



# RISE AND SHINE



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It's said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. But we like to think of it as the most fun. When else can you justify having bacon both on your plate and in your Bloody Mary? Whether you're looking for a special-occasion splurge, a diner fill-up, or a few rounds of dim sum, our guide to **more than 50 of our area's best breakfast and brunch spots** might make you forget that snooze button and leap out of bed.

# BUSTLING SCENES

Brunch can be as much about hanging out with friends—and maybe rehashing last night's revelry—as it is about filling up. Grab your pals and say cheers at these good-time spots.



Garlicky, parsley-showered escargots at Brasserie Beck—an unexpectedly delicious way to start the day.

## Bar Pilar

1833 14TH ST., NW;  
202-265-1751

Anthony Bourdain's hangover cure of choice might be leftover Chinese food, a Coke, and a joint. Ours is a robust Bloody Mary and an order of bull's-eye toast—fat slices of "Texas toast" with a poached egg in the hollowed-out middle (even better doused in hot sauce). The rest of the menu is a carb-lover's heaven—oversize pancakes, buttermilk biscuits with melty butter and jam, and crisp skillet potatoes—served at a leisurely pace. There's only one way to follow up a meal like this: a nap. *Saturday and Sunday 11 to 4.*

## Bistrot du Coin

1738 CONNECTICUT AVE.,  
NW; 202-234-6969

Few restaurants in Washington pull off atmosphere as well as this Francophile institution. The jammed-in tables (each bearing a bottle of rosé), the roaring din, and the glittering disco balls help propel a party vibe, even during the day. A brief brunch menu is all about eggs (we prefer the classic Benedict over the hulking omelets), but look to the regular menu for such comforts as *tartiflette* (a bowl of soupy Reblochon cheese, bacon, and potatoes that's divine with a baguette), hanger steak, and killer *frites*. *Saturday and Sunday 11:15 to 4.*

## Brasserie Beck

1101 K ST., NW;  
202-408-1717

Robert Wiedmaier's vast beer bar and Belgian restaurant draws well-heeled brunchers with its excellent cocktails and versatile menu. Breakfast items include a lemony soufflé pancake

served in a skillet with a pitcher of blackberry-maple syrup and a spinach-and-Gruyère omelet folded just so. Better still are the seafood offerings: buttery escargots sizzling in their shells and five preparations of *moules frites* (the white-wine-sauce is our pick for daytime dining). Little details—such as coffee served with a rock-sugar stirrer and a biscotti—add to the charm. *Saturday and Sunday 11:30 to 4.*

## Columbia Firehouse

109 S. SAINT ASAPH ST.,  
ALEXANDRIA; 703-683-1776

Old Towners head to this restored 19th-century firehouse for such fare as Southern eggs Benedict with fried green tomatoes and a smattering of jalapeños or Belgian waffles served with fried chicken or rich fruit compote and chantilly cream. If you're in the mood for seafood, go for Chesapeake Bay oysters—on the half shell or deep-fried and piled in a po' boy. Kid-friendly and comfortable, this is a relaxing place to while away a lazy morning with the neighborhood crowd. *Saturday and Sunday 11 to 3.*

## Eatonville

2121 14TH ST., NW;  
202-332-9672

Named for the Florida hometown of author Zora Neale Hurston, this sprawling dining room with chandeliers and paddle fans is a lively spot for a Southern-style repast. That means fried chicken with jalapeño-sausage gravy (ask for a bone-in thigh instead of the boneless breast) and custardy mac and cheese or the odd-sounding but delicious fried poached eggs over bacon-studded potato hash. The frittata,



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*I usually eat Quaker oatmeal and some sort of fruit—blueberries, oranges, pineapples—or Cheerios. Strawberry Nutri-Grain bars are big when I'm running out the door. The dolphins eat a couple of pounds of capelin or herring.”*

**Keri Barton**

Marine-mammal trainer,  
National Aquarium in Baltimore

with its woodsy shiitakes, feta, and arugula, is a departure from the Dixie theme, but it works. Flaky biscuits come with a few plates—if they don't, order a round. And don't overlook the marvelous lavender lemonade, served in a Mason jar. *Saturday and Sunday 9 to 3.*

## Georgia Brown's

950 15TH ST., NW;  
202-393-4499

Babies in their Sunday best bopping around to live jazz, welcoming service, an array of Southern comfort food—it's easy to see why brunch at this elegant downtown eatery is a beloved tradition. Diners pay \$40.95 for an entrée plus access to a buffet piled with tender Virginia ham, biscuits and sausage gravy, Belgian waffles with pecan-maple syrup, myriad salads, and Creole-seasoned peel-and-eat shrimp. (Children ages 5 to 12 can graze the buffet

for \$21.95.) There's a dessert table with a chocolate fountain plus cupcakes and peach cobbler. The offerings are so ample that many patrons take their main courses to go—don't miss the gravy-drenched fried chicken with collards and mashed potatoes or the gumbo with spicy andouille sausage. *Sunday 10 to 2:15.*

## Jackson's Mighty Fine Food

11927 DEMOCRACY DR.,  
RESTON; 703-437-0800

This upbeat Reston Town Center favorite serves savory doughnuts in the bread basket at lunch and dinner, so it's no surprise it's got a lock on brunch. Big, low-on-filler crabcakes make a nice centerpiece to a plate of poached eggs and biscuits, while steak and eggs is elevated with tender filet mignon. Supplement the morning



*A Southern classic at Columbia Firehouse: fat waffles with crisply fried chicken.*