23 Service: 25 Cost: \$60

(2008 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 24 Service: 24 Cost: \$58

(2007 rating) Food: 25 Décor: 24 Service: 24 Cost: \$58

56. ZOLA

800 F St., NW (8th St.) (202) 654-0999

“Even 007 would be impressed” by this “swanky” Penn Quarter New American where “witty, spy-chic” décor – “dim lighting”, hidden doors, peepholes into the kitchen – entertains a mix of tourists, power-lunchers and “young people” attracted by its “intriguing” location attached to the International Spy Museum; a “chichi” crowd packs the bar for “killer drinks” (“making a sardine can seem roomy”), and while some suggest it’s “pretentious and overpriced” “the pre-event prix fixe menu is a good deal if you’re headed to the [nearby] Verizon Center.

(2009 rating) Food: 22 Décor: 24 Service: 20 Cost: \$50

(2008 rating) Food: 22 Décor: 25 Service: 20 Cost: \$50

(2007 rating) Food: 22 Décor: 25 Service: 20 Cost: \$50

57. Rosa Mexicano

Terrell Pl., 575 7th St., NW (F St.) (202) 783-5522

“Bustle and buzz” fill this “swanky” NYC import “across from the Verizon Center”, where “mind-blowing” margaritas and “glorious guacamole” “prepared tableside” lead into “inspired” takes on Mexican classics; still, some peso-pinchers pan the “upscale prices” and others wish getting a table in the “dramatic”, “colorful” space didn’t involve “interminable waits.”

(2009 rating) Food: 21 Decor: 21 Service: 19 Cost: \$40

(2008 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 23 Service: 19 Cost: \$40

(2007 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 23 Service: 19 Cost: \$40

58. Ceiba

701 14th St., NW (G St.) (202) 393-3983

A “spicy mixture of fun and élan” awaits at this “effervescent” Downtown Nuevo Latino where an “adventurous spirit” enhances the “wide-ranging” menu, which features “zesty” “culinary treats” like the “fabulous ceviche”; it’s all “elegantly served” in a “stylish”, modern setting that’s made for “impressing” “dates and clients”, as well as in a “cool” lounge that hosts a “ “hip” “scene” (“don’t miss the mojitos”); P.S. everyone loves the crunchy “caramel corn with check.

(2009 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 22 Service: 21 Cost: \$47

(2008 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 24 Service: 22 Cost: \$48

(2007 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 24 Service: 22 Cost: \$48

59. Via Cucina – not listed

60. Matchbox

713 H St., NW (bet. 7th & 8th Sts.) (202) 289-4441

Expect to see a “line trailing out the door” of this Chinatown “in place” where fans queue up for “amazing”, standout” sliders, “inventive”, “crispy” pizzas and other New American eats that are “worth the wait”; although an expansion has made it “easier to get a table” in the “box” –like space, you may still find “you elbows in your neighbor’s plate”; N.B. a Capitol Hill spin-off is slated to open in summer 2008.

(2009 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 21 Service: 18 Cost: \$26

(2008 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 19 Service: 17 Cost: \$26

(2007 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 19 Service: 17 Cost: \$26

61. Bistro D’Oc

518 10th St. NW (bet. E & F Sts.), (202) 393-5444

“Escape” on “a lovely trip to the Languedoc” at this “oasis in a vast wasteland of buildings” in Downtown DC, where “hearty French classics” from chef-owner Bernard Grenier are delivered in a “quaint”, “intimate” bistro setting that now features an upstairs wine bar; plus, it’s a “convenient dinner stop” before or after shows at Ford’s or E Street’s Landmark theaters; P.S. the Thai specialties are “a treat.”

(2009 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 16 Service: 19 Cost: \$37

(2008 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 17 Service: 20 Cost: \$36

(2007 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 17 Service: 20 Cost: \$36

62. Le Paradou

678 Indiana Avenue, NW (Bet. 6&7 Sts.), (202) 347-6780

Those who “love exquisite, elevated [New] French cuisine” should “prepare to be wowed” at “talented” chef/co-owner Yannick Cam’s “hushed”, “modern” Penn Quarter dining room, an “elegant and rewarding extravaganza” featuring “beautiful presentations” of “heavenly” food; but while devotees laud the “well-spaced tables” and “professional service”, others suggest the prices “can be more expensive than April 15th”; P.S. the prix fixe lunch is a “real bargain.”

(2009 rating) Food: 27 Décor: 26 Service: 23 Cost: \$95

(2008 rating) Food: 27 Décor: 25 Service: 24 Cost: \$89

(2007 rating) Food: 27 Décor: 25 Service: 24 Cost: \$89

63. Five Guys

808 H Street, NW (bet. 8th & 9th Sts.), (202) 393-2900

For “humongous”, “finger-lickin” burgers so “full of beefy goodness” they “leak grease through their wrappers” plus “mountains” of “fantastic” fresh-cut fries”, this “uber-franchising” “phenomenon” is “the best deal in town” (it’s the Top Bang for the Buck in the Baltimore Survey); legions of loyalists also give “a high five” to the “terrific fixin’s” and “free roasted peanuts”, so who cares about “zero atmosphere” and “fast-food” service.?

(2009 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 8 Service: 16 Cost: \$10

(2008 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 8 Service: 15 Cost: \$9

(2007 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 8 Service: 15 Cost: \$9

64. Oya

777 Ninth Street, NW (H St.), 202-393-1400

With a “dramatic”, “ultramodern” setting sporting “capiz-shell lighting”, marble fireplaces and water walls, this Penn Quarter sophisticate flaunts a “way cool” backdrop for “delicious”, “smartly plated” Asian-French fusion fare (“adventurous” sushi included) and “even more spectacular” cocktails; some suggest the “flashy décor can’t camouflage” “minuscule portions” and “slow” service, but most agree the “captivating scene” “doesn’t disappoint.”

(2009 rating) Food: 22 Décor: 27 Service: 19 Cost: 48

(2008 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 26 Service: 18 Cost: 53

(2007 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 26 Service: 18 Cost: 53

65. IndeBlue

707 G Street, NW (bet. 7th & 8th Sts.), (202) 3332538

“The beautiful people” adorn this “ostentatiously hip” Penn Quarter hot spot where “East meets West” in a “Chic” upstairs dining room courtesy of “creative”, globally accented New American fare “name that spice!” – From Chef Michael Hartzler (ex Citronelle, Viridian), who came on board post-Survey; still, a few doubters are “underwhelmed” by “uneven” service; P.S. “less expensive” appetizers are on offer in the “sexy” ground-floor Tantra Lounge.

(2009 rating) Food: - Décor: 23 Service: 19 Cost: 53

(2008 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 25 Service: 21 Cost: 62

(2007 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 25 Service: 21 Cost: 62

66. Rasika

633 D Street, NW (Bet. 6&7 Sts.), (202) 637-1222

“Success has not spoiled” this “most original” Penn Quarter “hot spot” that “redefines Indian cuisine” with “spectacular” dishes like street fare-inspired small plates and insanely delicious” appetizers, all paired with a “superior wine” selection; with a “gorgeous” interior bathed in an “orange glow”, it’s a “chic place” that’s also “surprisingly comfortable” thanks to “outstanding” service.

(2009 rating) Food: 26 Décor: 24 Service: 23 Cost: \$46

(2008 rating) Food: 26 Décor: 26 Service: 23 Cost: \$46

(2007 rating) Food: 26 Décor: 26 Service: 23 Cost: \$46

67. Poste Moderne Brasserie

555 8th Street, NW (Bet. E&F Sts.), (202) 783-6060

In a “sophisticated” setting stamped into the 1840s-era General Post Office, this “trendy” Penn Quarter brasserie “stacks up” thanks to chef Robert Weland’s “wonderful use of seasonal ingredients” in his “creative” New American fare; the “lackluster service” rankles, but “beautiful” types pack the “happening bar” for cocktails and “to-die-for” truffled fries, and the “secluded” courtyard “can’t be beat.”

(2009 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 22 Service: 19 Cost: \$49

(2008 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 22 Service: 21 Cost: \$45

(2007 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 22 Service: 21 Cost: \$45

68. Vapiano

1800 M Street, NW (18th St.), (202) 640-1868

For a “fresh, quick Italian meal” prepared “with German efficiency”, head to this “upscale cafeteria-style” chain where the “have-it-your-way pasta, salad and pizza stations” rate “a couple steps above fast food, but a couple steps below white-tablecloth”; its “gimmicky charge-card” system may prove “a little confusing on the first trip”, but “great happy-hour specials” make it an ideal “gathering spot” for “large groups”, and its “smart European décor” lends a “festive” air.

(2009 rating) Food: 17 Décor: 17 Service: 14 Cost: \$19

(2008 rating) Food: -- Décor: -- Service: -- Cost: \$ --

69. Zengo

781 7th Street, NW (Gallery Place – Bet. F&H Sts.), (202) 393-2929

“Sexy, spicy” Asian-Latin fusion fare and a “chic” atmosphere define this Chinatown hot spot that’s “alive with happy people” sipping “phenomenal” cucumber mojitos in its “hip”, “crowded” street-level bar or enjoying a meal in its “captivating” upstairs dining room; a simple culinary arithmetic (“Asian + Latin = yummy and interesting”) leads to dishes like tuna-filled won ton tacos with “a kick”, but naysayers advise “if you like quiet meals with attentive service, ‘zen-go’ somewhere else.”

(2009 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 23 Service: 18 Cost: \$43

(2008 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 24 Service: 17 Cost: \$45

(2007 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 24 Service: 17 Cost: \$45

70. Clyde’s

707 7th Street, NW (Bet. G&H Sts.), (202) 349-3700

“Perennial favorites” for a “dependable” “variety” of “regular American fare” that “doesn’t require a second mortgage”, these “comfortable” saloons are “agreeable” for an “old fashioned” burger or “classier” pub grub paired with “competent” service and priced for “value”; each location has “its own motif” (“hunting lodge”, “nautical”, “clubby”), and the fact that they’re “always paced” with “massive crowds” indicated they’re “doing something right.”

(2009 rating) Food: 19 Décor: 21 Service: 19 Cost: \$32

(2008 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 21 Service: 19 Cost: \$30

(2007 rating) Food: 18 Décor: 21 Service: 19 Cost: \$30

71. PS 7’s Restaurant

777 Eye Street, NW (Bet. 7&8 Sts.), (202) 742-8550

“Tucked away” in the Penn Quarter, this “amazing” restaurant is “earning its reputation” thanks to chef-owner Peter Smith’s “amazing takes on Modern American cuisine”, an “eclectic mix of flavors” that combine with “beautiful presentation” to yield “over-the-top taste” (it even “makes its own charcuterie”); with its “sleek” interior, “blissfully low” noise levels and “hip lounge area” serving “whimsical cocktails”, it’s a “welcome treat” that’s “well worth the trip.”

(2009 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 23 Service: 22 Cost: \$52

(2008 rating) Food: -- Décor: -- Service: -- Cost: \$E

72. Brasserie Beck

1101 K Street, NW - JBG Bldg (11th St.), (202) 408-1717

"Pulsing with energy", Robert Weidmaier's Downtown "mega bistro" beckons as a "trendy", "lower-priced" proxy for big brothers Marcel's, serving a "wonderful", "artery-clogging" taste of Belgium ("try the moules frites") in a "bright, gorgeous space"; the "epic" brew list is presided over by a "helpful" "beer sommelier", and despite "deafening" acoustics, the servers "try like crazy to make sure you have a fabulous time."

(2009 rating) Food: 24 Décor: 23 Service: 22 Cost: \$47

(2008 rating) Food: -- Décor: -- Service: -- Cost: \$M

73. Acadiana

901 New York Avenue, NW - New Convention Center (9th St.), (202) 408-8848

"Pols with Southern roots gravitate" to this "N'Awlins experience" near the new Convention Center, where the "upscale spins on Louisiana comfort food" –from "meaty gumbo" to "excellent shrimp 'n' grits" – are preceded by "melt-in-your-mouth biscuits" that "make the meal"; the "contemporary" atmosphere "can suit a mood ranging from business to romantic", and while the Creole desserts ensure "you'll walk out five pounds heavier, it's worth it."

(2009 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 22 Service: 22 Cost: \$48

(2008 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 21 Service: 22 Cost: \$49

(2007 rating) Food: 23 Décor: 21 Service: 22 Cost: \$49

74. Bobby Van's

809 15th Street, NW (Bet. H&I Sts.), (202) 589-0060

A "K Street lobbying crowd" "brings corporate cards" to dine on "prime" porterhouse at this "quintessential" Downtown chophouse where "solid" cuts, an "old clubby atmosphere", a "hopping" happy hour and an "everyone-knows-your-name" crowd draw more than meat eaters; but the unimpressed say it's "just another steakhouse" and "there are certainly better."

(2009 rating) Food: 21 Décor: 18 Service: 20 Cost: \$57

(2008 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 18 Service: 20 Cost: \$54

(2007 rating) Food: 20 Décor: 18 Service: 20 Cost: \$54

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