



Spring Long Weekend: What's New in D.C.



Cherry Blossom Season in Washington, D.C. Photo by Elizabeth Harvey

Whispers of springtime are in the air, and as the afternoons fill with sunshine and timid buds stretch their faces towards the light—and vaccination rates continue to rise—the culture capitals of the East Coast are shrugging off their coats of snow and coming back to life. Particularly in bloom is **Washington, D.C.**: the clouds have lifted over Pennsylvania Avenue, and the National Cherry Blossom Festival is in full swing, with peak pink flowering expected next weekend (through April 10). The District has always been one of our favorite destinations for a long weekend getaway, but it delights all the more this season—especially if you are just beginning to travel again and are looking to stay close to home. From quiet, cobblestoned Georgetown, where the Rosewood has debuted townhouse residences for the ultimate private stay, to the rapidly developing Navy Yard—the new “it” neighborhood, offering exceptional additions to D.C.’s already prolific restaurant scene—a visit to the nation’s capital offers a first taste of a city in revival. It’s the spring escape you’ve been hoping for.

Contact your Indagare Trip Designer or Indagare, if you are not yet a member, to start planning a spring long weekend trip to Washington, D.C.—this year, or

whenever you're ready. Our team can match you with the accommodations and activities that are right for you and provide information on [Covid-19 travel safety](#), [Covid-19 hotel policies](#) and more.

Getting There



The last of winter snow in Georgetown. Photo by Elizabeth Harvey

Depending on where you're traveling from, Washington, D.C. can be easily reached by a quick drive, flight or train ride (plus: Amtrak now displays the percentage of seats booked for each upcoming trip, so you can choose a less-trafficked time). Currently, all travelers into the capital should get tested for Covid within 72 hours before traveling, unless they have been vaccinated, have tested positive in the last 90 days and do not have symptoms, or are visiting from Maryland, Virginia, North Dakota or Hawaii. There is still a public mask mandate in effect, and the capital has maintained a steadily cautious approach to lifting Covid-safety restrictions.

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Where to Stay: New Rosewood Residences and More



The living room of one of the new Rosewood townhouses. Photo courtesy of the Rosewood Washington D.C.

The most exciting arrival to the D.C. hotel scene is the eagerly-anticipated addition of six private, four-story townhouses to the [Rosewood hotel in Georgetown](#). Just steps from the hotel's main entrance, these authentic Georgetown homes are ideal for privacy (and social distancing), whether you are simply seeking the comforts of your own space or require an oasis for an extended period of remote work (or, in a future world, graduations). With their own private entrances on 31st Street, the townhouses are approximately 1,000 square feet in size, featuring: furnished private patios; one king bedroom (plus a sofa bed, accommodating up to four guests); a master bathroom (with a soaking tub, rainfall shower and Toto toilet) and additional bathroom with a shower; a fully equipped kitchen (the hotel can send a private chef to prepare a meal in your house); a central living room with a fireplace; a Bosch washer and dryer; and access to a personal butler—as well as to Rosewood bicycles and all of the services and amenities of the main hotel. Decorated by renowned local designer Thomas Pheasant (who has also worked on the Hay-Adams Hotel and The Blair House, the White House's primary guest house), the Rosewood townhouses strike the perfect balance between functionality and grace—the way the best homes do. Every item is exactly where you want it to be (thanks to the attentive service), from the Smeg electric kettle and glass jar of artisanal teas to the Dyson hair dryer waiting (with multiple attachments) on its magnetic stand beside the wide his and hers sink. The furnishings are polished yet

familiar; the space is pampering yet compact. Black-and-white photographs of D.C., taken by Pheasant himself, adorn the walls, providing little windows into the city you've found yourself staying in. At once, you feel the place is yours—and departure is bittersweet.



The CUT restaurant at the Rosewood. Photo courtesy of the Rosewood Washington D.C.

While you may find it hard to tear yourself away from admiring the perfection of your adopted kitchen's glassware—after all, after a year at home, it is truly thrilling just to be somewhere *else*—Rosewood residents should remember that the townhouses are just the final piece in a multi-year renovation of the property that began in 2019 and included design updates to the public spaces, as well as the addition of dining concepts by Wolfgang Puck. The main restaurant, CUT, is now a can't-miss in Georgetown. Warm and well spaced, with an open kitchen, CUT has a fresh focus on seasonal, local ingredients. In addition to the signature "Nose to Tail" beef menu, there are plenty of options from "The Garden," "The Seafood Bar," and "The Nest"—and everything is excellent (including the craft cocktails and robust wine list). After dinner, the peacock-green velvet chairs in the bar adjacent beckon for a nightcap—or you can head up to the rooftop lounge for twilight views.



The Dupont Circle lobby lounge (left); the bar at Café Riggs in the Riggs Hotel (right). Photos by Elizabeth Harvey

Beyond the Rosewood, there's no shortage of fabulous hotels in the District—old and new—and there's a match to suit every taste and traveler profile (for return visits, we recommend combining your favorite haunt with a few nights at a different address, for a sense of novelty). Families will love the classically stylish [Four Seasons in Georgetown](#) (it was one of [Indagare's most-booked hotels during Covid](#)); history buffs will be at home in the elegant [Hay-Adams](#). Style mavens and scene-seekers will adore the **The Dupont Circle**, with its delectable Clodagh interiors, airy suites (with private terraces overlooking the neighborhood's elite manor houses), and chic, upscale vibe (*reopening mid-April*). And in Penn Quarter, devotees of design hotels should not miss the quirky yet grand **Riggs** (within a former bank, the architecture matches the surrounding monuments—but the décor features modern marbled wallpaper, a bright color palette and a massive floral sculpture on the ground floor; if nothing else, come for an *aperitif* at the Café Riggs, where soaring Corinthian columns, a long marble bar and a swanky atmosphere practically require the ordering of Champagne and oysters).

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Where to Eat



Stopping for lunch at Slice Joint (and a craft IPA from Bluejacket) at The Roost. Photo by Elizabeth Harvey

It's possible to build an entire Washington, D.C. itinerary around dining—and, currently, restaurants are offering both indoor and outdoor seating until midnight (the former at 25 percent capacity). The city saw a host of openings in the beginning of 2020, which were forced to close just weeks later, at the outbreak of the pandemic—which means there's plenty of ground for even the most seasoned foodies to cover. In Penn Quarter (just up the street from the Riggs), **Cranes** is a sophisticated Spanish-Kaiseki creation from chef Pepe Moncayo, who combines Catalán, Singaporean and Japanese influences into a playful menu of bento boxes, tapas and larger sharing plates, with the *pièce de résistance* being a six-course *omakase* menu and curated sake and wine pairing that will leave you elated, and a bit stunned. On the opposite end of the spectrum (and the opposite side of the Mall), **The Roost** is a hip, 12,500-square-foot food hall—a “dining and drinking consortium”—that celebrates the many flavors of the D.C. culinary community, from local chefs and coffee roasters to craft brewers, vintners and spirit producers. The eight current vendors (with more coming soon) sell everything from Grandma-style slices engineered by “Pizza Regina” Rachel Marie—who formerly worked the ovens at the New York institution Roberta's—to sushi, tacos and plant-based plates. There's also a large bar space—Shelter—which can easily be imagined buzzing, one day,

with colleagues post-work, eager first dates and rambunctious college students.



The well-spaced interior of the Navy Yard’s Albi restaurant (left); a corner of the Anchovy Social rooftop (currently closed) at the Thompson Hotel (right). Photos by Elizabeth Harvey

The Roost is just one of the many venues that are making the Navy Yard—or “The Yards”—the hottest neighborhood to know in D.C. This former industrial zone on the Anacostia waterfront has been rapidly developed over the last five years by Brookfield Properties, with a major focus on dining. **Albi**, a wood-fired, Levantine treasure from chef Michael Rafidi, is one of its finest ambassadors, and another can’t-miss spot—especially for anyone who has been dreaming of the Middle East. The menu, like the atmosphere, is authentic, unpretentious and fun (“Albi” means “heart” in Arabic), and while it’s hard to go wrong with your order, the Beirut-style hummus, orchard fattoush and grilled lamb belly are all Indagare-approved (if you like, with a bottle of wine from Kakheti, Georgia or Lebanon’s Beqaa Valley). Next door, oenophiles will also enjoy exploring the varietals on pour at the acclaimed **Maxwell Park**—while beer-drinkers should pilgrimage across the square to **Bluejacket**, one of the first establishments to put the Navy Yard on the map. You’ll want to start making your reservations now, as *Michelin* stars are rumored to be awarded this year—beginning with **Maialino Mare**, a seafood-focused sister restaurant to Danny Meyer’s Italian classic in Manhattan. Scheduled to reopen this April, the restaurant is located within the new **Thompson Hotel**—a wonderful option for young, hip travelers and families

seeking an up-and-coming, “Brooklyn-esque” location off the beaten path—where Meyer has also launched **Anchovy Social**, a bright and gorgeous indoor-outdoor rooftop bar with nearly 360-degree views sure to make New York green with envy.

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What to Do



The Yards (left); Inside ARTECHOUSE, which has installations in both D.C. and N.Y.C. (right).
Photos by Elizabeth Harvey

One of D.C.’s biggest events, the **National Cherry Blossom Festival**, kicked off on March 20 and will last through April 10. This year, most of the common Tidal Basin and park viewing points are blocked off to eliminate crowds, and many of the festival events are being held virtually—though there is a city-wide installation of 26 colorful blossom sculptures, painted by local artists, that travelers can seek out and snap. While museums were recently allowed to open, the majority of the most famous collections remain closed, including the National Portrait Gallery, the Renwick Gallery, the National Air and Space Museum, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the National Museum of African American History & Culture. The National Mall and open-air monuments are accessible as usual (although traveler’s should note that the White House and Capitol Hill remain gated off by a several-block radius; it is possible

only to catch a glimpse of these buildings from afar, and the area is somewhat difficult to navigate because of the barriers). In addition to shopping the boutiques in Georgetown and downtown (**Salt + Sundry** is a particular favorite), a few cultural attractions that are currently open and worth a visit include the **Phillips Collection**, the **International Spy Museum**, the **National Gallery of Art's Sculpture Garden**, **Dumbarton Oaks** (a historic estate-turned-museum in Georgetown with collections of Byzantine and Pre-Columbian art and highly renowned gardens) and **ARTECHOUSE**, an immersive digital art exhibition.

Some travelers might be deterred by these closures and restrictions—but we see them as an opportunity. Washington, D.C. is a wonderful city for walking: its neighborhoods are highly unique and spread out, like London, and there is amazing architectural diversity—not to mention history—to be found down every street. Charming pastel-colored townhouses reminiscent of [Charleston](#) give way to majestic Victorian mansions and Greek Revival mammoths—and on to contemporary high-rises. So often when we used to travel, we rushed out the door to see things and do things, taking the places we rested our heads and replenished our bodies for granted (or leaving wishing we'd savored more). This spring, we have the chance to look with fresh eyes and take in all the details, from the crispness of a pressed bedsheet, to the faces of our fellow diners—and even the shades of a tiny cherry blossom.

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- Elizabeth Harvey on March 25, 2021

