

SHOPPING

top picks

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- Barney's Co-Op (p131)
- Meeps Vintage Fashionette (p138)
- Dekka (p139)
- Second Story Books (p136)
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SHOPPING

Shopping in DC can mean many things, from browsing atmospheric antique shops to perusing rare titles at secondhand booksellers; there are temptations for lovers of vinyl, kitschy home furnishings, one-of-a-kind jewelry and art, and handicrafts imported from all corners of the globe.

To the outsider, the DC fashion scene may seem like all blue suits and khakis, with government insiders and corporate types defining the reigning aesthetic. This stereotype – not inaccurate in some quarters of the city – misses by a wide margin Washington in all her multicultural beauty. This is a city where you'll find an assortment of funky vintage shops, fashion-forward boutiques, couture-loving consignment stores and specialty shops dealing in African robes, hats, lingerie, urban gear and stylish footwear.

DC also has the nation's best collection of politically oriented souvenirs, from rhinestone-studded Obama hats to stars-and-stripes boxer shorts, rubber Nixon masks and White House snow globes, placemats and ties. Museum shops are also good places to browse, containing iconic gifts like stuffed pandas from the National Zoological Park and balsa-wood airplanes from the National Air & Space Museum, as well as more unusual finds like Kenyan handicrafts from the National Museum of African Art, weavings from indigenous tribes at the National Museum of the American Indian and hand-painted and decorative East-Asian pieces in the Freer Gallery of Art.

If you can't find it on the streets of Washington, or time is limited, you can also visit one of the vast shopping centers in the suburbs (see [p141](#)).

Shopping Areas

Georgetown is DC's number-one shopping district, with stores lining M St and Wisconsin Ave. Adams-Morgan, along 18th St, has a handful of shops selling African handicrafts, books, records and vintage clothes. Nearby Columbia Heights has a growing number of boutiques and one-of-a-kind stores along U St and 14th St. Dupont Circle is another major shopping area, with stores on Connecticut Ave and the streets running off the circle. The Smithsonian museums each have their own souvenir stores – some better than others (see [p130](#) for recommendations). Downtown you'll find plenty of shops selling whimsical DC souvenirs, T-shirts and political schlock. Further out, Alexandria's Old Town has an impressive variety of antiques, art galleries and craft shops.

Opening Hours

Generally, stores in DC are open 10am to 7pm Monday to Saturday and noon to 5pm Sunday, although some close on Sunday (some boutiques close on Monday instead). Smaller shops may close at 5pm daily, or stay open until 7pm one night a week, eg Thursday. Museum shops open according to museum hours.

Sales Taxes & Refunds

Sales tax is 6% in DC and 5% in Virginia. For more info, see [p246](#).

WHITE HOUSE AREA & FOGGY BOTTOM

You'll find many tourist-aimed souvenir shops throughout these neighborhoods. There are some gems here, however, including a small travel store, a Native American craft shop and the AIA bookstore for architectural junkies.

INDIAN CRAFT SHOP [Map p64](#) [Art](#)
☎ 202-208-4056; 1849 C St NW, No 1023 Dept of Interior; 🕒 8:30am-4:30pm Mon-Fri; 📍 Farragut West

Representing over 45 tribal groups in the US, this crowded one-room shop sells gorgeous but costly basketry, weavings, pottery, beadwork and carvings made by Native Americans. It's hidden inside the Department of the Interior; show photo ID to enter the building.

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS BOOKSTORE [Map p64](#) [Books](#)
☎ 800-242-3837; 1735 New York Ave NW; 🕒 9am-5pm Mon-Fri; 📍 Foggy Bottom

Architecture buffs are in good company in this small specialty shop, which stocks the latest architecture and design titles and periodicals. For the classic overview on the city's iconic buildings, pick up the *AIA Guide to the Architecture of Washington, DC*.