

Logan Circle, U Street & Columbia Heights

LOGAN CIRCLE | SHAW | COLUMBIA HEIGHTS | MT PLEASANT | NORTHEAST DC

Neighborhood Top Five

- 1 Wander along U St and take in its jazzy history, troubled descent and vibrant rebirth as an arts and entertainment district, then contemplate it over a meal at **Ben's Chili Bowl** (p173).
- 2 Walk through wooded groves at the **United States National Arboretum** (p167).
- 3 Feel the neighborhood vibe at cheery beery **Right Proper Brewing Co** (p177).
- 4 Discuss politics, sip free-trade coffee or spout verse at **Busboys & Poets** (p175).
- 5 Gawk at Lincoln's assassination bullet and more macabre exhibits at the **National Museum of Health and Medicine** (p170).



For more detail of this area, see Map p312 ➔

Explore Logan Circle, U Street & Columbia Heights

These neighborhoods have changed more in recent years than almost anywhere else in DC. The U St Corridor – DC's richest nightlife zone – has quite a history. It was once the 'Black Broadway' where Duke Ellington and Ella Fitzgerald hit their notes in the early 1900s. It was the smoldering epicenter of the 1968 race riots. There was a troubled descent, and then a vibrant rebirth in recent years. A stroll here is a must and rewards with mural-splashed alleys, red-hot music clubs and antique-crammed shops.

U St becomes part of the larger Shaw district, which is DC's current 'it' hood. But it's not annoyingly trendy. Instead, the breweries, bars and cafes that seem to pop up weekly are true local places, where neighbors come to sip among neighbors (and students among students, as Howard University is here). Logan Circle is next door and also booming. Walk down 14th St NW and hot-chef wine bars, beer bars, tapas bars and oyster bars flash by. The side streets hold stately old manors that give the area its class.

To the north, Columbia Heights has a reputation as an enclave for Latino immigrants and hipsters. There are no real sights, but the cheap ethnic food and unassuming punk dive bars can occupy many an evening.

Northeast DC is a vast stretch of leafy residential blocks holding several far-flung sights (and breweries). Nature lovers have a couple of groovy, free landscapes to explore, as long as you have a car or don't mind lengthy public-transportation trips.

Local Life

➔ **Be at Ben's** The Chili Bowl (p173) is no secret, and you'll probably find a bus load of tourists inside. But it remains a real neighborhood spot, with locals downing half-smokes and gossiping over sweet iced tea.

➔ **Bang on the Drum All Day** When the weather warms, a multicultural group gathers in Meridian Hill Park (p167) for a drum circle on Sunday afternoons.

➔ **Get Funky** The neighborhood revs up the first Saturday in May with the Funk Parade, a musical street fair that celebrates the spirit of U St.

Getting There & Away

➔ **Metro** The Green and Yellow Lines run in tandem to most sites. Useful stops are U St, Shaw-Howard U and Columbia Heights. Religious sites cluster near Brookland-CUA (Red Line). For Logan Circle points south of P St use McPherson Sq (Blue, Orange, Silver Line); for points north, use the U St Metro station.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Loosen the belt. These areas have fantastic eating and drinking options. Pick a street and meander until you find a favorite. There's 14th St in Logan Circle (trendy), 11th St in Columbia Heights (neighborly), 7th St by the Shaw Metro station (eclectic) and U St in the heart of it all (budget fare and soul food).

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Ben's Chili Bowl (p173)
- ➔ Compass Rose (p174)
- ➔ Le Diplomate (p173)
- ➔ Estadio (p171)
- ➔ Bistro Bohem (p175)

For reviews, see p171. ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Right Proper Brewing Co (p177)
- ➔ Room 11 (p181)
- ➔ Churchkey (p176)
- ➔ Bardo Brewpub (p177)
- ➔ A&D Bar (p177)

For reviews, see p176. ➔

Best Places for Music

- ➔ Black Cat (p181)
- ➔ 9:30 Club (p182)
- ➔ Bohemian Caverns (p182)
- ➔ U Street Music Hall (p180)
- ➔ Velvet Lounge (p183)

For reviews, see p181. ➔