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Dining

# DC's Most Romantic Restaurants



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By Danielle Turner

Love is in the air and on the menu as many area restaurants dish up an irresistible combination of decadent dishes and impeccable service for couples in search of the perfect romantic dining experience. Warm and cozy, cool and sleek, traditional favorites or cutting edge cuisine – whatever your preference, these restaurants are serving up romance not just on Valentine's Day, but all year long. Make a reservation or stop in for a culinary courtship you won't soon forget.

## CoCo Sala

929 F Street NW  
 Washington, DC 20004  
 202.347.4265

CoCo Sala's name is a clever take on chocolate and coffee, the driving forces behind its deliciously out-of-the-ordinary theme. Chef Santosh Tiptur wears two toques, serving as both executive and pastry chef and he is skilled at combining their namesake ingredients in innovative ways. A hazelnut and coffee dressing tops a Manchego and Baby Arugula Salad and his Asparagus and Kale Tart gets its crunch from crispy watercress, smoked almonds and dark chocolate pretzels.

## Fiola

601 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
 Washington, DC 20004  
 202.628.2888

The brainchild of uber Chef Fabio Trabocchi, this upscale trattoria is known for its delicious blend of rustic and modern Italian cuisine. Fiola sets the standard for fresh Italian food and Trabocchi has a knack for turning simple Italian plates into masterpieces. His Maria Menu offers health-conscious diners three courses of healthy items prepared in the Mediterranean tradition. Top your dinner off with a great bottle; Fiola's extensive wine list consists of great grapes from Italy, France, Spain and the United States.

## Iron Gate

1734 N Street NW  
 Washington, DC 20036  
 202.524.5202

Before Iron Gate re-opened in November 2013, it had been the oldest continually operating restaurant in the District. Today, the Greek and Italian influenced menu is Chittum's love letter to the Mid-Atlantic foodshed. The four or six course tasting menus are categorized based on their origins – from the Pasture, Grilled Berkshire Pork Belly with Charred Onion, Potato Fritter and a Dippy Egg. Impress your date with a shaving of winter truffles for an additional fee.

## Jackson 20

480 King Street  
 Alexandria, VA 22314  
 703.842.2790

The menu at the Hotel Monaco's Jackson 20 celebrates the comfort food of the Mid-Atlantic region. Appropriately nestled in historic Old Town Alexandria, the restaurant is named for President Andrew Jackson and the \$20 bill on which he's memorialized. The menu is a mix of traditional Southern dishes with a new-fangled twist provided by Chef Brian McPherson. Think Vidalia Onion Soup or Pork Cheek Bourguignon. The open kitchen and contemporary cocktails make for a great date.

## Lyon Hall

3100 N. Washington Blvd  
 Arlington, VA 22201  
 703.741.7636

Lyon Hall offers a little bit of Europe in the middle of Arlington. Diners can expect classic French brasserie cuisine with Swiss and German influences. A Warm Bavarian Pretzel shares the menu with Grilled Bone Marrow and Pork Schnitzel. Chef Matt Hill's produce, fish and meat are conscientiously sourced. Breads are freshly baked and charcuterie house-cured. Lyon Hall has 23 beers on tap and the wine list highlights boutique family-owned French wineries.

## Marcel's

2401 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
 Washington, DC 20037  
 202.296.1166

Chef Robert Weidmaier breaks out all the fine dining bells and whistles at Marcel's, where the service is as enjoyable as the food. The menu changes frequently but high-end French-Belgian cuisine is the standard. If Saffron Emulsion and Ponzu Gel excite you, Marcel's is the place to be. You can choose a four to seven course menu and enjoy what is arguably the largest selection of Belgian beer in town.

## Rasika

PENN QUARTER  
 633 D St, NW  
 Washington, DC 20004  
 202.637.1222

## WEST END

1190 New Hampshire Ave, NW  
 Washington, DC 20037  
 202.466.2500

Rasika's Chef Vikram Sunderam was awarded the 2014 James Beard Award for Best Chef in the Mid-Atlantic region and one taste of any of the curries, chutneys and masalas at either Rasika location and you'll know why. Rasika means flavors in Sanskrit and Sunderam takes the name seriously. Vanilla, tamarind and cardamom season the Tawa (Griddle), Sigri (open Barbecue), Tandoori and other regional dishes on Rasika's menu of small plates.

## Rose's Luxury

717 8th Street SE  
 Washington, DC 20003  
 202.580.8889

Southern comfort food updated with ingredients from around the globe — most notably Mexico, Italy, France and Southeast Asia — are what's on the menu at Rose's Luxury. Reservations are not accepted and there's no greater testament to Chef Aaron Silverman's food than the long line that forms out front nightly. Stellar service and inventive dishes like Chicken-Fried Oysters with Raw Oyster Tzatziki make the long line worth the wait. Bonus – Rose's donates .25 of every meal to the World Food Program.

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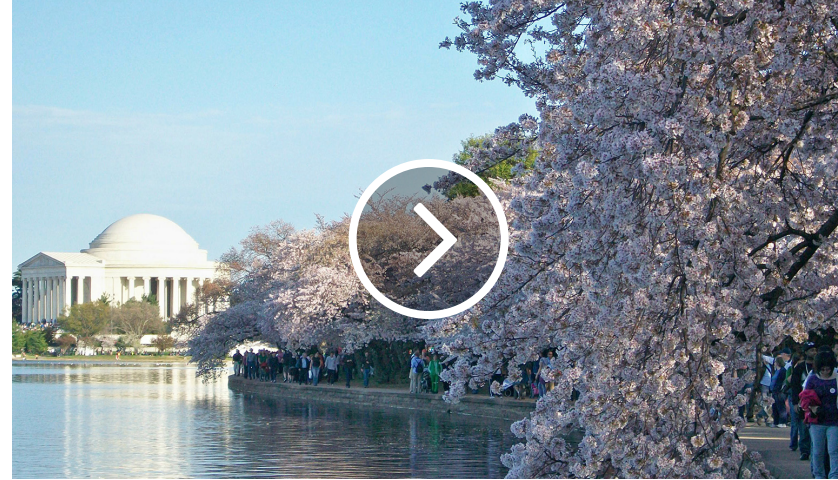


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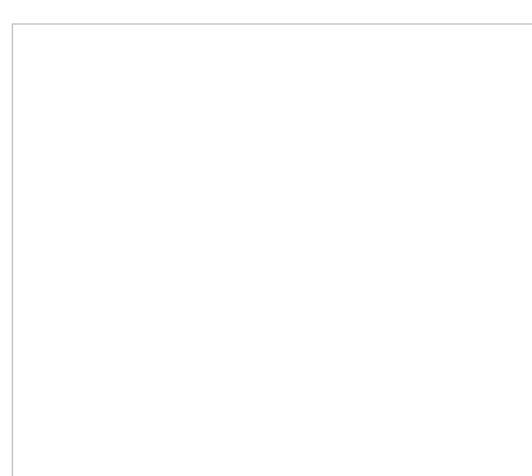


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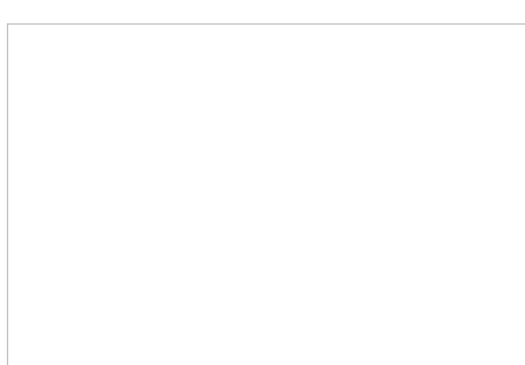
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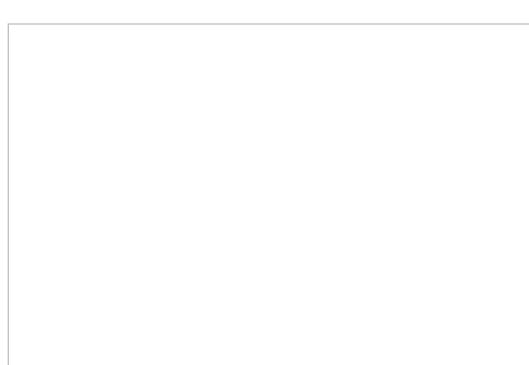
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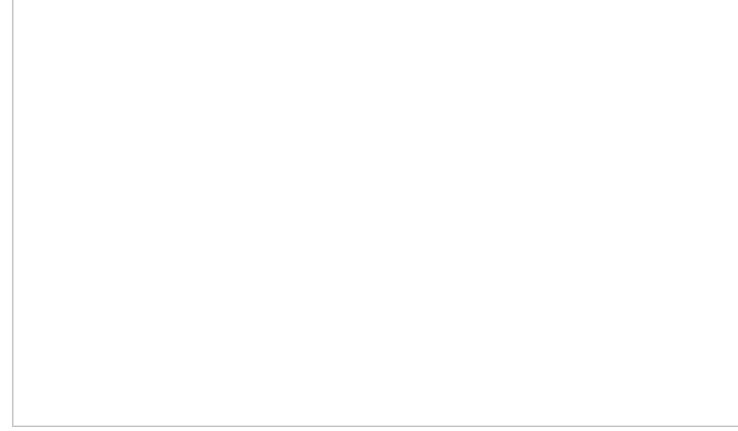
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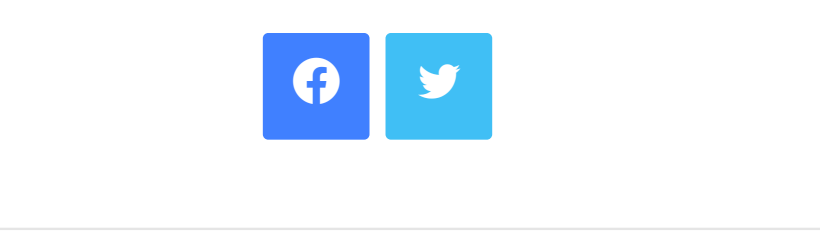
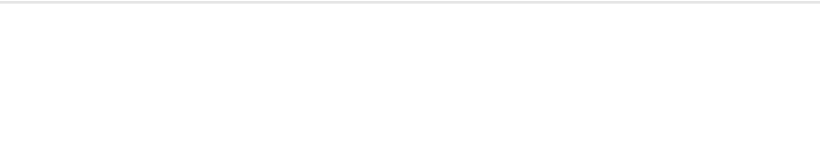


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