



B O U R B O N S T E A K

W A S H I N G T O N , D . C .

Oaken Oasis

The contemporary elegance of Bourbon Steak at The Four Seasons Georgetown

You are drawn in at first glance. It's serene, elegant, and spare, much like Audrey Hepburn, whose stylized likeness graces an otherwise unadorned dining room wall. This is Bourbon Steak, the restaurant that anchors The Four Seasons, Georgetown, and it exudes the quiet, confident, contemporary style that you'd expect from this distinguished hotel.

In the hands of renowned architect and restaurant designer David Rockwell, Bourbon Steak's atmosphere reflects the same philosophy that its culinary masters, proprietor-chef Michael Mina and executive chef Drew Adams, embrace in their New American cuisine: at Bourbon Steak, the menu is focused on the finest, freshest ingredients; its design is composed of luxe natural materials. Cured oak sheaths virtually the entire interior. Tabletops are covered in rich leather the color of dark chocolate, as is the entire ceiling of the lounge. Bronze hardware punctuates finely crafted cabinetry like jewelry. Everywhere you look, every surface, every finish, speaks to lasting quality and considered design.

From the hotel's dramatic marble lobby, a broad entranceway welcomes you to the restaurant foyer, where the lounge beckons to the right, and the dining room is visible a few steps down through a series of broad openings in the horizontal oak paneling. This handsome honey-colored oak -- whitened by the centuries-old French technique known as *cerusing* -- is the predominant surface of the interior. On the foyer floor, it is laid in a subtle yet dynamic chevron pattern; on the walls throughout the foyer, dining room, and lounge, the planks run horizontally, floor-to-ceiling. An exquisite, long-and-low oaken cabinet facing the hostess station serves as a humidor, housing drawers of Bourbon Steak's fine cigar offerings; drop-stations in the dining room and the short-ends of the bar are crafted from the same pale wood, imparting a seamless, unified effect of timeless monochromatic beauty.

The oak-clad expanse of the dining room is illuminated by elegant drum lights suspended from oak panels overhead, their cylindrical shades framed in polished metal; grids of similar lights with square shades brighten the foyer. Though the main dining room is spacious, seating 140, rows of high-walled booths create enclaves of intimacy, while long banquettes with leather seats and backs of cut velvet just a shade lighter than the oak afford wide-angle views of the interior. Pale shimmering velvet upholstering the straight-backed chairs, and soft carpeting in the same honey color, ensure a plush and hushed dining environment. Large windows along the south wall reveal long views over the C&O Canal far below, framed by floor-to-ceiling drapery in a color matching the carpet and upholstery.

The neutral palette of the dining room keeps the focus on the tabletops. These are made of dark brown leather, and each offering, in turn, is artfully plated on a backdrop of pure white matte French porcelain by Guy Degrenne. Sleek Sambonet stainless flatware is complemented by more rugged black-handled steak knives, and the whole vignette sparkles with Riedel and Schott Zwiesel

glassware. After the meal, petit-fours are presented in custom mangowood boxes inset with a branded bronze plaque.

Off the lobby to the east, is a glamorous private dining room, where wrap-around vistas of the noble arched bridges spanning Washington's Rock Creek Park provide the primary decorative feature. Its walls of windows are lined with golden tone-on-tone drapery, and its curvy upholstered high-backed chairs accommodate up to 36 guests in stylish comfort.

The bar at Bourbon Steak is a destination in and of itself, a source of award-winning artisanal cocktails, and a relaxed lounge setting in which to enjoy good company and less formal dining. An arrangement of sofas near the lobby is an ideal place to meet and sip before dinner; a row of elevated booths opposite the bar, and a long banquette fitted with oak tables at the far end of the space are ideally suited to both small plates and full meals. A focal wall above the banquette is upholstered, like the ceiling, in panels of rich dark brown leather; a dramatic trio of bull's eye mirrors set into it and framed in the same leather commands attention from across the room, reflecting light from a row of playful pendant lamps whose shape and surface are reminiscent of slowly melting ice cubes. The bar and lounge accommodate 55 patrons, eleven at the polished Marrone marble bar itself, in high-backed leather stools facing Bourbon Steak's collection of fine spirits, displayed on open glass shelving that opens on to the dining room beyond for ease service. Two televisions flanking the pass-through window make it easy to track a score or catch the news. The floor immediately surrounding the bar is an intricate geometric mosaic of small interlocking rings, whose neutral colors complement the rest of floor material: the ubiquitous oak.

The patio at Bourbon Steak is an urban garden enclave, seating 65 in cushioned comfort. Its serpentine design winds around mature trees, raised beds of greenery, a massive wall sculpture, glass-topped tables, and fire features (after dark). Accessed from the bar or the hotel lobby, it is ideal for private events or for enjoying a fine cigar.

Whether you experience Bourbon Steak indoors or out, you are assured of an atmosphere whose refined design matches the standards of the cuisine and the service.

BOURBON STEAK at Four Seasons Hotel Washington, DC

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