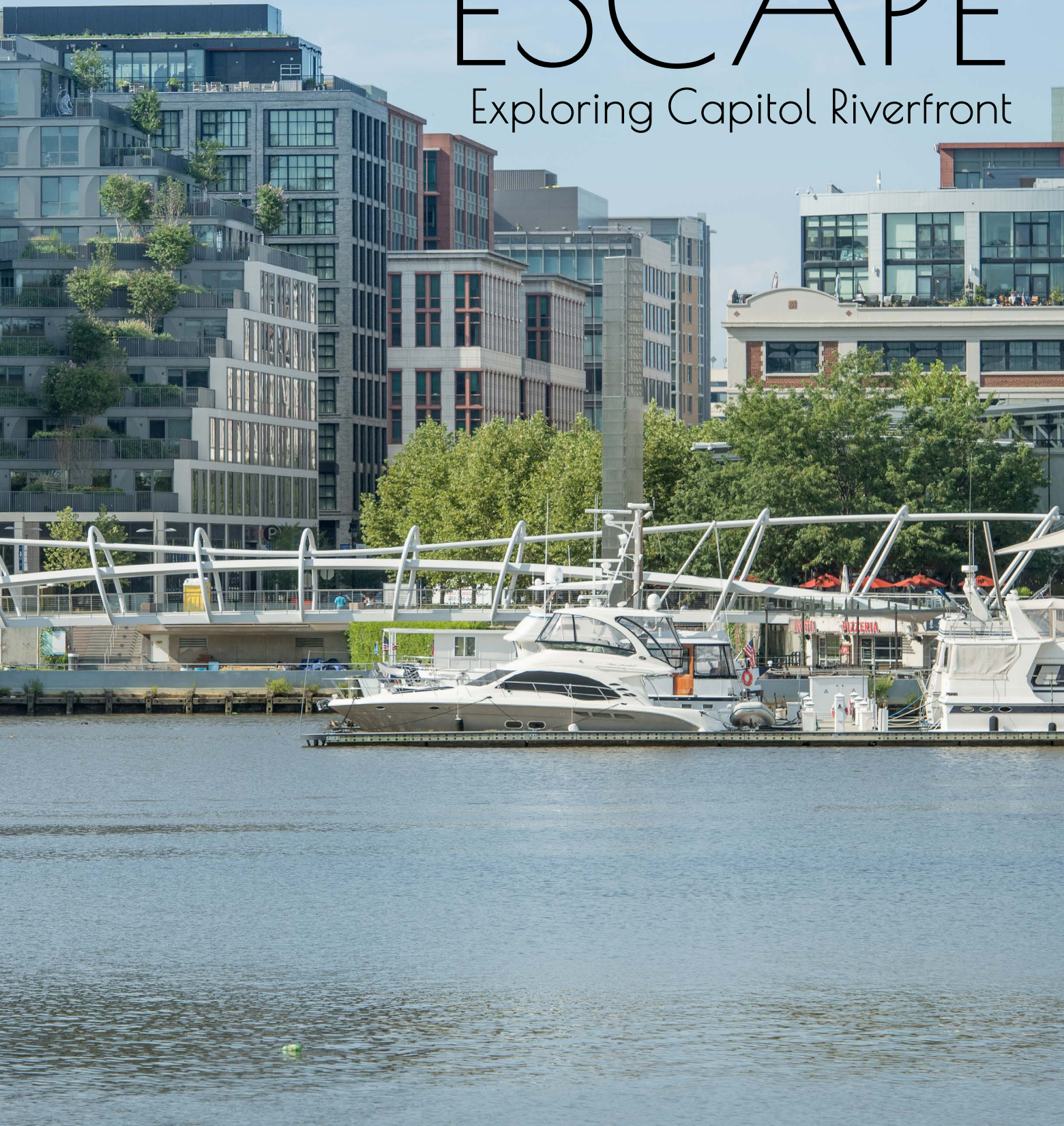


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10 Ways to Explore Outdoors in Capitol Riverfront This Summer

WORDS BY INGRID HARBO

With a view of the Anacostia River, miles of recreation trails, open-air sports stadiums and multiple parks, you don't have to go far to enjoy the outdoors in Capitol Riverfront. From athletes and sports fans to nature lovers and everybody in-between, the neighborhood has an outdoor activity for everybody to enjoy. Read on for the best ways to get outside in Capitol Riverfront this summer.

Rent a Kayak from Ballpark Boathouse

Discover Capitol Riverfront from the Anacostia River with a Ballpark Boathouse kayak rental. Anticipated to open this summer after a pandemic hiatus, the boathouse offers single and double kayak rentals at hourly rates, and season passes for a summer of paddling. **Ballpark Boathouse:** Potomac Avenue + First Street in SE, DC; www.boatingindc.com // @boatingindc

Run a DIY 5K Along the Anacostia River

The 20-mile-long Anacostia Riverwalk Trail runs along both sides of the Anacostia River. Use an app like Strava to map your own 5K course on the trail for yourself and friends. When you finish your run, use the app to post your 5K course as a segment, which other users can then see and run, creating a leaderboard of the fastest times on that stretch of the trail. www.capitolriverfront.org/go/anacostia-riverwalk-trail

Picnic at a Neighborhood Park

Pack a lunch or grab food to go from a local restaurant and bring it to one of the green spaces in the neighborhood. Canal Park's

northern block features an open green space perfect for a picnic followed by yard games. At Yards Park, the terraced lawn steps provide a view of the river and boardwalk for a scenic picnic with friends or family. **Canal Park:** 200 M St. SE, DC; www.capitolriverfront.org/canal-park // @canalparkdc
Yards Park: 355 Water St. SE, DC; www.capitolriverfront.org/yards-park // @yardsparkdc

Discover the Neighborhood's Public Art

Capitol Riverfront is filled with public art including the recent "Beauty of Buzzard Point" mural by Kaliq Crosby and Rose Jaffe, which features D.C. icons like Frederick Douglass and Marvin Gaye. To make sure you don't miss any of the neighborhood's art installations, the Capitol Riverfront BID has partnered with Traipse to create a walking tour and puzzle hunt that details the history and design behind the neighborhood's art. To participate, download the Traipse app, search for Washington, D.C. tours, and find the one titled "Capitol Riverfront - History & Design Hunt." **The Beauty of Buzzard Point:** S Street at First Street in SW, DC; www.traipse.co // @gotraipse

Bike to Nearby Riverfront Destinations

The Anacostia Riverwalk Trail isn’t just for running. Grab your bike or rent one from one of the 11 Capital Bikeshare stations in the neighborhood, and ride to nearby riverfront destinations. The trail runs throughout Anacostia Park and off the trail, the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens and Kingman Island are two bikeable spaces that show off the District’s unique wetland ecosystems. **Anacostia Park:** 1900 Anacostia Dr. SE, DC; www.nps.gov/anac // [@anacostianationalpark](https://twitter.com/anacostianationalpark) **Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens:** 1550 Anacostia Ave. NE, DC; www.nps.gov/keaq // [@kenilworthnps](https://twitter.com/kenilworthnps) | **Kingman Island:** 3101 Benning Rd. NE, DC; www.kingmanisland.com // [@doee_dc](https://twitter.com/doee_dc)



Take a Boat Tour with Anacostia Riverkeeper

If you feel like hitting the water without the work of paddling yourself, Anacostia Riverkeeper provides free, educational boat tours funded by D.C.’s disposable bag fee. On the tour, learn about the history of the river, the environmental challenges it faces today and the conservation work being done to preserve its beauty. In Capitol Riverfront, tours leave from a wheelchair-accessible landing in Diamond Teague Park. **Diamond Teague Park:** 100 Potomac Ave. SE, DC; www.anacostiariverkeeper.org // [@anacostiariverkeeper](https://twitter.com/anacostiariverkeeper)

Take a Class at Trapeze School New York

At the Trapeze School New York (TSNY), people of all fitness levels and athletic abilities can give the flying trapeze a try. At the hour-and-a-half-long first class, beginners learn safety basics and their first off-the-ground trick: a knee hang. After the first class, returning students can build on their basic skills to learn more tricks at their own pace. **TSNY Washington D.C.:** 520 Tingey St. SE, DC; www.washingtondc.trapezeschool.com // [@tsnydc](https://twitter.com/tsnydc)

Attend a D.C. United Game at Audi Field

Audi Field is welcoming fans back to live sports at a limited capacity in the open-air stadium. D.C. United has home games scheduled throughout the summer, with options to purchase tickets for single matches or full-season memberships. Tickets are sold in pods of one to six people, making it the perfect way to reunite with a close group of friends. **Audi Field:** 1711 First St. SW, DC; www.dcunited.com // [@dcunited](https://twitter.com/dcunited)



Spend the Day at Nationals Park

On home game days, celebrate the Nationals all day in and around Nationals Park. Before, during or after the game, head to the Bullpen for hot dogs and drinks with friends. During the third through seventh innings, the Bullpen serves drinks at a \$5 happy hour price. For a more laidback feel, head to Sandlot Southeast for a cold-pressed juice cocktail and food served in partnership with Uber Eats. **The Bullpen:** 1201 Half St. SE, DC; www.thebullpendc.com // [@thebullpendc](https://twitter.com/thebullpendc) | **Nationals Park:** 1500 South Capitol St. SE, DC; www.nationals.com // [@nationals](https://twitter.com/nationals) | **Sandlot Southeast:** 71 Potomac Ave. SE, DC; www.sandlotsoutheast.com // [@sandlotsoutheast](https://twitter.com/sandlotsoutheast)

Take Sailing Lessons with DC Sail

If you’ve ever wanted to learn how to sail, DC Sail is the place for you. Lessons are available for kids and adults with any level of sailing experience. DC Sail also offers themed cruises on their 65-foot schooner, American Spirit, that range from sunset sails to July 4th firework cruises. **Diamond Teague Park Piers:** 99 Potomac Ave. SE, DC; www.dcsail.org // [@dc_sail](https://twitter.com/dc_sail)



NEIGHBORHOOD GEMS

WORDS BY INGRID HARBO

Although Covid has created a challenging new environment for businesses, it hasn’t stopped new restaurants, gyms and salons in Capitol Riverfront from opening and surviving over the last year. While new businesses faced challenges like opening at a limited capacity or having to provide to-go service only for months, the neighborhood is now emerging from the pandemic with new life. We rounded up some of the best new food, drink and wellness finds in the neighborhood.

RESTAURANTS

Albi

Chef and owner Michael Rafidi describes Albi’s food as a modern take on traditional Levantine cuisine. His menu blends traditional flavors and cooking methods from Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey with local Mid-Atlantic ingredients. “Everything is specially sourced and there’s a reason why we’re doing this kind of food,” Rafidi says. “We’re educating people on what this food really is. We have a very talented team here sourcing food and developing dishes.” An international wine program featuring wines from the eastern Mediterranean compliments Rafidi’s menu, bringing unique international flavors to Capitol Riverfront. 1346 4th St. SE, DC; www.albidc.com // [@albiwashdc](https://twitter.com/albiwashdc)

THIS PAGE. Albi offerings. Photo by Scott Suchman. **NEXT PAGE.** Clockwise from top. Albi cocktail. Photo by Rey Lopez. Cliché DC tuna niçoise lettuce wraps + avocado toast. Photo by Monica Alford. La Famosa cocktail. Photo by Scott Suchman. La Famosa baked goods. Photo by Scott Suchman. Bearded Goat Barber. Photo courtesy of location.

Cliché DC Lunch Pop-Up

The idea for Cliché DC came when Side Door Pizza owner Brian Schram decided to create a new a pop-up restaurant concept. “We wanted to do what everyone else was doing but do it our own way and make it really simple and delicious,” Schram says. With an emphasis on convenience, freshness and affordable prices, Cliché DC has an approachable menu with a smash burger running for only \$6.50, avocado toast for \$9 and tuna niçoise lettuce wraps for \$12, among other options. The pop-up is open for lunch on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and customers can pick up their food at Side Door and eat it on the Scarlet Oak patio or take it to go. 909 New Jersey Ave. SE, DC; www.clichedc.com // [@cliche_dc](https://twitter.com/cliche_dc)

Jackie American Bistro

Drawing inspiration from the 60s and former first lady Jackie Kennedy, Jackie American Bistro serves a taste of classic American cuisine. The concept is the newest endeavor of Dacha Beer Garden and was launched in 2020 after the start of the pandemic. James Beard-nominated chef Jerome Grant’s food paired with trendy modern cocktails and an interior 60s aesthetic creates a restaurant as stylish and iconic as the first lady herself. Jackie is open for takeout, delivery, and indoor and outdoor seating. 79 Potomac Ave. SE, DC; www.jackiedc.com // [@jackierestaurant](https://twitter.com/jackierestaurant)



La Famosa

La Famosa is more than just a restaurant. Inspired by the concept of the Puerto Rican panadería, it's a restaurant, bakery, all-day café and bar wrapped into one. "It should feel like a little respite or break from city life, almost like a staycation, when you come to see us," says chef and owner Joancarlo Parkhurst. He draws from his Puerto Rican upbringing to bring the flavors of the island to D.C. "The food is supposed to be very recognizable as Puerto Rican cuisine, but I also take certain liberties with it using some non-classical ingredients and techniques. Everything should be very Criollo for people who know Criollo food, but at the same time, it is a little bit modified, just 'cause I can." La Famosa offers takeout, patio dining and limited indoor seating. 1300 4th St. SE, DC; www.eatlafamosa.com // [@eatlafamosa](https://twitter.com/eatlafamosa)

Maxwell Park

For a wine selection that changes with the seasons – or even faster than the seasons – Maxwell Park's second and newest location has you covered. The wine bar's extensive menu changes with quirky monthly themes, which in the past have included Tiger King, Monopoly and Netflix and Chill-ed Reds. Wines are stored in one of four controlled temperature zones to be served at optimal temperatures that bring out the unique notes of each wine. 1346 4th St. SE, DC; www.maxwellparkdc.com // [@maxwellpark_navyyard](https://twitter.com/maxwellpark_navyyard)

Swizzler

A food truck turned brick-and-mortar burger shack, Swizzler pairs grass-fed beef burgers and unique veggie burgers with thick, house-cut fries for a quick, affordable and sustainable meal. Menu highlights include the bacon cheddar jalapeño burger with thick-cut bacon, candied jalapeños and arugula; The Beet Goes On, a house-made beet burger with goat cheese and candied jalapeños; and Parmesan Truffle Spudz, fries topped with cheese and truffles. Currently, Swizzler is open for takeout and delivery. 1259 1st St. SE, DC; www.swizzlerfoods.com // [@swizzlerfoods](https://twitter.com/swizzlerfoods)



WELLNESS

9Round

Need a quick, full-body workout? Then 9Round is the place for you. The gym's kickboxing-style workout takes only 30 minutes and is a high-intensity cardio workout you complete on your own time. In non-pandemic times, 9Round had no class times and instead operated on a circuit model, where patrons could drop in any time and cycle through a series of nine stations, with a new round starting every three minutes. Due to pandemic restrictions, gym-goers currently need to sign up for a time in advance. Co-owner and trainer Krista Ashshaheed described 9Round's speed as one of its best features and named the Capitol Riverfront community as another. "We've had so many members who are new to the area and have found their best friends [at 9Round] in such a short period of time," Ashshaheed says. 1105 New Jersey Ave. SE, DC; www.9round.com // [@9roundnavyyard](https://twitter.com/9roundnavyyard)

Bearded Goat Barber

The team at Bearded Goat Barber aims to give the best cuts in the industry. At the Capitol Riverfront location, the second in the DMV, patrons can treat themselves to a haircut, facial hair trim, and manicures and pedicures. Co-owner Scott Parker explains that creating a great space for a trim, complete with a soundtrack, was one of the main priorities when creating the Bearded Goat brand. Even after the haircut, clients can bring the Bearded Goat vibes home with a Spotify playlist of the carefully curated music played in the shop. "We try to provide a beautiful and inviting space, obviously great cuts, and the best in customer care," Parker says. 301 Tingey St. Suite 101, SE, DC; www.beardedgoatbarber.com // [@beardedgoatbarber](https://twitter.com/beardedgoatbarber)

Black Bird Salon

Look no further for the trendiest cut and color in the neighborhood. Black Bird is a woman-owned and operated salon with a cozy vibe. Each appointment starts with a consultation to determine your hair needs and provide the best service and product recommendations. 801 Virginia Ave. Suite 101, SE, DC; www.districtblackbird.com // [@districtblackbird](https://twitter.com/districtblackbird)

Scissors & Scotch

Scissors & Scotch makes a routine barbershop visit into a full-fledged self-care experience. Services range from full-service haircuts and facial hair trims to scalp and hand massages. Each hair service comes with a complimentary drink of choice, with an extensive menu of liquor, cocktails and on-tap beers to choose from. 1 M St. Suite 100, SE, DC; www.scissorsscotch.com // [@scissorsscotch](https://twitter.com/scissorsscotch)

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*opening/reopening summer 2021
**temporarily closed



Who Are the People in Your Neighborhood?

WORDS BY KEITH LORIA

Capitol Riverfront is home to an active community of residents. The neighborhood is friendly, with plenty of ways for people to meet and congregate including great outdoor restaurants, waterfront views and dog parks aplenty. Here are the stories, hidden talents and best neighborhood tips from just a sampling of those who call Capitol Riverfront home — the folks you could meet each day.

SAMANTHA TESTA

Testa owns Painted Palettes and is a full-time watercolor artist and calligrapher in D.C.

What attracted you to the Capitol Riverfront?
My partner and I have lived in the neighborhood since 2017. We initially started looking to move to the area because we wanted to be in close proximity to 695 for his job. The fact that Cap Riv had so many amazing restaurants and amenities, not to mention being so close to my favorite sporting event (go Nats!), really sealed the deal.

Tell me about your art and what you offer through Painted Palettes.
I have a retail line of D.C.-themed watercolor goods and paint custom art for clients, specializing in architecture and house portraits. Workshops are natural offshoots of these skills, and I enjoy interacting with the community to help people realize their creativity.

What are some of your favorite things to do in the area?
I’ve played softball since I was 8 years old and currently play at Ryan Zimmerman Field on Sundays with [my] DC Fray league. I love going to Nationals games. Whether it’s the first game of the season or my 20th, it’s something I always look forward to. I will never forget watching the World Series Game 7 at Nats Park. It was a once in a lifetime experience, and I’m so happy I got to live that out in my own neighborhood.

What are your favorite food options in the neighborhood?
Our weekends almost always include a breakfast sandwich and a coffee from Lot 38. We have a handful of old faithful establishments we frequent including The Salt Line, All-Purpose, Albi, District Winery and Bluejacket.

@painted_palettes on Instagram // www.paintedpalettes.com

SARA QUINTEROS-SHILLING

Quinteros-Shilling is co-owner of Shilling Canning Company, with a focus on hyperlocal and sustainable food.

How long have you been part of the Capitol Riverfront community and what brought you here?
I’ve been living in Capitol Riverfront since 2019 when we opened our restaurant Shilling Canning Company, but we really fell in love with the area in 2017 when we were looking for a space for the restaurant. Although my family and I made the transition to Capitol Riverfront to open our business, we had

been interested in this area because of its community feel — and lots to see and do nearby, including the ballpark.

Tell me a bit about what makes Shilling Canning Company special.
We celebrate the flavors and products of the Chesapeake Bay Region. We are family-owned and hyper-locally focused. Our name comes from the Maryland canning and farming business that my husband’s family operated from the 1930s to 1950s. My husband and partner, Reid Shilling, is the executive chef and creative director behind our menu and food. His family was known to be meticulous, not only about what they grew but also about what they ultimately canned. You’ll find a lot of that attention to quality and detail still lives on in the restaurant’s mission.

What are some of your favorite things to do in Capitol Riverfront?
I love that there are so many small business shops and restaurants. I love taking my dog and daughter to the various parks. There are so many activities throughout the year for different age groups such as Rosé All Day, music in the parks or Noon Yards Eve — there’s always something going on.

@shillingcanningcompany on Instagram // www.shillingcanning.com

ADAM LAZOFF

Adam Lazoff and his partner Matt Weintraub are pet parents to 10-month-old Winston, a French bulldog who won the annual Mutt Madness Bracket Contest in March. Lazoff currently works for design consulting firm Street Sense, while Weintraub is a consultant for pharmaceutical companies.

How long have you been part of this neighborhood?
We moved in September last year from Woodley Park and decided to move down here to be [closer to] the happening crowd. We moved into the Maren, an awesome building that has a dog park for [Winston] and great amenities.

Winston has had a successful year with Mutt Madness.
It happened during a time I was unemployed, so I was able to market my dog. It was the first contest we were ever a part of, and we wound up winning. We had a lot of friends and family who helped support the cause.

What do you appreciate most about the neighborhood?
We love that it’s very dog-friendly here and we’re able to walk to a lot of different restaurants. We go to The Salt Line probably once a week. We made a lot of friends through the dog park itself, as it has a great community of dog lovers. Just being able to take the dog and walk the bridge over to District Winery is great.

@realstreetsense on Instagram // www.streetsense.com



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Pursuant to the District of Columbia Inclusionary Zoning program, income restricted units are available at at these developments. Please contact the Department of Housing and Community Development at www.dhcd.dc.gov regarding the availability of such units and requirements for registration in the Inclusionary Zoning program. This landlord accepts rental vouchers.



TORI COLLINS

Collins is a USDOT employee and a rising poet who won several local competitions this past year.

What brought you to the area?

I moved here from Chicago in November 2014, relocating for a job with the Department of Transportation. When I was doing my final interview, I drove around and realized Capitol Riverfront was a great neighborhood. It wasn't as redeveloped as it is now, but I saw a lot of potential in it. I really liked the history of the area and connecting with people in the community has really taught me a lot about D.C.'s rich history.

What is your background as a poet?

I won a poetry contest in eighth grade, but I totally had forgotten about that. I journaled as a hobby in high school and college, and always have been in love with words. There is a lot of power in poetry and expressing yourself. It's something I started doing again just last year with everything going on in the world: the pandemic, people losing jobs, police brutality and all the emotions going on in the world on the political front. This was a very cathartic way for me to release emotion. My first one was "From Pandemic to Protest," and it was published in the Hill Rag and won an award.

How would you characterize the dining scene in the area?

Eateries are what makes people want to come to the area. I live on New Jersey Avenue, so my quintessential "Cheers" is Scarlet Oak, which is attached to the building I live in. I also like the new restaurants popping up like District Winery and Bammy's. If I want to venture a little further, I love to get the best burger in the Capitol Riverfront at The Salt Line.

@frompandemic2protest on Instagram

THE STATE OF MY STATEHOOD

Ward 6 Dems Poetry Matters contest winner

WORDS BY TORI COLLINS

Like unfinished wood, the District of Columbia can survive indoors or outside of the House.

We prefer to be on the inside, to be included.

We prefer to vote and have it count.

It isn't a question of politics.

It is answering the question of politics with basic fairness, Solving issues that taught us civics.

Statehood means being seen in America, being heard in America and, Growing with Americans.

Simply put, it is Freedom, Equity, Honor, and Respect.

Acquiring these truths is and has been a self-evident uphill battle and often, an unlikely climb up the ladder through the rings of Congress.

Nevertheless, those like me in the 'hoods named after Barracks for Marines, Yards needed for the Navy, Hills with no Caps, Triangles with many corners and all things George;

We've remained Diligent, Empowered, Long-Suffering Tax-Paying Citizens.

It is because we have hope.

It is because we are diligently waiting for the door to open.

I am patiently waiting for the state of my hood to one day be 51 shades of statehood good.

And we will continue to make down payments on policies, elections and decisions without representation until we have proper documents which will transcend evolution.

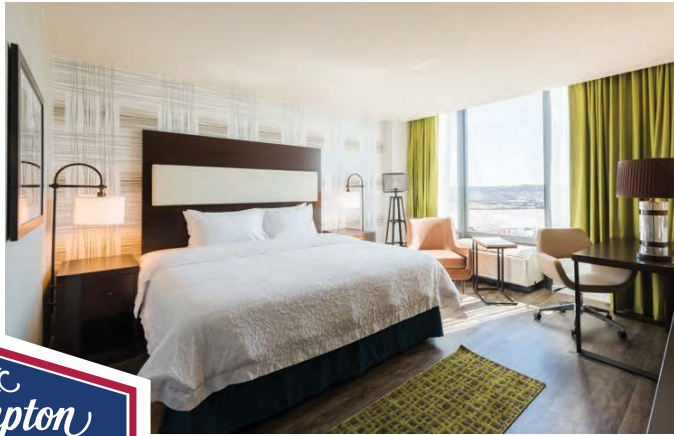
Statehood for me is like a big blockbuster movie set to premiere on Independence Day, the whole world can stream it, watching it from handheld flat screens.

It is our next Emancipation Day, our newest April 16th, 1862.

It is the result of merging just action with the right vision to leave behind a country better than the one we were given.



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- Directly across the street from Nationals Stadium
- Walking distance to AUDI Field
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SPEND A DAY IN CAPITOL RIVERFRONT WITH DCCITYGIRL

WORDS BY KEITH LORIA

Even if the name Laurie Collins doesn’t ring a bell, chances are you know the D.C. native by her social media nom de plume, dccitygirl, as she has more than 132,000 followers on Instagram.

Referring to herself as a city explorer and storyteller, Collins regularly posts gorgeous images of some of the most interesting and beautiful sites around the District, including some of her favorite places in Capitol Riverfront. As a photographer, Collins is always looking for opportunities to take photos of her city.

“There are so many landmarks that make that easy,” she says. “I like to wait on one side of the pedestrian bridge to capture the symmetry of it and look for the right moment when people add just the right balance to the shot. This can take some time, but in my opinion, it is so worth the wait.”

Born in D.C., Collins first became interested in photography when she traveled to Europe in her early 20s. Armed with a Nikon, which she still owns to this day, she created lasting memories of the places she visited. Today, she concentrates most of her work on street photography, capturing city life.

“To me, it’s important to show Washington, D.C. as I see it on a daily basis. I want it to be different than what you would expect, for example, from a tourist site.”

If she had a full day to spend in Capitol Riverfront, while not nearly enough time to enjoy all it has to offer, Collins has thoughts on what the day would entail.

“From my home, I would hop on the Circulator to Yards Park where I would walk along the boardwalk,” she begins. “The [Anacostia] River is always busy in the spring and summer with folks kayaking and boating. [I’d] pull up to a bench and gaze out at the water, keeping an eye out for great blue herons, cormorants, hawks and other waterfowl.”

One of the fun spots for adults and kids alike is the dancing fountains at the waterfront. Collins says she would then challenge herself by trying to take a picture under the waterfall without getting soaked before switching gears to go shopping.

“I always like to make time for retail therapy, especially shops owned by women, so I’d head to Steadfast Supply to see what’s new. As the day progresses, I might stop by Bluejacket Brewery for baked feta dip and an icy cold beer. The kids might prefer ice cream, so if that’s the case, make your way to Ice Cream Jubilee. My personal favorite is a double scoop of raspberry rose and chocolate chocolate in a waffle cone. Don’t forget to add rainbow sprinkles!”

A big baseball fan, if it’s a day Collins is lucky enough to get tickets to a Nats game, she will spend the rest of her day cheering on the home team with a bowl of D.C.’s famous chili from Ben’s Chili Bowl, located right within the ballpark.

By perusing her Instagram, it’s easy to see Collins has a great eye and knows how to enjoy life. And her love of D.C.’s neighborhoods is a big part of that. That’s why photographing



the different neighborhoods is one of her favorite things to do in the District.

“The combination of the different architecture, beauty and colors make for delicious photos,” she says. “I love landmarks and memorials, and I try to visit them at different times of day and during different seasons because the light changes and the number of people change with the seasons.”

Among her top spots for taking photos are the Tidal Basin during peak cherry blossom season; McKee Beshers in Poolesville, Maryland, where the towering sunflowers are breathtaking; and Rock Creek Park — especially Boulder Bridge.

All of this exploring and taking photos around the District can get tiring and naturally, Collins can build up quite the appetite. Thankfully, she has some go-to places in Capitol Riverfront she deems as essential that would definitely be a part of her perfect day.

“With all that walking, carbs are essential to refuel. Either sitting at the bar or outside on a cool summer night, Osteria Morini serves up the best cappelletti: truffled ricotta ravioli and melted butter. Top it off with a few glasses of wine and lots of crusty bread, [and] it will provide a good night’s sleep and extra energy for the next day.”

She always finds time for entertainment and is glad that Capitol Riverfront is flush with special events for her to photograph and attend.

“I always look forward to Rosé All Day, which features live music, multiple rosé bars, perfectly pink Instagrammable installations and a garden lounge with flower crowns you can create.”

With so much beauty and fun things to do in the area, no two days will ever be alike, and Collins is happy to be part of the community while capturing its unique moments.

Learn more about Collins at www.dccitygirl.com and follow her @dccitygirl on Instagram.

HALF STREET IS ROCKING, FULL STOP

Ballpark Day Trips Get Major Upgrade

WORDS BY CASEY PAZZALIA

We all got used to the inside of our homes during the pandemic. If you're like me, you probably even dedicated a good portion of bandwidth to some home improvements. No matter how posh the upgrade, it was still just a little short of normal. When the weather got nice and the Nationals started playing again, it was even worse. The new home bar was still at home, and the views from the deck didn't quite hit the same as a waterfront seat on The Salt Line patio.

That was then. This is now. A closer-to-normal D.C. summer is right around the corner. We've been inching in the right direction for some time now, and when the Nationals opened their 2021 season on April 6, 4,801 fans were there to see it. Capacity limits have continued to expand as reported Covid cases fall and more D.C. area residents get vaccinated. By the Nationals' June 11 game against San Francisco, Nats Park will be at max capacity.

Just writing that is a bit surreal; the last time the stadium was filled to the brim and the surrounding streets were raging was during the 2019 World Series run, and that feels like *forever* ago.

Much has changed down by the water in Capitol Riverfront since then, particularly on Half Street outside the ballpark's Centerfield Gate. Taking the place of construction and roadblocks — the street is fully operational now — is a mixed-use development on both sides of the street, creating a mini baseball-themed neighborhood. There's even a ramen bar named Base Bowl. Many MLB ballparks across the country have some version of this idea nowadays, and Half Street — when at its full maturity — can be one of the best.

Atlas Brew Works is one of the biggest additions to the block. Headlined by a walk-up window for beer and pizza by the slice via Andy's Pizza, Atlas opened its second location on Half Street midway through 2020. Locals supported the brewery and taproom even through the most difficult of pandemic protocols, and now it's ready for a broader audience.

"They've stuck with us as we navigated all the changes thrown at us," says Justin Cox, Atlas' founder and CEO. "We've built a great community of regulars and I hope that will continue once Nats Park goes to full capacity."

Atlas' Bullpen Pilsner is sure to be a favorite among visiting baseball fans, and is one of many original brews offered. Inside the taproom, baseball cards line pillars like wallpaper, and booths are designed like stadium bleachers. The patio is vast, stretching nearly the entire block, and dogs are welcome with open arms. When I brought my dog down, the server was quick to bring out a big bowl and pitcher of ice water. My dog would also gladly co-sign Atlas as a go-to game day spot.

The Bullpen, of course, is the OG of the block, yet the new variety makes it so versatile. Half Street is filling out its batting order, so to speak. You can hit multiple spots pre- or post-game and catch a few different vibes in the process.

Gatsby, which opened in April inside an old bank on the corner in front of the ballpark, is a swerve into 1920s elegance. It's the type of place you'd bring friends or family to when they're visiting, and then they'd go tell everyone back home how cool it was.

Each detail of the two-story eatery was perfected by local restaurateurs KNEAD Hospitality + Design, and it made Gatsby the perfect addition to Half Street. It's sophisticated, but still welcoming with its In-N-Out-inspired smashburger, \$4 whiskeys at happy hour and Sunday brunch.

"We have been thrilled with the feedback," says KNEAD's founder Jason Berry. "Being able to open at the start of baseball season and receiving great reviews from our guests has been icing on the cake."

While we're on the subject of cake, Mah-Ze-Dahr has the area's coffee and pastry needs locked down. An Urdu word, mazedar translates to "delicious" in English. A brief look at their pastry showcase (or Instagram page) tells you all you need to know. It's not just a cleverly named bakery. Located next to Gatsby and also under the KNEAD umbrella, Mah-Ze-Dahr is perfect as an everyday latte spot or when you have a surprise Zoom call on gameday.

Already established in the Big Apple thanks to renowned baker Umber Ahmad, this is the first to open in the District. Ahmad, who started the brand out of her apartment in 2013, was profiled by The Michelin Guide last year, right before Mah-Ze-Dahr's expansion into D.C.

"We have a great community [who we] continue to be grateful [to] for allowing us to become a part of the D.C. community," she says.

Half Street has its heavy hitters in place to anchor the street when the ballpark reopens and the area is buzzing. More are coming, too. The other side of the street is going to get Tap99, a self-pour pub with 99 active taps, and the first Kilwins ice cream franchise in D.C. Well-traveled locals may know the magic that is Kilwins from Old Town Alexandria, Fells Point or Charlottesville. Both newbies, owned by former racecar driver Jason Cherry, will open this summer.

By then, the Nationals may very well be in first place. They're not playing like world beaters at the moment, it's just that there's no one running away with their division. All five NL East teams are within a handful of games of one another, and the top team is barely above .500.

Now is the perfect time to jump back in. Never forget, they didn't start their turnaround in 2019 until the end of May. When you make the trip down, make sure to download and link the MLB Ballpark app. Everything at the stadium (tickets, food, etc.) is contactless this year. It's a little different, but just being at a ballgame is the prize. We would have done anything for that chance last summer.

Atlas Brew Works Half Street Brewery & Tap Room: 1201 Half St. Suite 120, SE, DC; www.atlasbrewworks.com

Gatsby: 1201 Half St. Suite #205, SE, DC; www.gatsbyrestaurant.com

Mah-Ze-Dahr: 1201 Half St. Suite #105, SE, DC; www.mahzedahrbakery.com

Nationals Park: 1500 S Capitol St. SE, DC; www.mlb.com/nationals/ballpark

RIGHT PAGE FROM TOP. Nationals Park. Photo courtesy of Atlas Brew Works. Half Street. Photos courtesy of the Capitol Riverfront BID. Wood-roasted oysters. Photo courtesy of The Point DC.



THE POINT DC IN BUZZARD POINT

Fear not, soccer fans. We also have you covered for a spot to pre- or post-game when catching D.C. United home games at Audi Field in Buzzard Point. Picture yourself on an open-air patio with a glass of wine in hand, fresh seafood on your plate, and the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers converging right in front of you. Next, make that vision a reality at The Point DC, Capitol Riverfront's newest and Buzzard Point's first-ever restaurant, now open with a limited menu by reservation only. The newest Fish & Fire Food Group concept spans 12,000 square feet, featuring a 150-seat riverfront patio complete with five fire pits and four TV screens, in case you want to watch the game from the restaurant. For those on the go, the aptly named takeout window and market Beside the Point will open soon next to the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail. 2100 2nd St. SW, DC; www.thepointdc.com; [@thepointdc](https://www.instagram.com/thepointdc)



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