

THE DISTRICT'S CANNIABIS GUIDE



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THE DISTRICT DERP STORY

WORDS BY TRENT JOHNSON



If you had a time machine and traveled back to when Chris Licata made a harmless bet with a friend, he wouldn't believe you if you explained how his life was about to change. In fact, it's kind of hard to believe knowing it's already happened. The innocuous wager was if he could successfully get his Alaskan Klee Kai, Sudo, to paint. The answer was a resounding "Yes."

"The bet came first," Licata says. "The bet was over a bottle of bourbon [laughs]. We got her to paint, brush to hit the canvas. It took about a month of everyday practice."

Not only did Licata and his partner, Anaïs Hayes, train Sudo to paint abstract works on canvas, but the concept eventually morphed into a fully fledged cannabis business in the form of their District Derp art gallery.

"[Derp] is a very silly word, but cannabis makes you feel kind of silly," Hayes says.

"Sudo has a way of staring at you," Licata continues. "It's this blank face that happens where she's just staring at you, and we'd call her a little derp. The more we started saying it, the more disarming we found the word. It's not necessarily an insult; it's just poking fun."

"It's a whimsy, and you don't have any reservations," Hayes finishes.

The company started in 2018, and has a variety of custom Sudo pieces available for purchase with included gifts of cannabis flowers, THC cartridges and edibles.

"We were frustrated one night [and] we wanted better service," Hayes says after a bad experience with a dispensary. "We looked [into it], and you needed a gimmick — something to get people in. We were like, 'We have a dog that paints. Is that anything?'"

To paint, Sudo wields a brush in her mouth, and upon making contact with the canvas, Licata uses a clicker to indicate progress. After every click, Sudo gets a treat. When there are lots of clicks, you get a happy pup.

"She needs to hear she's accomplished what we intended for her to accomplish," Licata says. "So that's getting the brush to the canvas and swiping across, and then I click. The more clicks she hears, the more excited she gets."

On the cannabis side, the couple says they're gifting about 500 edibles per week, along with additional cartridges, flowers and pre-rolls. Beyond the meticulous amount of detail and thought put into the paintings by Sudo, both Hayes and Licata are heavily focused on transparency in their THC products, from quality control to customer service.

"We try to have a personal relationship or know something personal about all of our clients," Licata says. "We want them to have trust that we're going to put their needs first."



Their health is our priority and we're going to continue that. [It's] the small, intimate business relationship we have."

District Derp runs their cannabis through tests for potency, pesticides and heavy metal. Hayes says the reason is simple: You don't want to be associated with something that can make people sick. So far, edible potency ranges from 10-15 milligrams in their cookie options to 80 milligrams in the Big Bitchin' Brownie.

"I thought about my personal experience with edibles," Hayes says. "I wanted an edible to [be enough to] last two to three [uses], and tried to figure out what a high dosage is for a casual user. People have different needs. Some people are taking it to help them sleep and some people want something that will last eight hours for an adventure around the National Mall."

Like every other business in D.C., District Derp experienced change over the course of the pandemic, including how they interacted with the attached stigma of owning a business associated with cannabis. In early 2020, both Hayes and Licata opted against sharing their full names, but as the business advanced over the course of the past year, so did their approach.

"There's absolutely still that stigma," Hayes says. "You still hear the 'It's still a bad substance' stuff, especially in people who don't interact with marijuana, but it's decreasing. Also, we decided to put our names on it to counteract the stigma. We realized by not putting our names on it, we were going along with it. We had the realization that this is something we're proud of. This is something we want to bring to people. It's something I'm excited to put my name on now."

With a social media surge and a successful return to business last summer, Hayes became the first of the two to go full-time. A typical District Derp weekday starts with production kicking off at 8 a.m. and wrapping up at about 3-4 p.m., with emails and orders taking place in-between. From 6-10 p.m., more orders come in and deliveries go out. Once a month, Sudo dusts off the paintbrushes and gives her fans another work of art.

While a painting dog seems gimmicky on its face, and even is to an extent, Hayes and Licata are genuine in their attempt to connect with the D.C. arts community. District Derp sponsored

local artist and curator Kelly Towles' POW! WOW! DC festival in 2019 and 2020, and Licata says there are several collaborations on the horizon between local artists and Sudo.

"We really love working with the creative community in D.C.," Hayes says. "There are so many great minds here, and what we're trying to do this year is more collaborative works. We feel very firm with where we are in the cannabis scene, but what we are first is an art gallery. That's how we started."

This month, District Derp is participating in two 4/20 giveaways with vintage shops Underground Goods and Zhuzh. Short-term goals for District Derp include incorporating accessory sales, branded items and a fuller "smoke shop experience." As for Sudo's art, the couple plans to roll out the red carpet for their furry artist in the form of a comprehensive gallery opening.

"That is a goal," Hayes says excitedly. "We were planning to do that before the pandemic hit. That was the plan for 2020, and then [mimics explosion]."

In the meantime, you can check out Sudo's catalog in full on the website. Licata promises you'll be surprised.

"I don't know if you've actually stared at 'Jovial Nature,'" Licata says with a sincerity mirroring that of a person who'd just left their favorite artist's exhibition. "It's our first painting with Sudo, and I think it's incredible. It's incredible that a dog painted it. We've got it up on our wall."

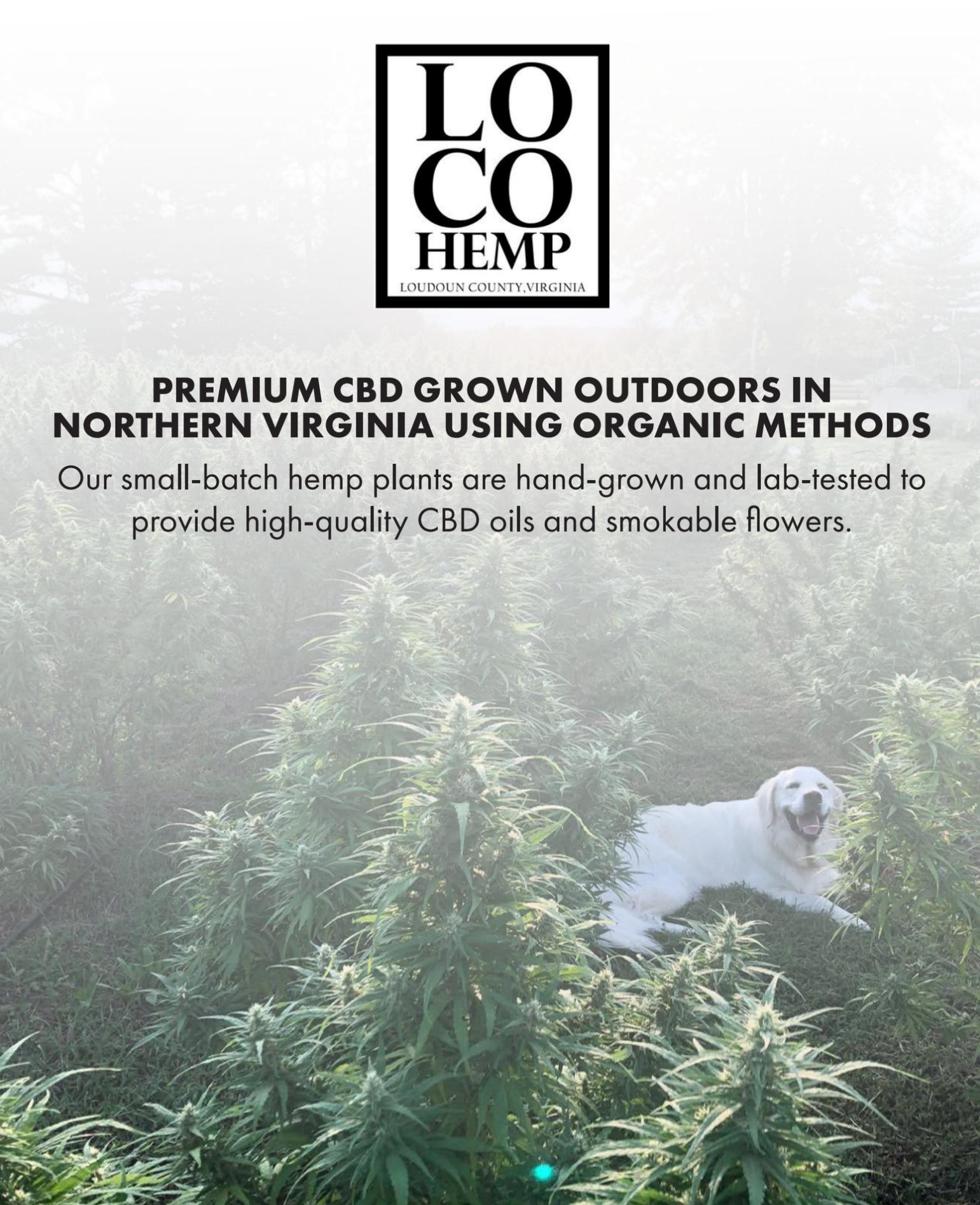
For more information about District Derp, Sudo's paintings and their gifts, visit www.districtderp.com and follow them on Instagram @districtderp.

Author's note: District Derp operates under D.C.'s Initiative 71, which means it does not assign a monetary value to anything with marijuana or THC in the ingredients. Instead, the items noted in the story are gifted along with the purchase of a work of art courtesy of Sudo. For more information about I-71, visit www.mayor.dc.gov.



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EAT YOUR GREENS

D.C. CHEFS ELEVATE MORE THAN TASTE BUDS

WORDS BY TRENT JOHNSON

When restaurants, chefs and other residents of the culinary world use the words “elevated experience,” I generally roll my eyes. And not because I don’t respect what they’re trying to achieve in the kitchen, but because the term is vague. What I take it to mean is they’re trying to concoct dishes that taste better (of higher quality) than similar plates you’ve had before. If you like your movie nachos, then try these elevated nachos with gouda. If you enjoy a hot dog, then try this elevated dog with 400% pure beef on a brioche bun, plus gold-flaked mustard, and so on and so forth.

However, when D.C. chefs working in kitchens with marijuana say “elevated experience,” it takes on a slightly different tenor. Rather than the subtle upgrades mentioned above, these locals are attempting to shift the image of your run-of-the-mill edibles. If you’ve ordered them, you’re probably used to days-old brownies, stiff cookies and gummies. This isn’t bad. It’s what we’re used to, and ultimately enough to get us elevated in a different way. But what if you could elevate your taste buds and mind at the same time?

For District Fray’s April issue, we decided to chat with four people behind three businesses who are, in their own way, challenging the idea of what marijuana plus food equals. From private dinners and catered events to decadent cookies and gorgeous cakesicles, these chefs (both savory and pastry) are putting a new, and frankly better, spin on elevated food.

Author’s note: These businesses operate under D.C.’s Initiative 71, which means they do not assign a monetary value to anything with marijuana or THC in the ingredients. Instead, the items noted in the story are gifted along with the purchase of a different product, such as stickers, shirts and other accessories. For more information about I-71, visit www.mayor.dc.gov.

Sucrée Sweets Co.

After a whirlwind few years, which took Shannon Rizvi from D.C. to California to D.C. again, the chef is here to stay with her brand-new business Sucrée Sweets Co. The small shop, known already for tasty gummies and incredibly mouth-watering cakesicles, kickstarted business operations in January of this year. The idea was the culmination of Instagram DMs exchanged between childhood friends and Northern Virginia natives Rizvi and co-owner, operator and chef Charlynn Pham.

“It was a leap of faith,” Rizvi says. “We don’t have wholesale clients, but I thought, ‘We can do this.’ We’ve been doing it. We’re killing it.”

Rizvi’s background in food stems from her time in culinary school at The Art Institute of Washington, where she picked up a penchant for savory foods. Since, she’s done work in kitchens and made edibles for other services in the area, though she admits the latter can be tedious if not boring, despite paying the bills. With Pham, a self-described at-home baker and the brains behind the duo’s photogenic cakesicles, the two have produced delicious alternatives to your standard edible fare.

“I was bartending full-time, and a lot of bars [closed during the pandemic],” Pham says. “I was wondering if I should go and find another bartending job, or go full force into pastry arts and baking. That’s what I wanted to with my life.”

Pham and Rizvi started talking about the possibility of joining forces after catching up when the latter moved back to the area in September 2020. Eventually, the messages became exchanges of pastries, baked goods, other dishes and ideas for the future, until Pham finally said, “If you ever want to go into business

together, let me know.”

“She said she’d been dying to get her hands going and baking like crazy, and I was like, ‘Let’s do it,’” Rizvi says.

Rizvi says step one was making money by churning out gummies and showing Pham how to dose, test recipes and figure out what they needed to get off the ground. So far, Sucrée offers raspberry, straw-nana and mango gummy coins, along with butter pecan Ferrero Rocher-sicles. The THC potency ranges from 20 milligrams in the gummies to 150 milligrams in the cakesicles. They also make full-size cakes for special orders.

“The other day, we went to Paris Baguette and got a whole bunch of their pastries,” Rizvi says. “We’re trying to figure out how to make cakesicles in all these different flavors. We’ve been working on pistachio and ruby chocolate ones — just weird stuff.”

Though their collective focus is on building out sweets for Sucrée, Rizvi also curates private dinners for small groups through her @chef.shan Instagram account. Before the pandemic, Rizvi hosted small get-togethers with friends and served infused dishes such as puff pastries with brie and apricot jam, roasted Brussel sprouts with pancetta, and braised short rib.

“After going to culinary school, I just had a love for food,” Rizvi says. “You can showcase cannabis in a beautiful and elegant way. It doesn’t have to be brownies and [Rice] Krispies. I want to give people that experience of when they eat something, they’re blown away.”

So far, the dinners have been for close friends and friends of friends. Rizvi handles all of the courses and serves the food, and if the customers choose to pair the dishes with drinks, Pham joins as a collaborator.

Infusions are small, she says. Rather than each bite culminating in an attendee being too high to function, the plates are microdosed to elicit a sensation of relaxation.

“It’s definitely more about the food,” Rizvi says. “You can’t get this experience at a restaurant.”

A five-course dinner with three beverages costs \$250 per person, with an optional alcoholic or nonalcoholic drink pairing.

Both Pham and Rizvi have expressed surprise at how successful they’ve been early on, and are confident the business will continue to grow as the city begins to reopen post-pandemic and marijuana legislation becomes more user- and business-friendly. Both cite the ultimate dream of having a brick-and-mortar but know a physical location is a long-term goal.

“We definitely want to get a website going so we can reach more people, and we also want to hire employees,” Pham says. “Right now, it’s just the two of us doing everything. It can be overwhelming. Long-term, I’d love to have a Sucrée Sweets storefront and bakeshop.”

No matter how fast or slow things go from here, the two South County Secondary School alums will cultivate business together.

“It was easy because I know who she is as a person,” Pham says. “It wasn’t like I was jumping in with a stranger. Everything is moving very fast, which I like.”

For more information about Sucrée Sweets Co. and their products, check them out on Instagram @sucreesweets.co. For more information about private dinners hosted by Rizvi, send her a DM on Instagram @chef.shan.







Green Panther Chef

Jazmine Moore, better known as Chef Jazz, grew up in a culinary household with a restaurateur for a mother. Because of this, the world of food always held her interest and eventually prompted her to attend Baltimore International College for culinary school. In 2006, Moore was diagnosed with Crohn's disease, which stripped her of the ability to eat solid foods and robbed her of an appetite.

"After I graduated, I was diagnosed," Moore says. "My mother introduced me to cannabis, but I didn't want to be associated. I started introducing it through my juices, and surprisingly, it would stimulate my appetite. And in turn, I started to eat soups, stews and salads."

Thirteen years later, Moore promotes the medicinal properties in her cooking through Green Panther Chef, her business offering catered events, consultations and virtual educational cooking classes, all with the hopes of sharing what she calls an edible experience.

"Most of the time, people want this food for birthdays or celebrations," Moore says. "But, we also have people who are interested in food with cannabis for things like pain, gastrointestinal issues [and] insomnia. It's 50/50, in a way. We have people who try it for their health."

Because cannabis is fat-soluble, Moore says it works great with butter, cheese and fish. After feeding her family and friends meals with her recipes, she was prodded to work it into a business following D.C.'s Initiative 71.

"French cooking is full of fats and butters," she says. "I was kind of pushed and urged to do it. It's been a great journey."

Green Panther Chef offers private dinners for homes and events with a customizable menu. Moore says they operate several dinners per week, where they serve anywhere from 20 to 120 guests at each. Potency depends on the client, but Moore always recommends low and slow.

"Sometimes you have to step in and say, 'Hey, I'm not going to do that to you,'" Moore says about people who want high dosages. "We teach courses for people to learn what your numbers are because if you take too much, it can put you in a horrible situation."

A big part of Green Panther Chef is all forms of education with regards to the use of cannabis in dishes and how to incorporate it into a healthy lifestyle. While legislation around the drug is constantly changing, both locally and nationally, she hopes to continue teaching other cooks, chefs and eaters about the benefits of infused foods.

"I would love to create a culinary school for cooking with cannabis," Moore says. "That's my 'big hairy ass' goal [laughs]."

For more information about Chef Jazz and Green Panther Chef, visit www.greenpantherchef.com and follow them on Instagram @greenpantherchef.

LEFT PAGE. Green Panther Chef's Jazmine Moore. **RIGHT PAGE.** Green Panther Chef dishes. Photos by Kimchi Photography.



BĀKT DC

After a decade of jobs in both the back and front of the house at various restaurants, Esteban Cantillo has experienced all aspects of the cooking industry. Upon getting furloughed due to the pandemic, he decided to try his hand at edibles for fun.

“At first, it was a way to keep our sanity,” Cantillo says. “Then it turned into its own thing. It wasn’t a huge plan to make it what it is now, but it sort of hit the ground running.”

As if steered by fate or serendipity, Cantillo has routinely been thrown into roles involving pastries despite his affinity for savory meals. Because he lacks a sweet tooth, his at-home experiments turned into goods shared with friends and family, who provided exceptional feedback. By June 2020, BĀKT DC was born.

“It didn’t really hit until the holiday season,” he says. “The first two or three months were great, but I wasn’t convinced until the holidays. From there, we started taking it more seriously and decided to go full on with this.”

If you heard BĀKT’s menu, it wouldn’t sound alien compared to most places offering edibles. However, upon perusing the website and glancing at the photos, you’d inevitably wonder whether you accidentally stumbled onto a food photographer’s professional page, as the decadent treats are both vibrant and alluring.

“You still hit home with the classic cookies,” Cantillo says. “It’s nothing too stuffy or out of this world. We’re not trying to reinvent the wheel. With no plans to make this what it is, it [has] one day into the next become a quality baked goods shop.”

The potency of the cookies and brownies range from 100-140 milligrams, and cakes range from 300-500 milligrams. Just by looking at the desserts, it would be hard not to eat each in its entirety, but that’s not advisable for everyone. Cantillo quips that he’s had serious internal debates about, “How good is too good?”

“If it tastes so good that you want to eat more, should we dose it less?” Cantillo asks. “We’ve had the conversation with a lot of customers about them being dangerously delicious, so it’s a fine line. It’s a personal experience. You have to test it to see.”

Consistency is key for Cantillo in both the product and service, from packaging to delivery.

“We want to be approachable. We’re trying to give a great experience and be consistent throughout.”

Though he’s stuck with sweets for the time being, Cantillo hopes to branch out to private dinners and other savory dishes in the future. Until then, the accidental pastry chef will be hard at work crafting edibles disguised as works of art.

“We want to do at-home dinners and tasting menus, somewhere you can get things outside of cereal bars and brownies. There are definitely a lot of things on our radar.”

For more information about BĀKT DC and its products, visit www.baktco.com, and follow them on Instagram @baktco.



We are dedicated to creating and elevating the edible experience. Green Panther Chef has been the premier cannabis caterer in the Washington, D.C area since 2017.

Our team of professional infusion chefs, charismatic waitstaff and expert customer service will make your next dinner party an easy, tantalizing and unforgettable experience all from the comfort of your home.



greenpantherchef.com



THE ARTISTRY BEHIND D.C.'S CANNABIS CULTURE

WORDS BY INGRID HARBO

Art and cannabis have long been associated with one another. In D.C., where cannabis is decriminalized and legal to gift, but not yet legal to buy and sell, artistry supports the city's growing cannabis culture. Many shops sell apparel, accessories and art while gifting cannabis products. The gray area allowed by Initiative 71 has made cannabis more accessible while creating space for new brands to emerge and challenging preconceived notions about cannabis.

Adams Morgan-based art gallery Gifted Curators and clothing store Pink Fox on 14th Street both combined the need for a legitimate business model and passion for street art and streetwear, respectively, with the added incentive of cannabis gifts to draw customers in.

Pink Fox is a D.C. lifestyle brand and gifting shop. Like every lifestyle brand, the shop fills a specific niche. Whereas Supreme has skateboarding and Nike has athletics, Pink Fox has cannabis.

"We acknowledge and accept that [while] we can't sell you cannabis, what we can sell you is our brand," says Mark Nagib, Pink Fox's co-owner and creative director.

The apparel takes a subtle approach to the niche of cannabis. Rather than flashy marijuana leaves or other cannabis-related imagery, their apparel is emblazoned with the brand's logo: The words "Pink Fox" form the head of a fox. Their products also frequently feature D.C.-specific things, like the Metro map, Lincoln Memorial and cherry blossoms.

Nagib designs all of Pink Fox's apparel and accessories, finding inspiration for designs everywhere — from the culture of D.C. to mid-century travel stamps. He says art and cannabis have a long history.

"Cannabis is seen as a very artistic tool or way to relax, so like any good combination, these things already have a relationship and go hand in hand. Because we had to be innovative and create that recreational marketplace [in 2015], art was the strongest, safest fall-back plan."

At Gifted Curators, the art is just as important as the cannabis. As a lover of street art, manager Tee Stoe brings that to the shop. The gallery features art from local and regional street artists, which customers can buy digital versions of, and cannabis products are gifted with those purchases.

"I come from the graffiti world myself, so the art angle of this is my main passion," Stoe says. "I've been so grateful to work with a bunch of my heroes as a kid, and now to include them as part of our aesthetic."

Street art is not the only way Gifted Curators engages with artistry. The gallery also hosts intimate live performances customers can win tickets to when they spend money with the shop. Gifted Curators also works with local DJ John "Brooklyn" Saviola, who runs record store El Donut Shoppe inside the West End's Yours Truly Hotel, to create strain-themed playlists.

Stoe describes art as something palatable for people to connect to. For Gifted Curators, the connection to art also helps challenge stereotypes about cannabis and the people who use it.

"When I started this, I expected to see a lot of Shaggy and Scooby-Doo-type characters coming here — your standard stoner type. But to be honest with you, the demographic [of our customer base] is so wide. We get a large portion of people who are [ages] 50 to 90."

Gifted Curators is often the opposite of what new customers expect.

"There are a lot of shops out here that are dark and dirty and dingy," Stoe says. "The gallery in general is a clean and concise experience to walk into. There is nothing threatening about a gallery."

Gifted Curators: 2469 18th St. NW, DC; www.giftedcurators.com // @giftedcurators.dc on Instagram

Pink Fox: 14th Street in NW, DC; www.pinkfox202.com // @fkapinkfox on Instagram

Author's note: These businesses operate under D.C.'s Initiative 71, which means they do not assign a monetary value to anything with marijuana or THC in the ingredients. Instead, the items noted in the story are gifted along with the purchase of a different product, such as clothing or artwork. For more information about I-71, visit www.mayor.dc.gov.

HOW HIGH-END GLASS IS CHANGING THE CANNABIS SCENE

Glass House Gallery showcases the intersection of art and cannabis in the form of intricate glass-blown pipes. The Shaw-based space works with over 320 different artists, and every piece featured is made by hand. Glass House frequently hosts shows to feature artists' work with pieces selling for between \$100 and \$55,000. Owner Eric Wimsatt talked with us about how high-end glass is changing the cannabis scene.

District Fray: How do you connect with artists to feature at Glass House?

Eric Wimsatt: Instagram. A lot of the artists are huge in our market, [and] we know [them] because we have been in the community for so long. It's more relationship-based than anything. It's an intimate thing because you're selling their artwork. When you meet these artists, you do want to build a relationship with them. You're selling part of their soul, in a sense.

How do customers generally react to the art at the gallery?

Honestly, they're astounded. At a lot of our shows, we put videos of the artists themselves blowing live from their YouTube, so they show all the work they put into this. They literally shape hot, molten liquid and form a piece with it. If they screw up in any way, from pulling it too hard to temperature differentiation, it can completely mess up the entire piece. It's a skill that takes a certain level of technique, but also years of figuring out. It's cool when people see the amount of work these [artists] put in.

How does artistry support D.C.'s cannabis culture?

It's kind of shaping it. When you get higher-end glass, you get higher-end customers. It's the whole lifestyle around it. It sets precedence not only for the glass but for cannabis you use with the glass: quality in, quality out.

Glass House Gallery: 1527 9th St. NW, DC; www.glasshousegallerydc.com; @glasshousegallerydc on Instagram



Gifted Curators aims to be the best service business in D.C. You are our priority.

Ease, safety and discretion are our top concerns. Our products are always top of the line. Please allow us to service you.

giftedcuratorsdc.com

**GIFTED
CURATORS**



19 ENTREPRENEURS SHAPING D.C.'S CANNABIS + CBD INDUSTRIES

COMPILED BY INGRID HARBO

Initiative 71 has allowed for a rich cannabis culture to bloom in D.C. Between CBD businesses, gifting shops and infused food services, cannabis products are increasingly available to those looking to relax, enjoy a high or anything in-between. We talked with 19 local cannabis and CBD entrepreneurs about their businesses, favorites and the future of cannabis in the DMV.

BĀKT CO.

Esteban Cantillo, Chef + Owner

Favorite strain of cannabis

Grand Daddy Purps. This one is more of a nostalgic thing for me. The smell alone reminds me of some of my favorite people.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

I mostly prefer smoking cannabis (joints and blunts) but am slowly gravitating toward edibles and infused savory foods.

Standout product

All of our products truly fight for the number one spot, but our standout is probably our Double Fudge Bustelo Brownie. This became our unofficial signature item behind our OG Chocolate Chunk cookies over the last few months. It's hard to argue with double fudge, Bustelo espresso and condensed milk. Think café con leche (coffee with milk) in brownie form.

Most unique aspect of your business

We wanted to elevate the edible game without making it snobby or stuffy: The same quality, care and service you'd get in some of the best Michelin-rated restaurants across the world for a reasonable price so everybody can enjoy — not just the privileged few.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

Although it feels like a slow and steady race, cannabis reform is absolutely taking charge in the coming months and years. I can see the DMV looking more like the West Coast in terms of cannabis accessibility, without the legal gray areas, sooner than we think.

Learn more at www.baktdc.com and follow @baktdco on Instagram.

BOUQÉ ROLLING PAPERS

Corey Dunson, Founder + CEO

Favorite strain of cannabis

White Widow. That flower never fails.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

My favorite way to consume is by rolling a joint, a.k.a. a Bouqué. Rolling is a part of my process, and for me, it is very therapeutic.

Standout product

Our dark walnut rolling tray. This is a fan favorite. Everyone who sees it wants one.

Most unique aspect of your business

In addition to selling quality cannabis accessories, our team is *very* active in our community. Tune in to our Saturday Smoke session on the last Saturday of the month on Clubhouse with Marijuana Matters, where our community can come to discuss [and] learn about everything that's happening in our amazing industry.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

I see a bright future for the DMV cannabis industry. The area already has a rich culture and I believe our industry will only flourish more as laws and regulations become less restrictive.

Learn more at www.rollingbouque.com and follow @rolling_bouques on Instagram.

DISTRICT CANNABIS

Grace Hyde, Chief Operating Officer

Favorite strain of cannabis

Cherry Chem.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

Vaporizing concentrate with a Puffco Peak.

Standout product

Our strain Gelato Cake is far and away our most popular product. It has high levels of the terpene linalool, which makes it very calming in addition to having a delicious flavor profile and effects that are consistent, batch after batch.

Most unique aspect of your business

[We are] truly owner-operated. Both owners [are] medical patients who use our products. Owner Andras Kirschner designed, built and oversees the cultivation at both facilities. Quality and consistency is at the forefront of every decision we make.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

Recreational cannabis in the District is inevitable in the next few years, and something the actual citizens of D.C. have wanted for a long time. The Harris rider on the House appropriations bill is only holding D.C. back from a plethora of benefits including job creation, racial justice initiatives and a windfall of tax revenue, just to name a few.

Learn more at www.districtcannabis.us and follow @districtcannabis.us on Instagram.

DISTRICT DERP

Anaïs Hayes, COO + Head Baker

Favorite strain of cannabis

If I'm looking to get out with the pups, I'm all about Super Lemon Haze. But if I'm winding down for the night [and] maybe enjoying a face mask, then it's got to be Granddaddy Purple.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

With a water piece, preferably a bong. The flavors and smoke are so smooth after filtering through water. It enhances the whole experience.

Standout product

I'd have to say our gummies. They're made completely from scratch, are out of this world fruity and are the perfect level of chewiness.

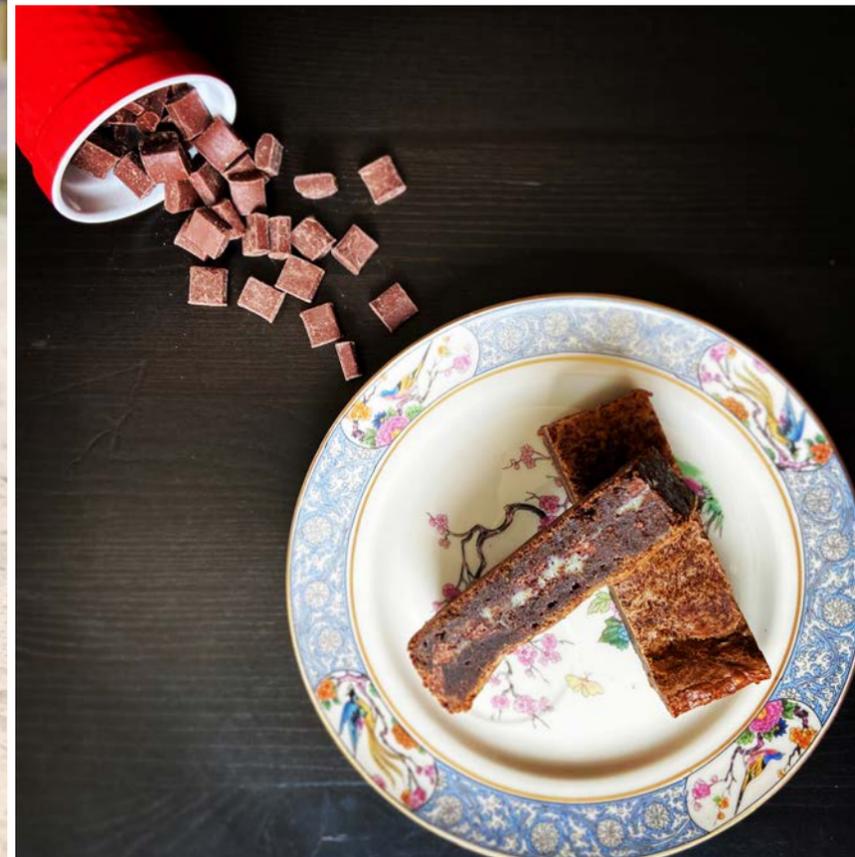
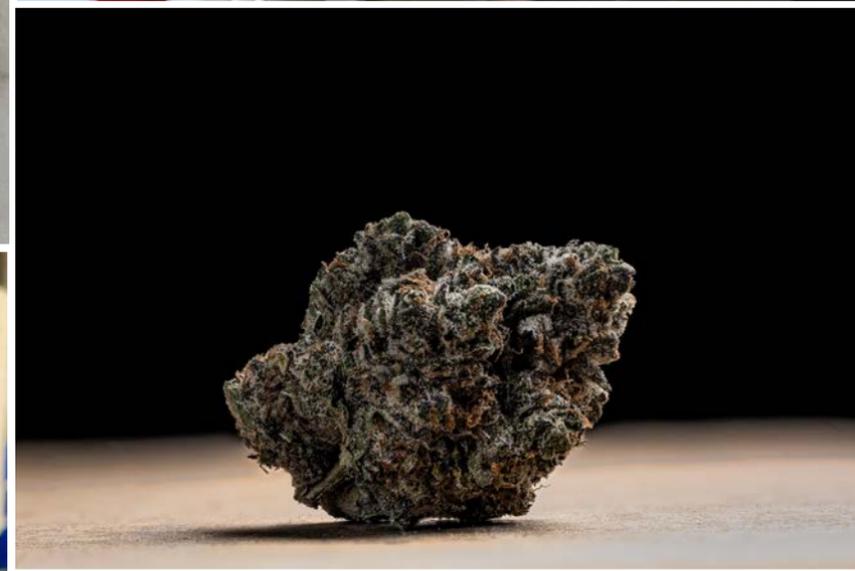
Most unique aspect of your business

Our devotion to elevating the experiences and expectations our clients have with cannabis. We're not just giving out high-quality gifts, we're empowering our community to be knowledgeable and kick-ass consumers, whether they're children of the '60s or newcomers to the plant.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

I see cannabis having a big role to play in building back up the parts of our community that have been hit the hardest by the pandemic and the War on Drugs. There will be a big boom in terms of cannabis-related businesses, beyond retailers and growers. I'm dreaming of softly lit cafés and lounges: somewhere stressed-out citizens can smoke, enjoy and connect with one another. This plant we love so much has the incredible ability to catalyze connection and compassion, and there's a lot of opportunity in that.

Learn more at www.districtderp.com and follow @districtderp on Instagram.



DISTRICT HEMP BOTANICALS

Barbara Biddle, Founder

Favorite strain of CBD

Blueberry Muffin Hemp Pre-Roll.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

Vaping.

Standout product

Palmetto Delta-8 gummies.

Most unique aspect of your business

We carefully curate our products to make sure we're only offering the very best to our customers. We also focus a lot on the customer experience and listening to what our customers want.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

I think we will see a big increase in recreational marijuana retail options as soon as it becomes fully legal in the area. We will hopefully begin to look more like California and Colorado in terms of availability and accessibility.

Learn more at www.districthempstore.com and follow @districthemp on Instagram.

FLOWERZ

Chad Frey, CEO

Favorite strain of CBD

Hawaiian Haze.

Preferred method of enjoying CBD

It really depends on the day and environment, just like choosing a wine with dinner or a cocktail on the beach. After a long day, I really enjoy hitting some fresh ground flower. For the weekends, I will take a vape out with me on the go. And for experiencing a new adventure, I like to share edibles with friends.

Standout product

Our best product over the years has been Hawaiian Haze flower. Our standout right now is our Delta-8 all-natural fruit thins (think a fruit rollup cut into small-dosed pieces with no added sugar). [It's] perfect for new cannabis users [who] don't want the anxiety.

Most unique aspect of your business

Easy: the people and the passion we have for the community. Our core beliefs are founded in being the best at what we do and making an impact that is greater than just cannabis.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

D.C. will be an East Coast driver for the cannabis industry and the culture that drives it. Now that New York has passed its marijuana legislation, it will have reverberation with the DMV. Maryland and Virginia are the next dominoes falling in place quickly.

Learn more at www.pickflowerz.com and follow @pickflowerz on Instagram.

THE GIFT

Cory Moore, CEO + Liz Robinson, COO

Favorite strain of CBD

Elektra. We love strains with a high flavonoid content and Elektra has lots of anthocyanin: the flavonoid responsible for the purple color.

FIRST PAGE. District Derp gummies. Photo courtesy of Anais Hayes. **THIRD PAGE.** (clockwise from top) Strawberry Shortcake Cakesicles. Photo courtesy of Sucrée Sweets Co. Photo courtesy of Bouqé Rolling Papers. Gelato Cake. Photo courtesy of District Cannabis. Double Fudge Bustelo Brownies. Photo courtesy of BÄKT Co. Photo courtesy of LoCo Hemp.

Preferred method of enjoying CBD

The endocannabinoid system is responsible for so much of our health, so we hit every receptor possible through smoking, tinctures, topicals and edibles. We use The Gift's Rejuvenation Hemp Balm and Balance Whole Plant Hemp Oil twice a day.

Standout product

Our Self-Care Trio kit includes our top sellers: Rejuvenation Hemp Balm, Balance Whole Plant Hemp Oil and Restorative Hemp Bath Salts.

Most unique aspect of your business

We focus on education and creating products that are rich in phytonutrients. The cannabis/hemp plant can contain up to 545 chemical compounds, so we choose extracts like FECO (full extract cannabis oil) that contain all of the cannabinoids, terpenes, flavonoids, healthy fats and vitamins available in the plant.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

We hope to see craft cannabis licenses similar to microbreweries that would allow some of the awesome home growers in D.C. to build businesses and move into larger-scale cultivation. We must provide opportunities for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds to create equity in the cannabis industry.

Learn more at www.thegiftwellness.com and follow @completelygifted on Instagram.

GIFTED CURATORS

Tim Slay, Lead Curator

Favorite strain of cannabis

Purple Kush [is] definitely one of my favorite ways to relax after a long day.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

I prefer to hand roll, usually in OCB papers. They are the thinnest and burn slower so you get the maximum flavor and effect from your flower.

Standout product

The Next-Level Dipped and Infused Pre-Rolls, for sure. They're pretty, rolled joints filled with high-quality flower, then infused and dipped in rosin and rolled in kief. They'll get you where you need to go.

Most unique aspect of your business

The shop culture, all the way. The curators are all a fun bunch here and we're hyperfocused on the guest's experience. From first-timers to day ones, everyone leaves with a smile every time.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

The future of cannabis is bright in the DMV. Virginia decriminalizing was *huge* and I believe things are definitely looking up. It's encouraging to see the negative opinions of cannabis finally eroding away. We're all looking forward to a situation where cannabis is free of stigma and easily accessible to all.

Learn more at www.giftedcuratorsdc.com and follow @giftedcurators.dc on Instagram.



GLASS HOUSE GALLERY

Ben Dennis, Shop Manager

Favorite strain of cannabis

A good lemon cherry gelato never fails me.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

Six-star hash rosin dabs.

Standout product

We try to make sure every customer leaves with a unique piece of art suited to their style and consumption needs.

Most unique aspect of your business

Our relationships with artists and our unique knowledge and passion make us a top destination on the East Coast and definitely in D.C. We live this, we love it and we hope that resonates when you visit our gallery.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

We shall see. I think any laws relaxing the use of cannabis will be a good thing for our community and the local economy.

Learn more at www.fb.com/glasshousegallerydc and follow @glasshousegallerydc on Instagram.

GREEN PANTHER CHEF

Jazmine Moore (a.k.a Chef Jazz), Founder + CEO

Favorite strain of cannabis

Gelato.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

Consumption through food, drinks and tinctures. But I do inhale from time to time.

Standout product

Our artisan CBD-infused hot sauce: Up in Smoke.

Most unique aspect of your business

Our holistic and sustainable approach to cannabis and food curated through the lens of a Crohn's [disease] survivor.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

[I see] cannabis becoming more mainstream in hospitality, entertainment and retail spaces.

Learn more at www.greenpantherchef.com and follow @greenpantherchef on Instagram.

I+I BOTANICALS

Jennifer Culpepper, Cofounder

Favorite strain of CBD

I don't have a favorite strain. We prefer to use full-spectrum CBD in our products to get the benefits of all the cannabinoids in the hemp plant.

Preferred method of enjoying CBD

While there are many benefits of ingesting CBD and cannabis, I'm pretty obsessed with using it on my skin because you can see the results so quickly and profoundly.

Standout product

It's hard to pick a favorite because I truly love all our products. However, if I have to choose, our face serum is really like a miracle potion. It is a great daily moisturizer and feels luxurious

LEFT PAGE. (clockwise from top) CBD Muscle & Pain Balm. Photo courtesy of The Ounce. The Sauce. Photo courtesy of Green Panther Chef. Glass House Gallery pipe by Eusheen + Darby Holm. Photo by THC Samuel. Purple Kush. Photo courtesy of Gifted Curators. Palmetto D-8 Gummies. Photo courtesy of District Hemp Botanicals. Photo courtesy of Pink Fox.

on the skin. It's incredible [for helping to] calm and prevent rosacea and acne. I've also found it works wonders on sunburns and other skin irritations.

Most unique aspect of your business

[Cofounder] Selam Kelati and I come from very different backgrounds. I think the different viewpoints we bring helps us to empathize and create products for people with all different skin types and concerns. Selam also brings with her a vast knowledge of natural plant-based ingredients [to] help us create unique products that are both effective and good for the body.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

I think we'll see cannabis legalization soon. What will that look like? I don't know. I think CBD regulation could be very good for the clean beauty movement. If the regulations are created right, it could be a guide as to how to create standards for clean beauty. We self-impose strict sourcing and supply chain oversight, as well as several rounds of third-party testing, to ensure our ingredients are free from toxins and [have] accurate levels of CBD. I'd like to see this be an industry standard.

Learn more at www.iandibotanicals.com and follow @i.and.i.botanicals on Instagram.

LOCO HEMP

Louis Bergeron, Owner + Operator

Favorite strain of CBD

People like our Cherrywine and BaOx varieties.

Preferred method of enjoying CBD

People prefer our CBD oil and dry vaping our CBD flower. Dogs enjoy our hemp stalks to chew on.

Standout product

Our Full Spectrum 1500mg CBD Oil. It's effective and simple.

Most unique aspect of your business

We are veteran-owned and grown right here in Loudoun County (LoCo), Virginia. We grow outdoors to create a premium, small-batch product and sell locally. We're not trying to be the biggest operation; [we're] just trying to demonstrate that small, local farmers can and should get into growing hemp.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

I think hemperies are the next big thing in the region following wineries, breweries [and] cideries. People will love seeing hemp, and eventually marijuana, growing in the Virginia soil and sun after being absent for some many years. The challenge will be the federal regulations, with so many people in the area having to maintain government jobs. But I think in five years, we'll be [in] a very different place. I'm just glad to be one of the first licensed hemp farmers in Virginia and can't wait for more people to grow and experience hemp.

Learn more at www.locohempva.com and follow @locohempva on Instagram.

THE OUNCE

Ray Dixon, Founder + Lead Consultant

Favorite strain of CBD

Currently, my favorite strain of CBD is Mountain Mango, which The Ounce carries.



Preferred method of enjoying CBD

I really enjoy the ease and convenience of using water soluble CBD in my smoothie or tea, but nothing does it for me quite like a little smoke after a long day.

Standout product

Our CBD Muscle & Pain Balm. It's infused with a number of essential oils and works well for pain, skin irritation, inflammation, and loosening joints and muscles.

Most unique aspect of your business

Products and local hand-delivery service (often same day) aside, The Ounce is distinguished through our community involvement, advocacy, and celebration of marginalized communities and diverse people. We've worked with National Expungement Week (2019 and 2020), Black Women Benefit (a grassroots nonprofit organization) and Marijuana Justice's Legalize It Right campaign, among other efforts.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

That largely depends on the provisions in each respective municipality's final bill and the individuals overseeing licensing. Illinois is currently working to remedy major diversity issues in their newly regulated cannabis industry, where nearly \$700 million dollars was generated in the first year without a single new minority license holder. If the goal is to make the sale of cannabis more equitable, I feel it's important to consider the successes and failures of other markets.

Learn more at www.theouncebrand.com and follow @theouncebrand on Instagram.

THE RESET WELLNESS® GROUP

Tahmika Aldrich, Cofounder + CEO

Favorite strain of cannabis

Currently, I'm enjoying Peanut Butter Breath.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

My preferred method is smoking. But when I can't, our beverages do the trick.

Standout product

Our Ginger Honey Lemon beverage is our bestseller. It can be consumed hot or cold.

Most unique aspect of your business

We offer unique customer experience with our in-home/virtual consultations and events. We are more than a CBD product company. We are building community resilience and well-being through cannabis.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

I definitely see a regulated, adult-use cannabis program in D.C. in the near future. With this program, it is my hope that it be built on a framework of social equity. For example, reducing the barriers for entry into the industry and most importantly, investing the capital made from cannabis sales into education and opportunities for communities most affected by the criminalization of cannabis.

Learn more about The Reset Wellness® Group at www.theresetwellnessgroup.com and follow @resetwellness_dc on Instagram.



PINK FOX

Mark Nagib, Co-Owner + Creative Director

Favorite strain of cannabis

Tough question. If I am honest: weed. I [don't] believe in indica or sativa being indicative of how the strain will make you feel. I want something 27% THC or higher, please and thank you.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

A water bong: a combination of that big deep hit, the cloudy exhale, and that bubbling sound made famous on musical tracks by Snoop, Dr. Dre and Cypress Hill.

Standout product

The Lincoln T-shirt. It is Pink Fox's most popular and best-selling shirt, and the gift it comes with ain't bad either.

Most unique aspect of your business

We are building a lifestyle movement in the nation's capital. Initiative 71 has evolved into so much more than the legislation that legalized cannabis in the District. It has brought to life social equity issues, points of access for minority business owners and a voting rights issue for residents in Washington, D.C.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

We are excited and hopeful for a legislation change in the District, specifically allowing for broader participation in the legal cannabis market. But watching the legislative pieces in the surrounding DMV is incredible. I think the cat is out of the bag on cannabis. Those days of perpetuating cannabis as something to fear are over and cannabis could continue to be an unbelievably beneficial commodity for cities, states and the people that live in them.

Learn more at www.pinkfox202.com and follow @fkapinkfox on Instagram.

SPACYCLOUD

Tatiana (Tati) Kolina, Founder

Favorite strain of CBD

I like all types: isolate, full-spectrum and broad-spectrum. But for sPACyCLOuD products, we can only use isolate and broad-spectrum to comply with D.C. laws.

Preferred method of enjoying CBD

I prefer ingestion (edibles) and topical (creams and balms).

Standout products

CBD-infused mangoes, herbal teas and dog treats.

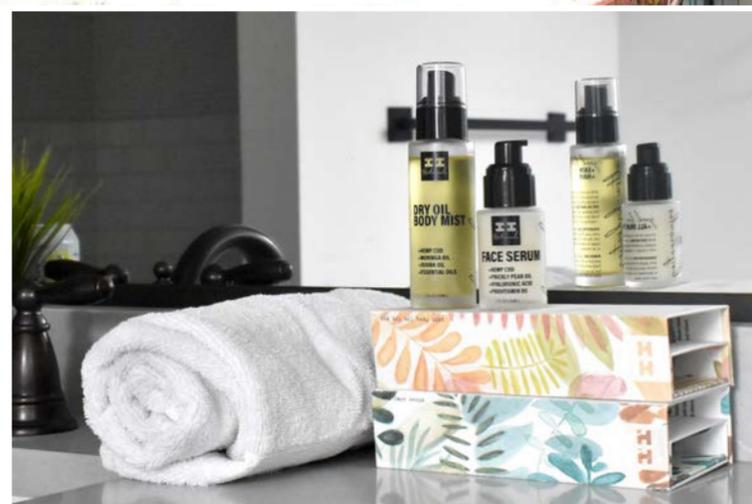
Most unique aspect of your business

sPACyCLOuD is a woman-owned green company located in Adams Morgan, with a focus on building a community around alternative resources and sustainable practices. It is dedicated to [being] a hub for the community and providing healthy vegan/vegetarian options with a modern twist. sPACyCLOuD's mission is to educate the community on alternative and healthy lifestyles through art, action sports, activism, music, social health and wellness.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

Hopefully, the Safe Cannabis Sales Act of 2021 will create an equitable adult-use cannabis program, bring safety and equity to the market, provide for automatic expungements of prior marijuana convictions, and support reinvestments in communities most impacted by prohibition.

Learn more at www.spacycloud.com and follow @spacycloud on Instagram.



LEFT PAGE. (clockwise from left). Hemp-infused beverages. Photo courtesy of The Reset Wellness® Group. Mango Fruit Thins. Photo courtesy of Flowerz. Photo courtesy of sPACyCLOuD. Body mist + face serum. Photo courtesy of I+I Botanicals. Self-Care Trio. Photo courtesy of The Gift.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP. Veriheal's Joshua Green. Photo courtesy of subject. Street Lawyer Services' Lonny Bramzon. Photo by Ben Frey. District Derp's Anaïs Hayes. Photo courtesy of subject.



STREET LAWYER SERVICES

Lonny Bramzon, Owner + Inspirational Leader

Favorite strain of cannabis

Bacio Gelato, which is a part of our #QUADAAAAY family. At Street Lawyer Services, we refer to the strains in our next-level category as the #QUADAAAAY category. It's not triple A — it's above that. It's the QUAD A.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

Cannabis is one of the few blessings I can enjoy in any environment.

Standout product

It is the love we spread throughout the D.C. community.

Most unique aspect of your business

This brand is based on quality, variety and consistency with style and love for the community. I do not really pay attention to other businesses, so I can't comment on uniqueness. This is just how we flow.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

There [are] going to be more happy and relaxed people walking around the beautiful streets of the DMV.

Visit www.streetlawyerservicesdc.com and follow @streetlawyerservices_dc on Instagram.

SUCRÉE SWEETS CO.

Shannon Rizvi, Cofounder

Favorite strain of cannabis

Strawberry cheesecake.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

I love smoking out of my bong. I prefer flower to concentrates or edibles when it comes to daily use.

Standout product

Cakesicles, gummies and custom cannabis infused cakes.

Most unique aspect of your business

We take pride in using the highest-quality ingredients in our edibles to create desserts and flavor combinations you've never seen with cannabis before.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

We only see things changing for the better. The cannabis prohibition will inevitably end, and small businesses will be able to flourish. Products will also be safer for consumers as they become more regulated.

Follow @sucreesweets.co on Instagram.

VERIHEAL

Joshua Green, Cofounder

Favorite strain of cannabis

Mimosa: It gives me a very light, cerebral energy and I love the taste.

Preferred method of enjoying cannabis

I prefer to roll a small joint for myself.

Standout product

I really like the cannabis-infused soft drink Keef. [It's] super innovative, I love the brand and it's an enjoyable way to consume.

Most unique aspect of your business

Our team is unparalleled. Finding talent in and of itself is a challenge. But building a company where the entire team will go to bat for your mission, day in and day out, and wear all the different hats a startup demands is one of our strongest assets. We went against the grain when we created Veriheal, and I do believe that investment into a very strong staff has allowed us to continually innovate and create new services, products, tools, etc. that will forever shape the medical cannabis industry.

Future of cannabis in the DMV

Although smaller in comparison, D.C. was our first market. We had much success in the District and it really helped us get our footing for what ultimately became a nationwide service. Maryland has had a particularly strong medical program — in my opinion, one of the best in the country. Virginia, on the other hand, has been slower to adapt. Now that Virginia is teasing recreational legalization, hopefully that accessibility opens up.

Learn more at www.veriheal.com and follow @veriheal on Instagram.

Author's note: The majority of businesses included in this article associated with cannabis operate under D.C.'s Initiative 71, which means they do not assign a monetary value to anything with marijuana or THC in the ingredients. Instead, the items noted in the story are gifted along with the purchase of a different product, such as clothing or artwork. For more about I-71, visit www.mayor.dc.gov.

Q&A with nurseMARK

Mark Worster — a.k.a nurseMARK BSN-RN, MCST, AFA — is a registered nurse who specializes in using cannabis as a tool for pain management, mitigating stress, and increasing overall health and well-being. Worster is also part of the world's only MS in Cannabis Science and Therapeutics program at the University of Maryland's School of Pharmacy, where he furthers his knowledge to share with those seeking the natural remedies that cannabis provides. We caught up with him to learn more about his experience and get his take on cannabis culture today.

District Fray: How did you become interested in using cannabis to assist others in living a healthy life?

Mark Worster: In late 2017, I became involved with an amazing entrepreneur out of Brooklyn, New York named Jenny Argie of Jenny's Baked at Home and partnered with her through 2018. The more I dove into cannabis, the more I was convinced it was my calling.

Can you tell me more about the services you offer?

The Green Nurse is a community of healthcare providers that offer medical card certifications and consultations for anyone wanting to learn more about how to use cannabis as a health and wellness tool, as well as [to] incorporate other modalities that support a healthy endocannabinoid system. We help people live their best lives.

What's the most common misconception about cannabis use and how do you combat that?

The most common misconception is that you need to be high to experience health benefits. Our job is to help people use this plant *below* the level of impairment and receive *all* the benefits the plant has to offer.

With legislation changing in the D.C. area and nationwide, what do you think the future of cannabis will be?

As legalization status changes, we'll see a standardization of regulations across the board, which will result in more accurately tested and labeled products in the marketplace.

To learn more about nurseMARK and the programs and services he offers, visit www.nursemark.co or email info@nursemark.co.

D.C.'S BEST CLOTHING BRAND



DESIGN WITH A PULSE FASHION WITH A VOICE

In support of the Initiative 71 legislation, Pink Fox began offering retail items and adult use only gifts that were cannabis or infused with cannabis. Pink Fox is a lifestyle brand established in Washington, D.C. under the belief that recreational cannabis consumption should be accessible and attainable for all adults in a safe, responsible community environment. The Pink Fox lifestyle is more than getting high. It's a lifestyle brand that recognizes the many who are in jail for cannabis offenses and advocates for retroactive record expungement, equal banking access and equal access for minorities in the cannabis industry. Make your appointment today!

PINKFOX202.COM



THE GREEN ISSUE

Industry experts and advocates make the case for legalization and decriminalization of cannabis.

WORDS BY AMANDA WEISBROD

Two pieces of legislation regarding cannabis are currently circulating through the District's system of government, both of which would include provisions to legalize recreational sales and establish social equity programs.

The current legislation, Initiative 71, which was passed in 2015, legalized recreational marijuana use for adults 21 and older with some key provisions.

Marijuana consumers may not possess any more than two ounces at one time, can only use marijuana on private property, may gift up to one ounce of marijuana to another person as long as it is not transactional and may grow up to six cannabis plants in their home — but no more than three of these plants can be mature at one time.

Marijuana has been available to purchase for medicinal use only at licensed dispensaries in the District since 2011.

If passed by the end of this year, The Safe Cannabis Act proposed by Mayor Muriel Bowser would legalize recreational sales at licensed dispensaries beginning on October 1, 2022. A 17% tax would be imposed on these sales, and part of this revenue would support reinvestments in communities most impacted by prohibition. The bill also includes automatic expungements for those who have prior marijuana offenses.

"This is about safety, equity and justice," Mayor Bowser said in a press release. "Through this legislation, we can fulfill the will

of D.C. voters, reduce barriers for entering the cannabis industry, and invest in programs that serve residents and neighborhoods hardest hit by the criminalization of marijuana."

The second piece of legislation is the Comprehensive Cannabis Legalization and Regulation Act of 2021, which was introduced by six D.C. councilmembers in early March. As state and policy manager at NORML (the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws), a nonprofit public interest advocacy group focused on marijuana legalization, Carly Wolf favors this proposal over the Safe Cannabis Act. While they are fairly similar, this one is more "comprehensive" — hence the name.

"It's a little more detailed on where the revenue would go and what kind of programs it would fund," says Wolf, who, along with every source named in this article, believes social equity is the most important aspect of marijuana legalization.

Social equity, an idea traced back to the great philosophers Aristotle and Plato, is "rooted in the idea that each person is equal and has inalienable rights," according to an academic article titled "Social Equity: Its Legacy, Its Promise." In regards to cannabis legalization, Caroline Phillips, founder of the National Cannabis Festival, believes social equity means giving back to the communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs.

Caroline Phillips. Photo courtesy of subject.



“Social equity, to me, is about transparency of process,” Phillips says. “It’s about making sure people have access, and it’s about fairness. Right now in the cannabis industry, we are really working state by state, if not city by city, to have legislators at the local level understand the impact a strong social equity program can have on the cannabis marketplace in their community, and why it’s something good for the longevity of the industry.”

Dating back to the late 1800s, America’s War on Drugs has disproportionately affected minority populations by associating cannabis consumption with Black and Latino communities, according to Morgan Fox, media relations director at the National Cannabis Industry Foundation.

“[This propaganda] was basically suggesting these groups were associated with violence, sexual assault and increased strength, or just a lot of racist tropes,” Fox says. “And some of those have carried on over the decades. I think [these tropes] have evolved a little bit, particularly in the eighties and nineties, to be more associated with laziness, inability to be successful professionally or personally, inability to have normal human relationships, and just generally being associated with a low moral character.”

Today, Black people are three times as likely to be arrested for marijuana-related offenses than their white counterparts, even though both groups consume marijuana at the same rate, according to a 2020 report published by the American Civil Liberties Union.

“The government used [the War on Drugs] as a way to target Black people [and] anti-war activists, and they couldn’t criminalize being Black so they criminalized marijuana use,” Wolf says. “It’s completely based on racist ideologies and I think those communities deserve to have much of the [tax] revenue. It’s crazy to me there are states profiting off of this, and then there are other states where people are literally sitting in jail for possession of a joint.”

Corey Barnette, owner of Kinfolk Dispensary and District Growers, weighs in, noting that “there are parts of our communities that have been ravaged.”

“I believe we have a great opportunity if this legislation is introduced in a sane and considerate way,” he says. “We have an opportunity to repair some of that damage.”

Both the Safe Cannabis Act and the DC Council’s proposals include ways to repair some of the damage done by the War on Drugs including automatic expungement, broader access to marijuana licenses and funneling the tax revenue gained from regulated marijuana sales to affected communities.

“It should definitely be directed toward those communities to provide things like education, healthcare services, and other social programs that could help with those who are struggling with poverty and other detrimental effects of the drug war,” Wolf says. “I think that’s a really important part of any regulation plan: to direct some of that revenue to communities [who] need it the most.”

Specifically, the Comprehensive Cannabis Legalization and Regulation Act of 2021 outlines a provision to direct 50% of cannabis revenue into a Community Reinvestment Program Fund, which would fund grants to community-based organizations that address economic development, mental health treatment, substance use disorder treatment, non-law enforcement violence prevention services, homeless prevention services, reentry services, youth development and civil legal aid for underserved communities.

In addition to reparations and social equity, Phillips says legalizing and regulating a recreational marijuana market in the District has several beneficial outcomes including consumer safety provisions, employment opportunities and even the potential to boost the District’s tourism industry.

Bethany Moore at NORML points out that because there is no quality control in the illicit market, there is no guarantee that products have been tested for harmful chemicals or other substances.

“There’s so many reasons regulating and legalizing cannabis is safer,” she says. “In addition to the safety of the products, dispensaries check IDs [to prevent] underage consumption but the illicit market does not. So, it’s another preventative for youth to get access to a substance intended for adults.”

As a longtime D.C. resident and business owner in the District, Barnette says he’s been working heavily with the DC Council and the Mayor’s Office to offer input on how to properly provide social equity while building a healthy cannabis market. So far, he says both pieces of legislation address these concerns.

For Barnette, moving Kinfolk into the recreational cannabis market would allow the dispensary to have even greater participation and influence in its neighborhood, which is what they’re all about.

“Kinfolk really is a family,” he says. “It really is a business that looks to have an impact on the community around it. As a result of that, we definitely want to participate in any sort of adult use opportunities that present themselves.”

There’s a kind of kinship between marijuana consumers, Barnette explains, that creates a special bond of understanding and fosters community. By expanding recreational use and creating a more acceptable and open-air culture, he believes the negative perceptions and stigmas surrounding cannabis have the potential to change.

“Over the years as [Kinfolk has] been entrenched in Ward 6, we’ve really developed a family of customers and patients who come through our dispensary,” he says. “We focus more so on trying to provide a cannabis experience to people who want to engage in a cannabis lifestyle. If you are a user of cannabis, then you probably know there’s a little bit more kinship there when you find out that someone else is also a smoker or uses cannabis.”

In the end, Fox says the prohibition of cannabis “has been far more harmful to both individual consumers and society than cannabis itself has.” The legalization of a regulated market would not only provide a way forward to avoid future harm but also

serve to repair some past injustices through social equity provisions.

“In broad strokes, prohibition doesn’t provide any sort of control over this substance and unfairly punishes people for consumption,” Fox adds. “I think there are all sorts of issues where our cannabis laws have caused serious harm that could be immediately alleviated by ending prohibition and sensibly regulating the substance.”

Check out this list of resources below to visit their websites and follow them on Instagram, and don’t miss the National Cannabis Festival’s Dazed & Amused Drive-In Party on Saturday, April 17 at the RFK Stadium Festival Grounds. Buy tickets at www.nationalcannabisfestival.com/drive-in-party.

District Growers: www.districtgrowers.com // @districtgrowers

The Executive Office of the Mayor: www.mayor.dc.gov // @mayor_bowser

Kinfolk Dispensary: <http://kinfolkdispensary.com/links> // @kinfolkdispensary

National Cannabis Festival: www.nationalcannabisfestival.com // @natlcannabisfest

National Cannabis Industry Foundation: www.thecannabisindustry.org // @nationalcannabisindustry

NORML: www.norml.org // @natlnorml



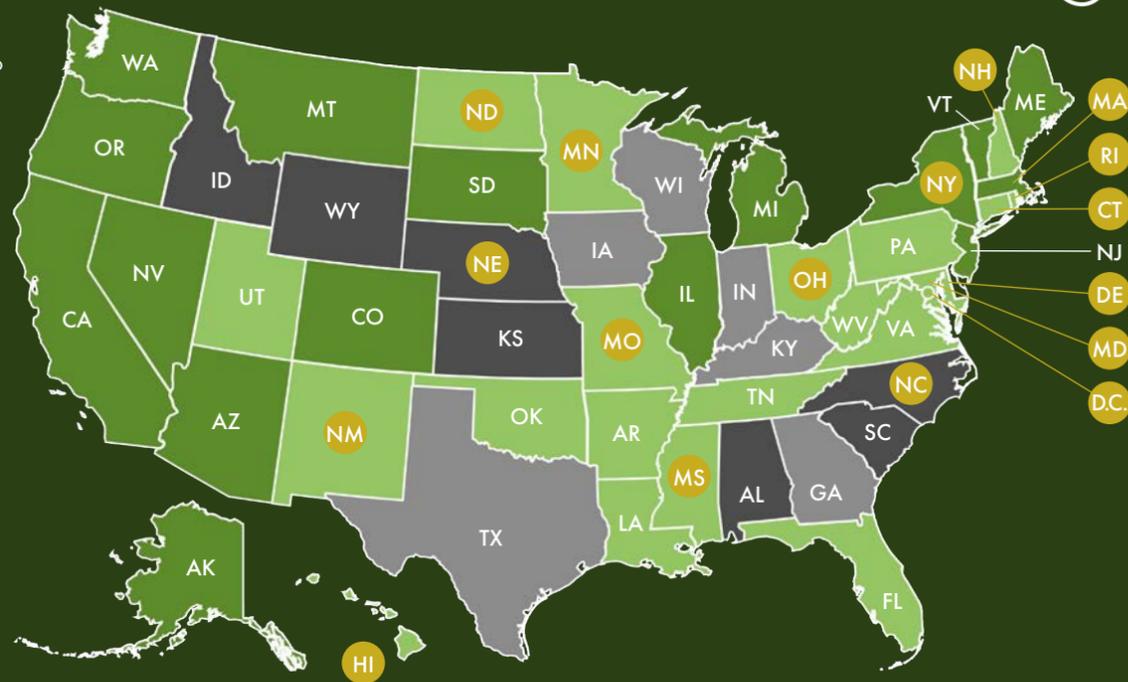
decriminalizing marijuana

WORDS + ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA WEISBROD

Every state has its own cannabis laws and the DMV area is no exception. Recent marijuana legislation has passed in Virginia and been brought to the table in the District and Maryland, leaving questions about what's legal now and what could be legal in the future.

Legalization only applies to adults 21 years and older.

- fully legal and decriminalized
- medically legal
- CBD oil, only medical use
- fully illegal
- decriminalized



Washington, D.C.

Virginia

Maryland

legislation status	Washington, D.C.		Virginia		Maryland	
	current law	proposed law	past law	new law	current law	proposed law
medicinal sales	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
retail sales		✓		✓		✓
legal amount to possess	< 2 oz.	< 2 oz.	< 1 oz. (\$25 fine)	< 1 oz.		< 2 oz.
home cultivation	✓	✓		✓		✓
expungement/decriminalization	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
social equity provisions		✓		✓	✓	✓

SO, WHAT'S LEGAL IN THE DMV?

D.C., Virginia and Maryland all have different cannabis laws in place, so to quell confusion and ensure your safety, here's a quick guide.

These provisions originally wouldn't have taken effect until Jan. 1, 2024, but on April 7, Virginia lawmakers moved up the date to July 1, 2021.

Maryland's proposed bills have been tabled until next year because they did not meet the state's 90-day legislative session deadline.

To put the 2 ounces threshold into perspective...

...if you have Stage 4 cancer or something like it, smoking 2 ounces a month is reasonable as you'll be using all day and night, every hour or so. For all other illnesses, it's overkill. But the high threshold is important for certain medicinal users."

Sean Santa, investment banking associate specializing in cannabis at Young America Capital

Q&A



CAROLINE PHILLIPS
Founder of the National Cannabis Festival

What are your thoughts on The Safe Cannabis Act?

I think that the Safe Cannabis Act legislation is so promising. There are still some challenges in there around social equity programs, or the potential social equity programs, in our city.

What do you mean by social equity?

The idea around social equity is making sure the people who have really been impacted by the War on Drugs and people who have traditionally been left out of the regulated cannabis industry, Black and brown people, actually have a fair opportunity to take part.

How do you think this legislation would affect the District?

Hopefully, it would open up more opportunity for work for residents of the District and would reduce the number of people locked up for cannabis offenses. I hope it would provide more clarity to people about the laws in our city. I think there's been a lot of confusion in the past five years. It would also provide clarity to people about how to gain access to the regulated market as consumers [and] business owners.

Do you think it would positively impact the economy?

Absolutely. The city would be able to benefit from a cannabis sales tax coming in, but also the tourism that would come with it. I think there could be an entire culture built around entertainment, art, technology, policy and cannabis in D.C., and that could become its own piece of our city's rich cultural fabric and something people would travel from out of town to experience.

Is there anything about the legislation you'd like to see change?

I think we need to take into account that the War on Drugs wasn't just directly about people being arrested for drug offenses. There were so many side effects and fallouts from it that caused people to find themselves in difficult situations or led to additional arrests or run-ins with the law. I would like to see D.C. be more open about convictions, not just related to cannabis, and allow those individuals to also apply for licenses.



Sources: mayor.dc.gov; chairmanmendelson.com; commons.wikimedia.org; disa.com; mpp.org; governor.virginia.gov; natlawreview.com; norml.org



Local Entrepreneurs Infuse CBD Into Wellness

WORDS BY M.K. KOSZYCKI

CBD (an abbreviation for cannabidiol) has gained popularity for its multitude of uses and benefits like aiding in chronic pain, easing anxiety, improving skin problems and more. It's a naturally occurring, non-psychoactive substance found in cannabis or hemp plants, but is perhaps most commonly found as an oil. Because it shows up in other products and faces changing regulations, it can be hard to know where to begin when attempting to incorporate CBD into your health and wellness routine. Hear from three local small business owners below about the benefits of CBD and where to start out with products.

District Hemp Botanicals

In looking for a remedy to help with postpartum depression, Barbara Biddle turned to CBD. Now, Biddle shares the benefits of CBD with the D.C. community as the founder of District Hemp Botanicals. With three brick-and-mortar locations plus a thriving online store, Biddle and her team stock a wide variety of CBD products and passionately educate all who seek CBD about its uses, benefits and many forms.

“One of the biggest things I like to convey to my customer base is CBD doesn't work for everyone,” Biddle explains. “That being said, we make it a point to offer samples prior to purchasing to ensure CBD is right for our customers. Now more than ever, we're living through a pandemic and people need to make sure they're spending their money on something that works. That's a huge part of what we do.”

District Hemp stocks oils, cartridges, edibles, pre-rolls, creams and more including their own in-house brand formulated with

a company in Colorado. In determining what the store should carry, Biddle ensures products have gone through stringent third-party testings before they hit the shelves. Biddle and other employees try products themselves so they can speak to the ways a specific brand, strength or delivery might assist a customer in targeting their needs.

The brand has seen an uptick in sales in the past year, with many seeking CBD to curb anxiety brought on by the stress of the pandemic, or to meet other wellness goals they've begun to prioritize. Biddle notes that while the online shop and curbside pickup are options for contact-free shopping, many customers crave the face-to-face interaction that comes with walking into the store to browse options and be educated on their CBD products.

For Biddle, the most rewarding part of her job comes from the positive customer feedback and reviews from those who have found help through District Hemp and the products they offer.

“It's the reviews,” Biddle continues, “and just hearing I was able to help. We've had customers come in and cry in our store while explaining how much these products have helped them, and I don't think there's anything better than that.”

Learn more about District Hemp Botanicals, shop online, see store hours and more at www.districthempstore.com, and follow @districthemp on Instagram.

District Hemp Botanicals: 1323 Connecticut Ave. NW, DC; 202-600-4664 // 9023 Church St. Manassas, VA; 571-364-8663 // 19 Wirt St. SW, Leesburg, VA // 571-799-9914

District Hemp Botanicals' Barbara Biddle. Photo by Rich Kessler Photography.

I+I Botanicals

When Jennifer Culpepper and Selam Kelati founded Annapolis, Maryland-based I+I Botanicals, they each brought backgrounds uniquely suited to begin a successful CBD-based skincare company. Culpepper is also the founder and creative director of the branding studio Brand Joint, which works exclusively with brands in the cannabis and hemp space. Kelati has a background in chemical engineering and organic formulation, and draws on her experiences growing up in East Africa to infuse natural products from her upbringing into powerful and effective skincare. Together, they had the idea to combine those ingredients with CBD to create optimal benefits for skin.

“The same thing CBD does in your body, it does for skin in a really obvious way,” Culpepper explains of CBD's anti-inflammatory properties. “It really helps with things like rosacea, eczema, psoriasis — anything that inflames your skin, it calms very well. It also helps to clear acne, which is something I didn't know until we made our face serum and I started using it. What I've seen with the research with CBD is it reduces the production of sebum in your skin, so that helps to prevent acne because your skin is not overproducing oil.”

In addition to their CBD face serum, I+I Botanicals offers a CBD dry oil body mist, CBD coffee body scrub and bath tea blends. The brand is committed to using eco-friendly and recyclable packaging for all of their offerings and shipping methods. And as the CBD and hemp markets are unregulated, they've looked to regulations put forth by other brands and organizations in order to ensure their products are safe and effective.

“Something that's really, really important to us is the transparency behind the ingredients,” Culpepper says. “With

FROM LEFT. Jennifer Culpepper + Selam Kelati. Photo courtesy of I+I Botanicals.

CBD particularly, that's something that's kind of like the Wild West in terms of how everybody grows it. It's not that hard to get, but it is hard to know if what you're getting is good or not, so we triple lab test everything.”

All of these lab tests are available to read on their website as well. And while CBD is an essential component to I+I Botanicals' products, they offer even more benefits to your skin and body by pairing the high-performing, well-tested CBD with other natural ingredients.

“What we find is when we pair CBD with some of these other ingredients that really do great things as well, it's kind of a power punch, especially for things like hydration and clearing the skin,” Culpepper adds.

Learn more about I+I Botanicals and shop their products at www.iandibotanicals.com, and follow @i.and.i.botanicals on Instagram.

LoCo Hemp

LoCo Hemp in Loudoun County, Virginia is a small, veteran-owned farm that uses sustainable and organic practices to produce their CBD products. In 2019, Louis Bergeron decided to try his hand at growing hemp on his farm, where he'd previously grown vegetables and kept bees. Through trial and error, Bergeron was able to harvest the plant and eventually scale up production to offer high-quality CBD products made in a natural, organic manner.

“It's been pretty exciting,” Bergeron says of the venture. “It's rewarding when people use it and find the relief they need. I have been really encouraged by the response we've gotten from people who've tried it and found gains and benefits from it, whether it's a need to relax after a stressful day of work or with kids or people in chronic pain.”



Currently, LoCo Hemp offers a 1500 mg CBD oil, CBD products for pets and CBD stalk dog chews. Their oil is full-spectrum, one of three major ways CBD is offered in addition to isolate and broad-spectrum. While it does contain trace amounts of THC, it's well under the legal limit of 0.3%. LoCo Hemp follows and meets all state and local regulations for the production of their offerings.

"Full-spectrum essentially uses all the parts of the plant, pulled and extracted together," Bergeron explains. "You get a mix of all the different elements of the plant. Some people swear by that because there's interplay between the different chemical compounds and those different chemicals, including the trace amounts of THC in full-spectrum CBD oil."

As for the pet products, Bergeron uses their full-spectrum pet CBD with his own dog, who he says benefits from it. Their most unique product is perhaps their CBD stalk dog chews, which are made from the repurposed stalks and offer a fun, eco-friendly chew for furry friends.

"My dog loves it," he says of the chew. "I've had several repeat customers whose dogs love it, too. The nice thing is it doesn't smell. People do the rawhide bones and all that sort of stuff, but those can get really messy and slimy. It's completely plant-based, which is nice."

As for growing locally, Bergeron says he's found that through trial, error and experimentation, hemp plants take exceptionally well to the Virginia climate.

"We've found amazing resilience in the plants. Obviously, we don't use any sort of pesticides or large-scale industrial practices. We do use very tailored organic and practices, and they've just grown really well."

Learn more about LoCo Hemp and shop their products by visiting www.locohempva.com and following @locohempva on Instagram.



Find more CBD products at these locations in the D.C. area.

Flowerz: 1440 G St. NW, DC;
www.pickflowerz.com // @pickflowerz

Grass&Co: 1730 Columbia Rd. NW, DC;
www.grassand.co // @grassandcompany

Hemp Haven: 509-B Main St. Laurel, MD;
www.hemphavenonmain.com //
@hemphavenwellnesscenter

The Reset Wellness Group: 6323 Georgia Ave. #55814 NW, DC;
www.theresetwellnessgroup.com // @resetwellness_dc

Photos courtesy of LoCo Hemp.



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GRASSFED MEDIA CHAMPIONS CANNABIS CLIENTS

WORDS BY KEITH LORIA

In 2013, Sacha Cohen started Grassfed Media in the D.C. area as a way to support and bring attention to wellness brands, organizations and companies that look to have a positive impact on their communities and the world around them.

The UK-born media professional found writing to be a creative outlet early in life.

“I love magazines and was terrible at math, so going into publishing made sense,” she says. “I got my first taste of writing in college doing music reviews, and then went directly into magazine publishing from there.”

Now a 25-year veteran of digital media, public relations and marketing, Cohen has relied on her perseverance, resilience, creativity and the ability to adapt quickly in making the Arlington, Virginia-based marketing company successful.

“Before I started the company, I had many years of experience in corporate America and I knew I wanted to create something different: a business that values integrity, good work and relationships,” she says. “I also care about the success of my

clients in a very personal way. In fact, the long-term relationships I’ve had with clients have brought the best results.”

That’s been proven through her work with cannabis companies, as she started working with CBD in 2018 both nationally and in the D.C. region.

“Personally, I’ve been involved in the cannabis community for years, and I launched a series of events for women interested in cannabis and health in 2017,” Cohen says. “In the D.C. area, I work with District Hemp Botanicals, the leading CBD wellness retailer in the region. I’ve also worked with Rose Glow Tea Room, a woman-owned company that makes wonderful CBD-infused teas.”

Nationally, Cohen has worked with prestodoctor.com, a leading online medical cannabis card platform, and Trym, a cannabis cultivation software company, among others. She works with her cannabis clients on refining their branding, messaging and positioning in the marketplace.

“A big focus of my work with all of my clients is ensuring they get

top-tier media coverage both in the D.C. area and nationally. I’ve had clients like District Hemp Botanicals appear on Cheddar TV, “The Kojo Nnamdi Show” and NBC, and in The Washington Post, Sweet Jane, MJ Business and hundreds of other outlets.”

Cohen originally learned about the benefits of medical cannabis when a close family friend of hers was diagnosed with cancer.

“She went on to run one of the most well-respected small cannabis farms in Northern California,” she says. “Her journey inspired me to learn as much as I could about the health and wellness benefits of the plant. I also began to educate myself about CBD and cannabis years ago when dealing with some of my own health issues, and I experienced the benefits firsthand.”

Cohen believes both recreational and medical cannabis will continue to mature throughout D.C., Maryland and Virginia, and hopes the area will soon look more like Colorado and California.

“We’re obviously far behind the West Coast, and although medical cannabis is fairly well-established here with a number of respected dispensaries in the region, recreational cannabis has a

long way to go,” she says. “The fact that recreational cannabis is legal, yet the sale of recreational cannabis is illegal, doesn’t make a whole lot of sense.”

With the new administration in place and Democrats having control of Congress, Cohen sees things heading in a more positive direction for the industry. In fact, she believes recreational sales may happen within the next year or so.

“There’s a lot of consolidation happening now, with large multi-state operators snapping up smaller brands. Hopefully, the independent operators will continue to thrive. But that depends a lot on policy decisions. We will also likely see big strides made in research and education, especially as cannabis continues to be destigmatized. I hope we will see more inclusion and diversity in both the recreational and medical cannabis and CBD space.

And I’d like to continue to see more women leaders in the space.”

For more on Cohen and Grassfed Media, visit www.grassfedmedia.com and follow @grassfedmedia on Instagram.

HIGH AND GO SEEK

In honor of District Fray's Cannabis Guide celebrating D.C.'s cannabis community, we are proud to present our first-ever High and Go Seek illustration. E\$ hid 42 jazz cabbage cigarettes throughout this entire illustration. See if you can find them all.



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