

brass pipes of which now dangle two stories in the air in a large, imposing cube. My room had a stylish if slightly self-conscious warmth, with colorful throw rugs, framed thrift-store ephemera, and an “air-purifying” snake plant, listed in the guest services binder as an in-room amenity. The Line also touts its Community Center, a public space that local nonprofits and artists can apply to use.

Jack Inslee, who runs Full Service, the hotel’s radio station, emphasized the Line’s role in the neighborhood. “That’s why we have glass walls when cement ones would be better for sound,” he told me, gesturing to the transparent partitions that can be folded back like an accordion. “We want to see the people, and vice versa.” As I looked around the lobby at the guests sitting on the dark blue sectionals, in the batik booths, and at the long library tables, I thought that the Line did seem to capture the new D.C. I saw a diversity of race, gender, and even age. The only thing that

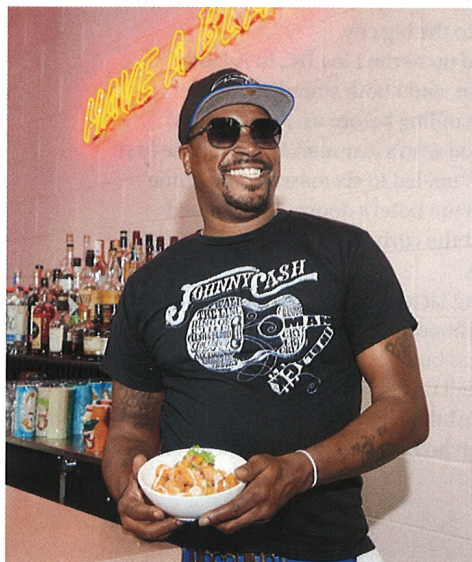
everyone appeared to have in common was that they were all impeccably, expensively dressed.

But there is something else that unites these representatives of the new D.C.: they’re hungry. And many of the restaurants that serve them, themselves a diverse lot, strive, like the Line, to be neighborhood places. I had lunch at one, the year-old Green Almond Pantry, a long, narrow, sunlit space in Shaw, a formerly majority-black enclave bordered on the north by Howard University. On my way, I walked past vibrant, freshly painted row houses, many with Sotheby’s signs in their front yards.

I had come to meet Genevieve Villamora, the co-owner of Bad Saint, a Filipino restaurant in Columbia Heights. Over a slice of leek-and-hazelnut tart and a meze plate so delicate that it defied my understanding of red peppers, she told me how much the city has changed since she arrived 25 years ago. “I can’t walk down a street anymore without thinking about what used to be there,” she told me as she tore off a piece of focaccia. “And people who came later will never know. Or they’ll have their own ghosts to remember.”

Villamora is typical of a new cohort of D.C. entrepreneurs who are redefining the city while striving to ensure that longtime residents still have a place at the table. Her restaurant, which she opened in 2015 in the midst of Columbia Heights’ transformation, is known for its long lines and egalitarian hospitality. “We don’t want to operate within a bubble, we want to be a part of the neighborhood,” she said. Hiring longtime locals, Villamora explained, has helped Bad Saint feel rooted even as its national profile has soared. “Many of our customers visit from far-flung corners of the world, but a lot of them are still people we run into at the grocery store or at the corner bar down the street.”

The day after I met Villamora, I took a Lyft to the Wharf. On a Wednesday afternoon, there were few people strolling its



◀ From far left: The Contemplation Court at the National Museum of African American History & Culture; a staffer at Tiki TNT, a tropical-themed bar at the Wharf.



▲ *A Rake's Progress, a restaurant within the Line DC that showcases mid-Atlantic ingredients.*

▼ *The cuisines of the Middle East, North Africa, and the Caucasus are the focus at Maydan, in Cardozo.*

waterfront walkway, but I found a cheerful crowd as soon as I entered Officina, chef Nick Stefanelli's three-story Italian marketplace-restaurant-rooftop bar. Like the rest of the Wharf, Officina still has a just-out-of-the-package shine, from the marble counters to the glass case displaying house-made sausages. The olive oil on my *vitello tonnato*, the pasta in my *bigoli all'anatra* (a thick spaghetti with duck sauce), even the torrone gelato in my dessert—which tasted, no joke, the way the cool side of your pillow feels—were all for sale in the market downstairs. Stefanelli told me he had polled D.C.'s Italian community to see which hard-to-find treats he might stock for them. By the time I left, lines of cars were idling in the Wharf's drop-off zones, delivering people in steady droves.

Probably the most famous (Continued on page 180)

How to Explore D.C.

Venture beyond the National Mall to see some of the city's most compelling corners.

Where to Stay

The **Line DC** (thelinehotel.com; doubles from \$199), in Adams Morgan, is stylish, with excellent dining (try the "next vacation cake" at Brothers & Sisters). Downtown, **Eaton DC** (eatonworkshop.com; doubles from \$199), the brainchild of hotelier Katherine Lo, has rooms stocked with books by Ta-Nehisi Coates and Shirley Chisholm. Other new additions include the 360-room **Conrad** (conradhotels.com; doubles from \$339) and the timelessly elegant **Dupont Circle Hotel** (thedupontcirclehotel.com; doubles from \$229).

Where to Eat & Drink

At the Wharf, go to **Officina** (officinadc.com; entrées \$18–\$68) for Italian fare and **Tiki TNT** (tikitnt.com) for tropical cocktails. Filipino spot **Bad Saint** (badsaintdc.com; entrées \$16–\$40), in Columbia Heights, lives up to the hype, as does **Maydan** (maydandc.com; entrées \$12–\$48), in Cardozo. Bring a group to nearby **Thip Khao** (thipkhao.com; entrées \$12–\$24), where Laotian dishes are served family-style. For picnic provisions, head to Shaw and stop at both **Green Almond Pantry** (greenalmondpantry.com; entrées \$8–\$13) and **Seylou Bakery** (seylou.com). Try the *pupusas* at **Don Juan** (donjuanrestaurantdc.com), in Mount Pleasant, then walk a mile south to Adams Morgan and compare them with those at **El Tamarindo** (eltamarindodc.com). **Vace Italian Deli** (vaceitaliandeli.com), in Cleveland Park, sells slices, subs, and other Italian delights, while Park View "Jew-ish" deli **Call Your Mother** (callyourmotherdeli.com) has inventive bagels and smoked fish even Bubbe would approve.

What to Do

The museums on the Mall are a must, especially the poignant **National Museum of African American History & Culture** (nmaahc.si.edu). To see the presidential memorials, rent a Citibike and go after dark, when they're empty and lit up against the sky. Other highlights include **Artechouse** (dc.artechouse.com), a gallery/light show hybrid near the Wharf; the **Phillips Collection** (phillipscollection.org), in Dupont Circle; and the Smithsonian's **Anacostia Community Museum** (anacostia.si.edu), in Anacostia, which reopens this fall. Try to catch a show at the **9:30 Club** (930.com), near the U Street Corridor. Once the heart of D.C. hard-core and go-go, it remains one of the best—and most iconic—venues in the country.