



WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Pride in Place

10 Ways to Outsmart the Typical D.C. Tourist



To truly experience all D.C. has to offer, ditch the obvious and go for the unexpected.

There's much to see and do (and eat!) in the nation's capital, but oftentimes much of the city gets overlooked in favor of the traditional tourist traps. While those are all well and good, to truly experience all D.C. has to offer, it's perhaps best to go off the grid. Herewith, all the insider tips you need to get the full district experience:

Insider tip 1: Avoid the crowds, see the monuments at night

When the sun goes down, the city gets quiet — and yet even more fun (and beautiful!). So skip the crowds and opt for the Memorials by Moonlight tour with [Scout Photo Expeditions](#), led by former Hollywood location scout Cindi Hobgood. Or, simply check them out yourself. All you need is a map and some comfortable walking shoes.

Insider tip 2: Skip Segways! Go with bike rentals

[Bike and Roll](#), perhaps the best bike-share program around, is the way to go if you want to cover some ground without wearing out your shoes. Each rental comes with a map and helmet, and there are three convenient locations in and around the city. Even better? Bike and Roll offers a [Bites by Bike tour](#), where guests can enjoy dishes from local restaurants in the Logan Circle, U Street and Dupont Circle neighborhoods.

Insider tip 3: Start the day off right with breakfast

Breakfast often gets overlooked, but there are some amazing options around D.C. For a quick, low-cost meal, head to the legendary [Ben's Chili Bowl](#) for grits and scrambled eggs at the lunch counter. Or for a true power breakfast, stop in at [Seasons](#) at the Four Seasons Hotel. It's a favorite of heads of state, so pay close attention to your fellow diners. You never know who you might see!

Insider tip 4: Skip the tour hot spots in favor of neighborhood exploration

One of the most historic neighborhoods to explore in the city is at 9th and U streets. Check out the [African American Civil War Memorial & Museum](#) during the day, before heading to [Oohh's & Aahh's](#) for dinner. Then catch a performance at the gorgeous [Howard Theatre](#) (which recently reopened after a 32-year hiatus and \$29 million renovation) — the historic arts landmark that launched the careers of Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Marvin Gaye and the Supremes back in the day. Head up to [Marvin](#) for cocktails and rooftop lounging to cap off the night.

Insider tip 5: Hit the pavement — there's much to see along the Southwest Waterfront

Start your walk at historic [Barracks Row](#), which is packed with restaurants like [DC-3](#) for gourmet hot



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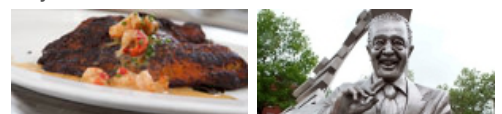
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dogs and [Cava Mezze](#) for Greek tapas. Stop in at [Homebody](#) for fun housewares and accessories before heading to the [Yards Park](#), where you can catch an outdoor movie or live music. Or check out the first LEED-certified "green" stadium in the U.S. at Nationals Park. Be sure to catch the Presidents Race during the middle of the fourth inning at the ballgame. Teddy has yet to win!

Insider tip 6: Go behind the scenes at the Elephant House

Although the Smithsonian National Zoo's Elephant House is currently closed while the elephants' new home is being built, if you get to the zoo by 8:15 on Wednesday and Sunday, you can snag a [behind-the-scenes](#) tour of the state-of-the-art Barn (which is not open to visitors, except for this tour), granting you a peek at the elephants as they get their baths and have breakfast.

Insider tip 7: Don't forget happy hour

Most happy hours include cheap beers and crummy food. But not at [Wolfgang Puck's The Source](#), where on weekdays from 4 to 6 p.m. you can snag three plates from the izakaya menu for \$20.11. Don't miss the pork belly bao buns, spicy tuna tartare in sesame-miso cones, and chili-pork wontons. One of the best deals in town! Another place whose happy hour is worth its salt: [Fiola](#), where the prices top out at \$6 for a refreshing cocktail or glass of fine Italian wine.

Insider tip 8: Pick a side

With it being an election year and all, there's no better place to watch the Donkeys and Elephants battle it out than at the [Congressional Baseball Game](#), a D.C. tradition since 1909. The game has become one of the most effective fundraisers for the District, with proceeds going to the Washington Literacy Council and the Boys & Girls Clubs. Catch this year's game on June 28 at Nationals Park. The Congressional Softball League carries on all summer long, with Democrat and Republican staffers battling it out on the Mall for beers and bragging rights. Take a walk round quittin' time and check out their skills.

Insider tip 9: On a rainy day, show your kids the money!

One of the coolest kid-friendly spots in the city is the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, where visitors can see millions of dollars being printed! The free 40-minute tour includes a short movie and gallery tour of the production process.

Insider tip 10:

One of the best (and most underrated) museums in the city is [Newseum](#), the world's most interactive museum, complete with 14 major galleries and 15 theaters to immerse you in the world's greatest news stories. From the Berlin Wall Gallery (which features eight 12-foot-high concrete sections of the original wall) to the 9/11 exhibit, Watergate Door, and 4-D theater, there's something for everyone at this 250,000-square-foot museum of news.



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