

travel



ENJOY A VISIT to the White House, but schedule a full tour months ahead of time.

Shopping, fine dining and some of the nation's premier historical sights and museums make Washington, D.C., a fabulous getaway for all.

WHY SHOULD I GO?

If all that comes to mind when you think of Washington, D.C., is your fifth grade field trip, then it's time to rediscover all that our nation's capital has to offer. Yes, there are the old standbys like the Smithsonian Institution, the Lincoln Memorial and, of course, the White House, but you'll find that these familiar haunts are certainly worth a second visit. What's more, in recent years D.C. has amped up its restaurant scene to compete with other major city destinations. So prepare to satisfy both your mind and your stomach!

WHERE SHOULD I STAY?

If you're looking for something young, fun and just plain different, look no further than the Ritz-Carlton, Georgetown. Housed in an old incinerator building, the 86-room boutique hotel is *the* place to stay in Georgetown and the city — as well as to see and be seen. Don't think stodgy, think sexy; with Bulgari bath amenities, luxurious marble bathrooms, flat-screen TVs and plush linens, you'll never want to leave your room. Every question or need can be



ENJOY A FEW politically correct drinks at Degrees Bar & Lounge at the Ritz-Carlton, Georgetown.

82 SEPTEMBER 11, 2006

Discover D.C.

Ready for a history lesson? Then fly, drive or train it over to our capital city



THE BRIGHT LIGHTS, bustle and historic sights of our nation's capital make for an exciting — and informative — getaway.

attended to by the hotel's fantastic concierge, Joshua, and for last-minute queries, Tyrone, the ever-courteous and helpful doorman, is your man. A must-do while at the Ritz is drinks at Degrees Bar & Lounge, one of the hottest spots in Georgetown on a Saturday night. Perch yourself high on a stool to view D.C.'s bright young things from your black-lacquered table, and enjoy one of the bar's law-themed drinks, such as "Blind Justice" and "Check Your Briefs." And, of course, don't forget your fabulous location — Georgetown itself is the perfect place to stay if you're looking for upscale boutiques, restaurants and bars, all within walking distance. The major sights of D.C. are just a cab ride away. (But take note: Cab fares are determined by zones, not meters; don't be afraid to speak up and ask your cab driver how much your fare will be from the get-go.)

WHERE SHOULD I EAT?

Two of the best places to nosh are within walking distance of the Ritz-Carlton. For some serious people-watching on a Saturday night, head for Café Milano. When *OK!* dined there, several members of the New York Yankees, including Alex Rodriguez, walked in the door, while Senator John Kerry and his wife ate outside. For starters, try the delicious octopus salad or the crudo with lemon and salt. For a main course, the must-have is the roasted veal chop with argula salad. The best brunch spot in Georgetown, by far, is Bistro Français, where the attentive staff and family-like feel make for great dining à deux or with a group. The \$21.95 set brunch is just about the best deal in town — you'll get unlimited champagne, as well as a house salad and your choice of a main course.

IndeBleu is a chic, Indian-fusion restaurant on G Street that offers dishes like crispy wild mushroom dosa and tandoori rack of lamb with green lentil ragout. The Blue Duck Tavern, located in the recently

renovated Park Hyatt hotel, has a country-chic atmosphere, and its sharing-themed menu wows from the start — make sure you sample the oven-roasted herb and garlic crusted marrowbone with country bread. For a taste of the South in D.C., head for Acadiana, which serves up New Orleans-style cuisine — *OK!*'s favorite dishes were the deviled eggs, charbroiled oysters and fried-oyster po'boy.

WHAT ARE THE MUST-SEE SIGHTS?

One of the best ways to take in the city's monuments is by walking. Begin at the White House to admire the place where presidents from John Adams on have lived and worked. Head down Pennsylvania Avenue, and turn onto 17th Street — you'll come to the stunning and moving National World War II Memorial. Other sights include the Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Lincoln Memorial. A great time to see the latter is at night, when the lights provide spectacular illumination. The Washington Monument looks stunning at night, too



DUPONT CIRCLE is a great place to take a break during your tour of the city.

— you can take an elevator up to the top on Saturdays, or walk the 897 stairs.

Museums to take note of: the National Air and Space Museum (where you can see the Wright Brothers' 1903 Kitty Hawk flyer and the Enola Gay), the National Museum of American History and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The International Spy Museum is a quirky yet fascinating homage to the profession of espionage. You'll be asked to assume an identity before you head into the maze-like museum, which has "artifacts" like a cuff-link compass, a cigarette-case gun, a tear-gas pen and a "bird cam."

HOW DO I GET THERE?

Most airlines fly into Dulles International Airport and Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport from many major American cities; Amtrak offers train service from Boston, New York and Philadelphia.

FEATURE BY JACQUELINE NEISS, *OK!* TRAVEL EDITOR

STAR TRAVEL



ANGELINA JOLIE has spent a significant amount of time in D.C., testifying before Congress on topics such as AIDS and ending world poverty. Rumors flew last year when she and beau BRAD PITT looked at some pricey area real estate.



JESSICA SIMPSON, along with dad JOE SIMPSON and pal KEN PAVES, visited Capitol Hill to lobby on behalf of children's charity Operation Smile. The singer created a stir when she declined an invitation to meet with the president.

TRAVEL TIPS

WASHINGTON DC CONVENTION AND TOURISM CORPORATION: WASHINGTON.ORG, 800-422-8644
RITZ-CARLTON, GEORGETOWN: RITZCARLTON.COM/HOTELS/GEORGETOWN, (202) 912-4100 OR (800) 241-3333
CAFE MILANO: CAFEMILANOCC.COM, (202) 333-6183
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INTERNATIONAL SPY MUSEUM: SPYMUSEUM.ORG, (866) SPYMUSEUM

STAR TRAVEL: FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: LIP WAKES; WAK/REG E. MAHERSON/LANDRY