

WASHINGTON, DC

ENCOUNTER

ADAM KARLIN

Washington, DC Encounter

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Color-Coding & Maps

Color-coding is used for symbols on maps and in the text that they relate to (eg all eating venues on the maps and in the text are given a green knife and fork symbol). Each neighborhood also gets its own color, and this is used down the edge of the page and throughout that neighborhood section.

Shaded yellow areas on the maps denote 'areas of interest' – for their historical significance, their attractive architecture or their great bars and restaurants. We encourage you to head to these areas and just start exploring!

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ADAM KARLIN

Dirty secret: Adam, while born in Washington, DC (George Washington Hospital, 1980, to be exact), grew up in... Maryland. DC residents may now cringe. And he barely visited the capital beyond field trips before he lit out to see the world, aspiring Lonely Planet–author style, working as a journalist and editor in Thailand, Laos, India, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Australia, Argentina and England, plus as a reporter at a fair few newspapers state-side, including a stint at community newspapers in Prince George’s County, which borders the capital. It was during this period that Adam spent more and more time in his backyard, both learning it and loving it. Today Lonely Planet sends him as far afield as Kenya, Cameroon, the Andaman Islands and Malaysia, but he still loves getting to explore Washington, a city that speaks both to his love of the international and his inner Maryland redneck.



ADAM’S THANKS

Thanks to the friends and family and new contacts who always make Washington feel like home to this itinerant wanderer. In particular, thank you local voices (Chris, John and Kenny) and Jordan, Maria and Jessie, who were invaluable research ‘aides’ – and more importantly, friends – in the winter of 2008.

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An unmissable memorial to the first president: the Washington Monument (p41)

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THIS IS WASHINGTON, DC

Like few cities in America, Washington is both a beneficiary and a victim of perception.

One version comprises marble, monuments and museums in the shadow of the Capitol dome. Great restaurants, wild clubs. More culture – the Smithsonian, the Kennedy Center, the Folger – than a city this size deserves, plus a National Mall that's the front yard and public podium of the American people.

The other version of Washington is where too many wake up to a morning-after hangover of the American dream, transplants and aristocrats float above the fray, and the federal government seems to turn a blind eye to its own home.

Which is the real Washington? All of the above. Yet the two-cities-in-one stereotype limits this great town. Like the nation she governs, DC is defined by her compromises, not her extremes. And conversations about where that nation is headed occur here with more frequency and passion than anywhere else in America.

Contrary to popular belief, this conversation occurs among out-of-town politicians *and* folks, as they say here, from around the way. The ones who remember Danny Ferry's fast break at DeMatha and Mark the Ripper at RFK. People who know Kissinger preferred Chinese at Yengching Palace before it closed, even though Full Kee does better duck. Guys who would never eat on the Mall, but know it well enough to recommend Constitution Gardens for the sunset (17th and Constitution, by the way).

When it comes to politics, DC's homegrown will argue you under the table. That's the soul of this city: not divisions or iconography, but a population that's as intellectually stimulating as any Manhattan dinner party, and as comfortably down-home as mom's mac 'n' cheese (which our soul-food joints cook best).

But don't take our word for it. Real Washingtonians might be opinionated as hell, but they're also twice as warm, so come visit, and see a global capital that's local enough to love.

Top An icon of American jazz: Bohemian Caverns (p87) **Bottom** A bronzed third president standing proud at the Thomas Jefferson Memorial (p40)