

Hello. My name is Jeremiah Cohen. I am the General Manager of the Tabard Inn. The two children measuring the opening of the alley onto 17th Street are my children, Rosie and Henry. You'll notice that at its narrowest point, the alley narrows down to a width of 9 feet 3 inches.

The Tabard Inn is a 40-Room Hotel composed of three 19th Century townhouses and has thrived on N Street for 85 years. Our buildings are contributing buildings to the Dupont Circle Historic District. The Tabard is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, continuously operated hotels in Washington DC. My family has owned and operated the Inn since 1975 after the original owner and founder of the Tabard, Mrs. Willoughby Rogers passed away. We are proud of this business and proud of the Dupont Circle Historic District in which we operate.

Historic, Functional, and Cherished are words that come to mind when you think about the Tabard. Despite having no elevators, some rooms with shared bath, and a small hotel lobby, the Tabard shows no signs of waning. Residing in the middle of the 1700 Block of N Street, one of the great historic blocks in Washington DC, the Tabard reflects its surroundings: turn of the century charm and quiet dignity. We have 80 Employees, most of whom have health insurance; we have an extremely low rate of staff turnover; and we have an Employee Stock Ownership Plan in which the employees own 1/3rd of the business

Although it may seem self-serving to say that we don't want another hotel on N Street; it is a fact that N Street already has two hotels on the block and a third one-- the Beacon Hotel with 225 rooms-- at the corner of 17th N St. and Rhode Island. Approval of a Special Exception for a Hotel would make four hotels within 200 yards of each other. Hotels with restaurants, such as the Tabard Inn, tend to have substantial delivery and service requirements on a daily basis. The nature of this proposed Hotel with its 98-car garage and its intention to have all of its hotel/restaurant deliveries made through the rear of the building will create bottlenecks in the alley that will spillover onto N Street. This would diminish one of the nicest historic blocks in the city.

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BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT
District of Columbia

CASE NO. 17337-A
EXHIBIT NO. 92

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Contrary to what the Office of Planning says, the proposed Hotel would not bring balance to the Special Purpose district as mandated by 512.5 of the Zoning Regulations. N Street has no residential. It did have a 20 unit apartment building as late as 1998. But it is gone. And it didn't leave easily or voluntarily for that matter. It took the applicant 10 years to empty out the Woodbine apartment building at 1755 N Street.

If you rely on the methodology of the Office of Planning for arriving at "balance", which uses a 7 to 8 block radius to measure balance between residential, office and hotel or inn in our Special Purpose zone, you quickly realize that you could add five or six new hotels to N Street without radically upsetting the "balance" percentages presented by OP. Indeed, the terms "balance" and "in the vicinity" – to have any meaning at all-- need to be viewed from the standpoint of N Street, or Squares 158 and 159 (which make up the 1700 Block of N Street,), not New Hampshire Ave, and R Street, seven blocks away. This proposed hotel is replacing the last residential on the block and creates an imbalance of uses that favors Hotel over Residential by a ratio of 3 to 0. (4 to 0 if you are counting the Beacon Hotel at 17th N St. and Rhode Island which is also zoned SP-1 zone.)

But most importantly, from the standpoint of the Tabard, the proposed Hotel deprives afternoon sunlight to the Tabard garden, Tabard's main dining room, bar area, more than a dozen hotel rooms, green roof areas and main roof area. This deprivation of sunlight and air will adversely impact the Tabard Inn.

Anyone who has spent an afternoon in the garden of the Tabard recognizes that there is magic there that cannot be found in a sidewalk seating area. It is a unique oasis that is cherished by many. It is a defining element of the Tabard "character" and a central element of the Tabard business. I have attached 22 print media mentions of our garden/patio from 1982 to present.

The Tabard character and health of its business, is in no small part, defined by our outdoor patio and courtyard which garner sunlight, ambient light and air. In the applicant's BZA submission, there is a lengthy definition of a "boutique hotel". I hope that you read it. Simply put, a boutique hotel is defined by its "character". Unfortunately, the proposed "boutique" hotel not

only diminishes the Tabard as a hotel but as a “boutique” hotel as well. That just does not seem right.

Being put in complete shadow by 4pm on the sunniest day of the year, and much earlier when the sun is lower in the sky, will negatively impact, among other things, Tabard’s wedding business. Weddings are extremely important to the Tabard bottom line and the Tabard hosts a number of outdoor 4pm weddings starting in the Spring and ending in the Fall. These weddings are booked under the pretense that there is an excellent probability that it will be sunny that day. Well, this proposed Hotel would ensure that it would be impossible for the Tabard to have a sunny 4pm wedding. Our wedding customers would likely look for alternative outdoor venues for their weddings that afford them sunlight. This would hurt the Tabard business and its employees. Tabard has been hosting outdoor weddings for 34 years.

Our efforts to green the Tabard and make it more sustainable would be diminished by the deprivation of afternoon sunlight and hurt our wallet and the environment in the long run. We have a series of green roofs at the Tabard –installed by Canopy LLC, that absorb substantial amounts of storm water, act as a cooling agent for the building, and supply our kitchen with herbs. In addition, we made a down payment on a 180-Tube Solar Thermal System for our rooftop to cover all of the hotel’s hot water needs. The solar hot water system has been put on hold pending resolution of N Street Follies request to build this tall wall along our property line. Due to the fact that our Eastern sunlight is already blocked by the non-conforming 10 story Topaz Hotel, our green initiatives are highly dependent on our Western sunlight. This proposed Hotel, as it is designed, would nullify our solar hot water program and diminish our green roofs.

Tabard had a sustainable-design consultation done last May by the DC Department of Small and Local Business Development (DSLBD) in which the DC Government praised our green roof project as well as recommended the installation of our solar hot water heating system.

And none of our green initiatives or lighting issues would be at stake, if the applicant presented a plan that was more sensitive to his neighbors. He has a 150 foot wide lot but no setback on his eastern perimeter. I take issue with the OP's assertion that the 5th floor NE corner "cut-out"—which is really just a small terrace on the corner of the building-- is a sufficient setback. That area is further north than the Tabard and the sun does not shine from the Northeast. A more sensitive plan, with less adverse impact on the light and air of the Tabard, would sufficiently setback upper floors that run south along Tabard's perimeter enough such that the project avoids cutting off substantial amounts of light and air to the Tabard.

We ask that the BZA deny this request for a Special Exception for a Hotel for the reasons stated above. Thank You.

Greening DC Restaurants Project

CONSULTATION REPORT: Recommendations for

Tabard Inn

May 28, 2009

Prepared by:

A. Bambi Tran, Sustainable Design Consulting, LLC

on behalf of

DC Department of Small and Local Business Development's (DSLBD)



DC Department of Small & Local Business Development

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I. Executive Summary

This report provides recommendations for improved environmental practices for Tabard Inn. The recommendations are based on information collected from a preliminary questionnaire and during an on-site assessment conducted on May 28, 2009 by A. Bambi Tran and Camille Nixon, which included discussions with Jeremiah Cohen, Angeli Escalante, Suzanne Knapik, Irene, and Cindy and a tour of the restaurant.

Restaurant Contact Information

Restaurant Name: Tabard Inn
Address, Zip: 1739 N Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036
Web (Business): www.tabardinn.com
Phone (Business): 202-785-1277
Email (Business): hoteltabardinn@aol.com
Owner(s)'s Name: Jeremiah Cohen
Phone (Owner): 202 494 2609
Email (Owner): hoteltabardinn@aol.com
Assessee(s): Jeremiah Cohen (owner), Angeli Escalante, Suzanne Knapik, Irene, and Cindy

Business Basic Information

Year Opened: 1975
Restaurant Size: 4,000 sf (+42 hotel rooms)
Type of Service: Full service
Seating: 90 indoor and 40 outdoor
Type of Food: American Eclectic
Other Locations: No
Franchise: No
Property: Own-Purchased
Staffing: # Employees: 60 FT and 25 PT
Operating Days/Times: Sunday: 8:00am-9:15am; 10:30am-2:30pm; 6:00pm-9:30pm
Monday-Thursday: 7:00am-10am; 11:30am-2:30pm; 6:00pm-9:30pm
Friday: 7am-10am; 11:30am-2:30pm; 6:00pm-10:00pm
Saturday: 8:00am-9:45am; 11:00am-2:30pm; 6:00pm-10:00pm

64 hrs/week (average 9.14 hrs/day)
365 days/yr
3,337 hrs/yr
Profit Margin: unspecified %

Motivations to Green (Listed in Priority Order)

Unranked: COST SAVINGS: I want to reduce my utility bills and other operating costs.
 Unranked: ENVIRONMENT: I want to reduce the negative impact on environment.
 Unranked: FINANCIAL INCENTIVES: I learn that rebates and grants are available to help.
 Unranked: REGULATORY: I need to comply with recycling/other regulatory requirements.
 Unranked: SALES: I want to attract customers who support eco-friendly businesses.
 Unranked: PATRONS: I want to improve dining conditions for customers.
 Unranked: STAFF: I want to improve working conditions for staff.
 Unranked: MINIMIZE WASTE: I want to learn how to reuse items and extend equipment life.
 Unranked: CUSTOMER DEMAND: My customers are asking for eco-friendly paper products, food or other items.
 Unranked: OTHER: We are just good people.

Utility Rates*

Electricity:\$0.1180
 Gas: \$0.99/therm (for 1741); \$0.855/therm (for 1737-1739)
 Water:\$2.30/CCF
 Sewer:\$3.47/CCF

* Rates do not include fees and taxes and peak demand charges

Utility Use*

Utility	Annual Use	Annual Cost (\$)	Annual Cost/SF (\$/SF)	Av. Monthly Use	Av. Monthly Cost (\$)	Av. Monthly Cost/SF (\$/SF)
Electricity	388,550 kWh	\$45,849	\$11.46	32,379 kWh	\$3,821	\$0.96
Gas	35,788 therm	\$33,379	\$8.34	2,982 therm	\$2,782	\$0.70
Water/Sewer	3,101 CCF	\$17,893	\$4.47	258 CCF	\$1,491	\$0.37
Total		\$97,121	\$24.28		\$8,093	\$2.02

* Usage information above includes utility use from hotel portion of establishment.

Business Owner Comments on Restaurant Operations:

1. Energy:

- Considerations in installing energy-efficient light bulbs: they cannot fix in some of the historic light fixtures; the LEDs are too intense for the desired ambiance; and, dimmer strings don't work because they don't consistently light.
- Continuity of kitchen use makes occupancy and exhaust sensors not viable (i.e., not enough downtime)
- Operates two wine rooms
- Switched from water- to air-cooled ice machines (2)

2. Water:

- Sale of bottled water to hotel customers account for \$5-10K/mo. sales
 - Uses Cooler Smart system to purify tap water consumed by staff (\$50/mo for two filters)
3. **Food:**
- Purchasing local food difficult in late fall/early spring due to seasonal availability.
 - Operated own farm in Maryland through 1999.
4. **Building:**
- The Tabard Inn comprises a hotel and restaurant, which occupy three buildings (1737, 1739 and 1741 N Street, NW) that are connected. The restaurant is located in the middle building, 1739. The hotel has approximately 42 rooms between the three sites.

Green Strategies Implemented prior to Consultation Meeting

1. **Energy Efficiency:**
- Weatherized external envelope of building
 - Improved the efficiency of the HVAC, plumbing or electrical systems
 - Switched to energy-efficient light bulbs (CFLs) however not all historic fixtures can receive such light bulbs
 - Installed dimmers/timers to minimize energy usage.
 - Purchased energy-efficient equipment
2. **Water Efficiency:** Lowered water temperature and uses hot water booster.
3. **Sustainable Food**
- Purchases organic food and beverages and free-range meats/poultry when possible (Eco Farms, Pipe Dreams)
 - Purchases food transported from local growers and seasonal food
 - Grows herbs on site
4. **Green Products:** (none noted)
5. **Waste Reduction**
- Recycles cooking grease (used to pay \$75/mo. now pays \$19/mo)
 - Recycles glass
 - Reduced or eliminated sales of beverages in bottles/cans
6. **Green Building:**
- Painted building roof white/silver
 - Installed green roofs

D. Greening Actions: Start Next Year/Significant Capital Investments

- ☐ **Replace old/damaged appliances and equipment with ENERGY STAR models**
 - o Cost: Varies
 - o Payback Period: 5%-80% energy/water savings – varies based on product type.
 - o Comments: Ask vendor for ENERGY STAR options and their estimated annual energy/water savings and calculated payback period. ENERGY STAR options available for a variety of products, including commercial food service, appliances, HVAC systems, water heaters, lighting, and office equipment. A list of ENERGY STAR products is available at: www.energystar.gov.

- ☐ **Change dish machine lease to lease ENERGY STAR model**
 - o Cost: TBD
 - o Benefits: Energy and water savings (Approximately \$907 savings per year)
 - o Comments:
 - Renegotiate dish machine lease to ENERGY STAR model. A list of ENERGY STAR qualified dish machines is available at: www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=comm_dishwashers.pr_comm_dishwashers.
 - Current dish machine model is: CMA model A-2 (similar to CMA model AH except wider – 27.5”), single tank, door type, low temp. If replacement purchase is required, then an ENERGY STAR dish machine has a payback of 7-10 years (over a conventional unit) depending on the natural gas and water/sewer rates (the higher the rates, the shorter the payback period). Dish machines are expected to last 15 years.

- ☐ **Replace paper towel dispensers with energy-efficient electric hand dryers in bathrooms**
 - o Cost: \$400-\$1,500 per hand dryer
 - o Benefit/Payback Period: Up to 95% savings over operating cost of paper towels (cost of paper towels plus labor for refilling dispensers) and up to 85% energy savings over conventional hand dryers. 2-6 year payback
 - o Comments:
 - Helps to prevent clogged toilets and reduces trash.
 - Beware that these hand dryers can be noisy – test them out prior to purchase.
 - Hand dryers have specific placement and installation requirements – consult the manufacturer prior to purchase.
 - o Manufacturers/models: Excel Dryer XLERATOR line; Dyson Airblade line; American Hand Dryer GXT EXTREMEAIR line.

- ❑ **Replace split HVAC system in main dining area and lounge area with high velocity central HVAC system**
 - Cost: \$20,000-\$30,000
 - Benefits: Energy savings. Improved comfort for customers and staff.
 - Comments:
 - Work with mechanical engineer/contractor to zone rooms to allow for maximum flexibility.
 - Pay attention to air distribution design to prevent dumping air on customers.
 - Check SEER for existing systems. Some are SEER 10 (not energy efficient) and others are SEER 16 (energy efficient).
 - Manufacturer(s) include: Energy Saving Products, Ltd. (Hi-Velocity Systems); SpacePak; Unico, Inc. Contractor: Air Cool & Heating Systems, Inc.; AJ Michaels Company; Argent Heating and Cooling.
-  ❑ **Install solar hot water heating system**
 - Cost: Typical installed cost of solar thermal system with collection area (sf) of:
 - 64 sf with a 80 gal tank = \$8,200 - \$11,000
 - 96 sf with a 120 gal tank = \$8,300 – \$13,000 (as suggested in Capital Sun Group proposal)
 - 128 sf with a 150 gal tank = \$10,800 - \$18,000
 - Benefit: Energy savings.
 - Payback Period: 3-7 year payback.
 - Comments: The proposal by Capital Sun Group was reviewed. Based on the system described, the cost estimate listed in the proposal seems to be high. SDC staff is not familiar with the controls listed, but it seems that it should not drive up the cost that much. Recommend getting bids from other installers.
 - Other Service Providers* include: Aurora Energy, LLC; Chesapeake Solar LLC; Cityspace Solar Annapolis; Greenspring Energy.
 - Financial Incentives:
 - Federal tax credit available for solar thermal system (up to 30% of costs). More information is available at: www.energytaxincentives.org.
 - DC Renewable Energy Incentive Program provides rebates for eligible renewable energy systems, including solar thermal systems. The Program is currently oversubscribed but prequalification applications are still being accepted. More information is available at: <http://www.green.dc.gov/green/cwp/view,a.1244,q.461562.asp>
- ❑ **Purchase green power for at least 50% of total annual electricity consumed**
 - Cost: \$6-\$10 per mWh (typically 5-10% cost premium over current electricity rate)
 - Benefit: Carbon emissions reduction.
 - Comments:
 - Can purchase green power from some local power suppliers (e.g., Washington Gas and Energy Services) or can purchase Renewable Energy Certificates via

“The Tabard Inn doesn’t just reflect its surroundings, it helps define them”

The Tabard Inn is the longest continuously operating hotel in Washington DC. Part of the reason for its longevity and continued success has been the magical walled garden that has provided a haven for Tabard customers for over 40 years. The Tabard Inn has always had a transcendent vision that goes beyond the traditional mindset. It exists to provide a soulful place for people to gather, interact and experience a pace that is reset to a human one. Part of the elemental mix is the brick-walled patio, the setting for a delightful breakfast, a power lunch, a romantic dinner, a relaxing after work or dinner cocktail or the joyous event of a wedding ceremony. To sit in the dining room or bar at dusk, looking out the handcrafted windows to the garden with the golden light streaming in, is to return to a safe, nostalgic place. The atmosphere on the patio and throughout the Tabard Inn is the product of long hours of collective, loving, diligent hard work done by a staff of dedicated people who rely on the Tabard not only for their livelihoods, but the chance to be a part of one of the most unusual, delightful oasis in all of DC.

...It’s a delight to take breakfast in the bricked patio out back with its tables and umbrellas, a parachute billowing overhead to keep guests dry in inclement weather.

Los Angeles Times 1982

...The Tabard Inn is crammed 9 months of the year. Its bar and restaurant, which in the summer spills out into a patio garden, are full every day. There’s always a line.

In Business October 1982

...Fresh is becoming a tired word in the restaurant world, but the Tabard Inn brings it back to life. Lunch in the garden is one of Washington’s hidden natural assets..

The Washington Post Top 50 restaurants 1989

...One of the first sign of spring in Washington is the long line forming for lunch in the Tabard Inn's walled garden. It's a green and peaceful downtown respite...

The Washington Post Top 50 restaurants 1992

...It wouldn't matter much what the Tabard Inn served if the management would guarantee you a space in its walled garden on a balmy afternoon.

The Washington Post Dining Guide September 1994

...It is perennially one of the most charming restaurants in town... Its walled garden is peaceful..

The Washington Post Dining Guide September 1995

*...Best Place for a Romantic Drink:
Tabard Inn. Take a table in the garden tucked away in the back of 1739 N St*

Daily News June 1997

...I celebrate the seasons at the Tabard. In spring, the walled garden is the nicest place for a midday escape called lunch

Washington Post Dining Guide 1997

...As soon as the weather suggests I don't need a coat, the Tabard Inn's brick-walled garden comes to mind. It is a joyful little mingling of masonry, trees, vines, flowers that together turn a meal into a vacation

Phyllis Richman Washington Post Magazine March 1998

...In spring and summer, its small garden patio is one of the city's most delightful urban destinations for outdoor dining.

Sidewalk Washington DC November 1998

...The Tabard Inn is a great restaurant. It owes much of the draw to the cozy, grandma's living room ambience, not to mention the glorious , enclosed outdoor courtyard that opens in spring.

Time Out Washington Guide 2001

...The Tabard has....an unexpected brick-walled courtyard that's a lovely place for outdoor dining in good weather

Washingtonian May 2002

*...Another great reason to return to the Tabard Inn... I can't wait to come back on a nice, **sunny** day and enjoy the terrific brickwalled patio and garden area, sitting at one if the wrought iron tables sipping a mimosa, **basking in the sun.***

Lori Welch Brunch of the month Old Town Crier March 2002

...It's near Dupont Circle, and it's an utterly comfortable, shabby-chic small hotel with a fireplace in the sitting room and a terrific restaurant with a garden deck.

Where to Stay National Geographic Traveler Magazine June 2002

...For more than 25 years now, it's been the place many of us head in spring and summer for a chance to dine outdoors, surrounded by a brick wall and abundant greenery.

Tom Seitsema The Washington Post Magazine February 2004

...The Tabard is in demand for its warm, funky atmosphere and fantastic kitchen. Light flows into the dining room from a skylight over the bar and windows on the back walls. In warm weather the patio is a lovely place to dine.

Harry Jaffe Washingtonian August 2005

...The popular restaurant and lounge screams ambience, including the brick-walled summer garden....

Washington Flyer Magazine and Travel guide January 2005

...The Tabard Inn is a small, British-style hotel with a smashing restaurant and verdant backyard patio where power-broking politicians trade quips over Glidden Point oysters..

Washington Flyer May/June 2005

...Like an old friend, I can always rely on the Tabard to be there for me. I can count on the brick-walled garden to impress any visitors

Washington Post Magazine October 2007

...Lighting is atmospheric—you'll feel like you are wearing Ray Bans—the overstuffed Victorian camelbacks are well worn and private enough for soulful kisses. In summer, the walled garden is the place to dine.

Romantic Days and Nights in Washington DC Cynthia Hacinelland/William Connor

...Enter through the homey lobby and cozy lounge and move out to the breezy patio pleasantly shaded by the trees and a canopy of billowing parachute silk.

Footloose Dining out Washington Post

...Best Romantic Hotel

Beyond the main parlor is a restaurant, an enchanting patio for drinks in the spring and summer and a bar from which you can purchase libations and carry them wherever you want to sit or whatever.

The Washington City Paper

HOTELS: D.C.

Continued from First Page

tered throughout the hotel, particularly the lobby that takes on the appearance of a displaced greenhouse.

Guest rooms at the Four Seasons are equipped with hair dryers, bathroom scales, boxes of homemade cookies, baskets of soap, robes, bedside TV control and a couple of magazines aimed at making the guest's visit to Washington thoroughly exciting.

The Four Seasons is the nesting place of entertainers Elton John, the BeeGees and classical pianist Van Cliburn whenever they're in town. Its rooms are bright and well appointed; the restaurant gets high marks, but there's one drawback: Because the Four Seasons does business in fashionable Georgetown, this places it slightly out of the mainstream for downtown sightseers.

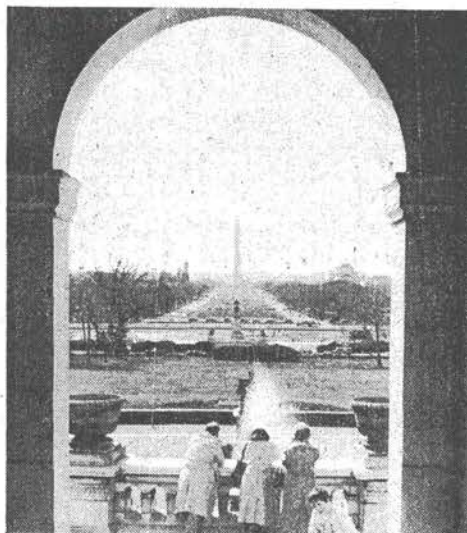
Still, taking afternoon tea in the lobby terrace while listening to Chopin makes for a most memorable experience. Singles at the Four Seasons are priced from \$115 to \$145, doubles \$135-\$165 and suites \$235-\$760.

A close neighbor to the Four Seasons (although not in the same category), the 164-room Marbury House features valet parking, a concierge, a small but tasteful dining room and rooms priced at \$75 single, \$87 double. There's also the Georgetown Inn where rates start at \$96 single, \$116 double (sewing kits, shower caps, shoe-horns—the whole mishmash).

Nifty Little Inn

A good deal of attention is being given these days to the nifty little River Inn where maids shop for guests at no extra charge. Small suites (\$84 single, \$96 double) come with terry robes, oversize towels, a coffee pot, grinder and fresh beans that are provided daily along with wakeup calls that include a weather report. With 128 suites, the River Inn is getting raves for its restaurant, the Foggy Bottom: fresh juice, homemade croissants, excellent lunches, dinners.

Other visitors are charmed by the little Canterbury



BOB McCAY

Washington Monument is seen across the mall.

pearance and gracious hospitality delight patrons, all of which is a bit of PR hype put out by Edward Cohen, the proprietor, an ex-financial reporter for the Washington Post.

No argument, there is a certain charm in the lounge with its deep sofas and adjoining bar. And it's a delight to take breakfast in the bricked patio out back with its tables and umbrellas, a parachute billowing overhead to keep guests dry during inclement weather.

Cohen, who sat glumly through breakfast in T-shirt and jeans, seemed particularly proud that the Tabard

PHOTOS BY BERNIE BOSTON / Los Angeles Times



Breakfast is a delight in the brick patio of the Tabard Inn, which is said to be the oldest continually operated hotel in Washington, D.C.

"To avoid failing we had to make a breakthrough, to get away from the traditional way of doing things. We had to emphasize fresh, natural foods."



During spring and summer, the Tabard is supplied with fruits and vegetables directly by a group of local farmers.

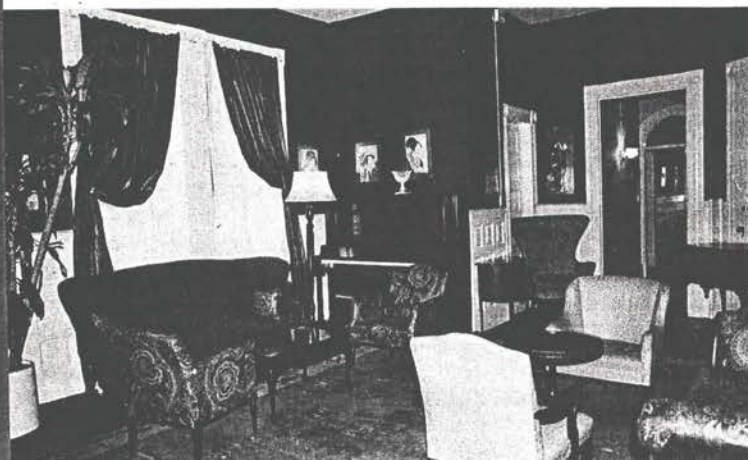
The staff doesn't dress up in uniforms. There are no doormen to carry your bags. No television sets in the rooms. (In fact there are more pianos in the hotel, which you're invited to play, than TVs). No discounts. No weekly rates. The 50 odd rooms are all different. And until just recently credit cards were refused. The owner now reluctantly accepts Visa, and even has permitted his staff to "experiment" with a weekend discount.

The Tabard is crammed nine months of the year. Its bar and restau-



rant, which in the summer spills out onto a patio garden, are full every day. There's always a line. During the Carter administration it was a watering hole for liberals doing business in the capital. But the change in administrations hasn't done the hotel any harm. If

A Houston oil man feels more at home at the Tabard Inn than at the more formal downtown Washington hotels.



anything the clientele is more varied. In the restaurant you'll encounter lawyers doing the usual Washington deal, an actor or writer on a promotion tour, environmentalists plotting an attack on James Watt, secretaries, businessmen, politicians, aides from the Reagan White House, and a Houston oil man who feels more at home at the Tabard than at the more formal downtown hotels. And, he says, it saves his company money. Tabard rooms range from \$30 to \$75 a night, compared to the \$125 and up he was paying elsewhere.

The 60 people who bustle about working at the Tabard are not at all what you'd expect to find at a hotel. The chef who pokes his head in and out of the kitchen is a deep sea diver by trade. The young woman who waits on tables is a psychotherapist, the bartender a business writer for a local magazine, another waiter, an opera student.

Behind this lively setting lies an interesting and instructive business story. Edward Cohen, a former newspaper reporter and public policy consultant, and his wife Fritz, bought the hotel in 1975. At the time it was down at the heel and without a restaurant. Setting up a restaurant and bar was one of Cohen's main goals. But to accomplish this he soon found himself having to set up in miniature what many big companies do by rote: a system of direct marketing, through which he could buy the kind of food he wanted to serve. This system, which still is evolving, drew Cohen into a skein of contractual relationships with nearby farmers, that may be helpful for others in similar situations.

"Since we were starting a restaurant from the beginning," Cohen says, "and since so many restaurants fail, the only thing we could hope for was that somehow the restaurant and the hotel would reinforce each other, so that in periods when one was off the other would subsidize it."

"Since we had very little experience in restaurants, the way we analyzed it was that in order to avoid failing we had to make a breakthrough, to get away from the traditional ways of doing things. We decided to try to hire cooks who were interested in the natural or organic or biologically grown foods. People familiar with this approach were more desirable than those who weren't thinking at that level. We weren't trying to define what naturally organic biologically grown food was. Most of all, we were interested in foods

This is a town of great jazz, ethnic food and outdoor bistros. Beyond the legislative gridlock is a loose grid of vital neighborhoods, an edgy arts scene and museums you never knew were here.



Bests

Best place for a family lunch: Union Station. If your kids are grownups (or close), sit outside at America, and watch the passing scene from a wicker chair set among the columns. If you have toddlers or young teenagers, head downstairs, where there are high chairs and pizza for the kids and Indian food for the adults.

Best place for a romantic drink: Tabard Inn. Take a table in the garden tucked away in the back of 1739 N St. Note: you can also stay at the inn, a charmingly restored townhouse near Dupont Circle.

Best bar for weekend jazz: 701. Frequented by salad-munching regulators and dour policy-makers by day, the place turns into a hot Capitol Hill-area jazz spot at night. DC's Phil Harris trio plays Friday and Saturday. Located at 701 Pennsylvania Ave. —N.F.

so take I-495 and follow the signs to Wolf Trap for an evening of music at the country's only national park for the performing arts. Tickets must be booked ahead. For schedule information (703) 255-1860.

Museums and monuments

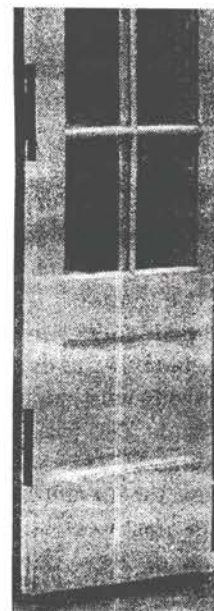
If you can't abide the thought of another visit to the Air and Space Museum with 6,000 of your most intimate friends, try a trip to some of the city's lesser-known museums.

The National Museum of Women in the Arts is the only one in the world devoted entirely to women artists. The collection includes works by Georgia O'Keeffe, Lee Krasner and Helen Frankenthaler. "The Sacred and the Profane: Josefa de Obidos of Portugal, 1630-1684" runs through September 7. (1250 New York Ave.; suggested donation: \$3)

In the Dupont Circle neighborhood, there's the Phillips Collection, housed in a superb 1897 brownstone. There are paintings by Paul Klee, Mark Rothko and Richard Diebenkorn, as well as impressionist works by Degas. The great surprise here is Renoir's "Luncheon of the Boating Party" (1600 21st St. NW; adults, \$6.50; students and seniors, \$3.25).

Okay, so there is one monument on the alternative tour. The newly dedicated Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, a 7-acre site near the Jefferson Memorial, depicts the four terms of FDR's presidency in bronze sculpture.

The city's newest monument caused a controversy when it was revealed that



FINDING A GARDEN
Left: Korean troupe

Roosevelt was not a chair. A sculpture of now being created.

A different George

Georgetown is, of its pretty townhouse restaurants and shop area's main drag, has congested. So run, d the quieter side street of the area's lesser-known

On 32d St., near gardens at Dumbarton, a lush garden haven. Designed in the 1920s, they are French, Italian and walks, arbors, fountains. June, the gardens are in bloom with magnolia, clematis and

The federal-style the United Nations — now houses an extension of Byzantine architecture. The garden entrance is at 32d St. NW. Art collection is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; gardens, 2-6 p.m.; adults, \$3, children

If you follow the path south, you come to the brainchild of George



SEPTEMBER 18, 1994

PHYLLIS C.

RICHMANS

FAVORITES

FALL DINING GUIDE

vegetables—including jicama—are crunchier, and the spicing—incorporating dried shrimp—is more exotic, while the dark sauce for slathering on the pancakes is far more pungent than hoisin. The noodle dishes—chicken kway teow, bee hoon and Singapore rice noodles—are a pleasant balance to the hotter, creamy, coconut-based curries such as the pink-sauced shrimp or the more familiar yellow chicken curry. A consistent favorite is small Chinese eggplants curried with chunks of carrots and chicken. And the nasi goreng—Indonesian fried rice—is one of those dishes you can't resist nibbling to the last morsel.

As for the appetizers—well, just order them all. But if you don't have quite enough people to warrant that, be sure to try the crisp fried beef-stuffed curry puffs and the rojak, an unusual salad made with jicama, cucumbers, carrots and pineapple coated with a savory shrimp paste marinade. Then there are the flat scallion-and-cilantro shrimp pancakes with a bright red peanuty hot sauce, the fried tofu with a similar sauce, and five-spice roll, which is an exotic cousin of meat loaf, and the meal-in-itself soup called laksa.

Straits of Malaya is an airy restaurant inside as well as on the roof, and it is prettily decorated with batiks. But while there are plenty of qualities that make it attractive, the food is enough in itself.

1836 18th St. NW. 202-483-1483. Open: for lunch Monday through Friday noon to 2 p.m., for dinner Sunday through Thursday 5:30 to 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday 5:30 to 11 p.m. AE, MC, V. Reservations accepted. Separate nonsmoking section. Prices: lunch entrees \$6.95; dinner appetizers \$4.95 to \$8.95, entrees \$9.95 to \$14.95.

SUSHI-KO

After trying just about all the sushi bars—and happily enjoying most of them—I find myself most eager to return to Washington's first, Sushi-Ko. What brings me back is its traditional sushi-bar environment combined with a little innovation on the menu. The setup is the usual: One side of the long narrow room has the sushi bar, with a long row of seats; the other is lined with booths. And on the walls are wooden signs listing the kinds of fish available and the specials the chef has created to fit the season.

Yes, sushi and sashimi are seasonal. In early summer, just as soft-shell crabs hit the menu, there was also a luscious little appetizer of tuna—raw inside, with seared edges, napped with a mildly sweet and nutty garlic sauce; it was garnished with bright red paper-thin slices of rhubarb, an utterly delicious surprise. Another summery creation, carpaccio of three kinds of fish, was very lemony and a little sweet; it was a beautiful pastel still life, though the taste of the fish was lost in its midst. Even on the everyday menu, Sushi-Ko

roll, a cone of seaweed filled with rice and a luscious combination of chopped raw tuna with faintly peppery mayonnaise, sesame seeds and scallions.

The traditional sushi is fine—the fish itself no better or worse than most. Sushi-Ko has the advantage, though, in its large selection. And if you love the premium items—tuna, yellowtail, salmon roe, eel, sea urchin and raw sweet shrimp—Sushi-Ko offers them and more as an assortment for just a few dollars above the regular assortment. Usually those luxuries are found only à la carte or as a small part of an assortment.

Finally, Sushi-Ko carries on its tradition of old-fashioned Japanese service with American communicativeness. It's as homey as a sushi bar gets.

2309 Wisconsin Ave. NW. 202-333-4187. Open: for lunch Tuesday through Friday noon to 2:30 p.m., for dinner Monday through Friday 6 to 10:30 p.m., Saturday 5 to 10:30 p.m., Sunday 5 to 10 p.m. AE, MC, V. Reservations accepted. Separate nonsmoking section. Prices: lunch appetizers \$2 to \$10, entrees \$6.50 to \$16.50; dinner appetizers \$3 to \$10, entrees \$8.50 to \$17.50.

TABARD INN

It wouldn't matter much what the Tabard Inn served if the management would guarantee you a space in its walled garden on a balmy afternoon. But those umbrella-shaded tables are first-come, first-served, so you have to take your chances. On the other hand, the food alone makes this homey little restaurant sufficiently worth the risk of sitting inside, and even the inside is pretty charming. The ingredients are not only fresh, but many of them are grown on the inn's own farm. The cooking is breezy and casual—colorful and flavorful combinations of ingredients without much fuss and nothing so elaborate as, say, a sauce.

The food is American, which means pork loin sandwich on Ethiopian bread or house-made chicken tamales, sesame salmon in wasabi-miso broth or a giant ravioli filled with various mushrooms and ricotta cheese. Salads are abundant and vivid. Vegetables are exactly fresh (in fact, the only flaws I've found in the ingredients were the shrimp and scallops, which one day tasted past their prime). And if the food lacks genius, it compensates with enthusiasm.

What's important about the Tabard Inn is that everyone seems enthusiastic, from the cooks to the servers to the customers. And no facet of the meal is beneath notice. The wines are interesting, the lemonade is fresh-squeezed, the butter is excellent, the garnishes taste good, the vegetarian dishes are stylish, the prices are modest—I could go on. Tabard Inn is not a gastronomic mecca; rather, it is an awfully nice restaurant.

1739 N St. NW. 202-833-2668. Open: for breakfast Monday through Friday 7 to 10

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Travel + Leisure
Phyllis Richman's
favorite places to
eat in DC

Tabard Inn

1739 N Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036

Telephone (202) 785-1277

Fax (202) 785-6173

TOP 50
1989

TOP 50

Washington

■ **Breakfast:** The sunny, yellow dining room of the **Hay-Adams Hotel** overlooks the White House. You have the feel of a garden—without actually being in one—and the view is very Washington. There's an elaborate brunch on Sunday, or you can order à la carte: Norwegian smoked salmon, eggs Benedict with asparagus, corn-and-crab bisque, banana-nut bread. During the week, the room is filled with politicians, but on the weekend it's just people like us. 800 16th St. NW; 202-638-2260; \$50.

■ **Lunch:** There are a lot of good restaurants spreading north along 17th and 18th Streets toward the Adams-Morgan neighborhood that are just right for Sunday lunch—relaxed, lively, stylish. During the summer, my pick would be **Lauriol Plaza**, which specializes in Mexican and Spanish dishes. I know this sort of food can be a bit heavy in the summer, but what could feel more Mediterranean than duck served with fresh olives and oranges? 1801 18th St. NW; 387-0035; \$40.

■ **Dinner:** Whenever I introduce someone to the **Tabard Inn**, it's love at first sight. Best known as a tiny hotel, it also has a charming dining room that's just right for quiet summer evenings (and a garden for breakfast, lunch and cocktails). The food, if not the best in town, can be delicious. The grilled fish is always good; and the Tabard prepares lovely fresh salads with all sorts of interesting greens and garnishes. It's a homey, folksy place that's particularly popular with Washington journalists. If you arrive early, just settle back on a sofa in the lounge and have a drink. 1739 N St. NW; 785-1277; \$50.

—Phyllis Richman, food critic, *Washington Post*.

TABARD INN

FRESH IS BECOMING A TIRED WORD IN THE restaurant world, but the Tabard Inn brings it back to life. Lunch in the garden is one of Washington's hidden natural assets, and the menu takes advantage of the best of our countryside.

One dish tells the story: Grilled tuna is a cliché these days, and it is a fish that is often maligned. But at the Tabard Inn it is slightly crusty and thick enough that the center is tender and moist. One day it was stuffed with gingered shrimp, an accent rather than a distraction, and its topping of pineapple vinaigrette was fruity without being too sweet. The tuna was positioned on a bed of couscous to absorb

the juices. A sharply vinegared salad of julienned raw vegetables added crunch.

The Tabard Inn's menu sounds colorful—white and red gazpacho swirl, beet and red onion salad, two-toned salad of smoked and fresh salmon with opal basil vinaigrette. And the inn goes to special lengths to get naturally raised beef and additive-free bacon for its burgers, even brings vegetables from its own farm and makes its own potato chips.

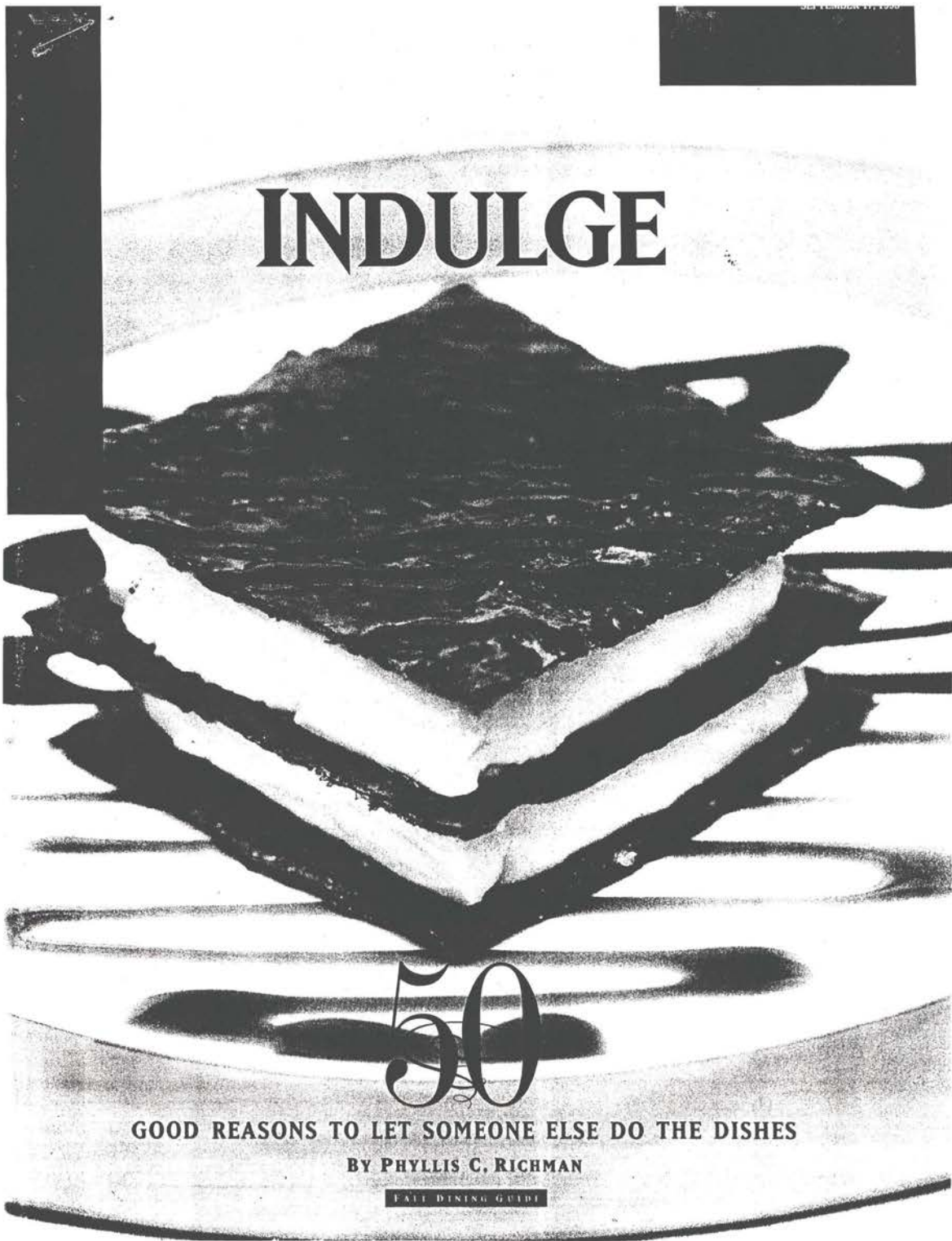
This kitchen doesn't get too complex, it doesn't strive too hard. Pastas, salads, chicken, fish and a couple of beef dishes make up its menu, with no such pretensions as beurre blanc or wine sauces. This is down-to-earth real American cooking of the '80s.

• 1739 N St. NW. 833-2668. Open: for breakfast Monday through Friday 7 to 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday 8 to 10 a.m.; for lunch Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.; for brunch Sunday 11 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.; for dinner Monday through Wednesday 6 to 10:30 p.m., Thursday through Saturday 6 to 11 p.m., Sunday 6 to 10 p.m. Prices: breakfast entrees \$4 to \$8; lunch appetizers \$4.75 to \$6, entrees \$6.25 to \$12.50; dinner appetizers \$6.25 to \$7.25, entrees \$17.25 to \$21.50; brunch entrees \$6.50 to \$13.

1992 TABARD INN One of the first signs of spring in Washington is the long line forming for lunch in the Tabard Inn's walled garden. It's a green and peaceful downtown respite, though wintertime at the Tabard also has its charms: sofas around the fire for your after-dinner drink, for example. And throughout the year the Tabard is respected for its simple lively dishes, often made with produce from the inn's own farm.

This is the kind of American restaurant where standard dishes turn out to be extraordinary. The hamburgers are sumptuous and made from "naturally raised beef," served with from-scratch french fries. The chicken salad is seasoned with chili and cumin, tossed with several kinds of freshly cooked beans, corn, peppers and scallions. The chicken tastes so juicy that it might have been just cooked, and the guacamole topping makes you wish you had a whole bowl of it. A mixed grill teams quail with curried chicken sausage and a mound of couscous; each element is excellent. Fish is dewy fresh, and the Tabard lightly smokes its own salmon for an appetizer or a sandwich. Even the more complicated dishes—an appetizer of toasted pita stacked with chevre and sauteed vegetables into a napoleon—make sense in the eating even when they sound too cute in print.

In all, the Tabard Inn is a delicious reminder of each and every season in its time. 1739 N St. NW. 202-833-2668. Open: for breakfast Monday through Friday 7 to 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday 8 to 10 a.m.; for lunch Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; for dinner Monday through Wednesday 6 to 10:30 p.m., Thursday through Saturday 6 to 11 p.m., Sunday 6 to 10 p.m. MC, V. Reservations suggested. Separate nonsmoking section. Prices: lunch appetizers



INDULGE

50

GOOD REASONS TO LET SOMEONE ELSE DO THE DISHES

BY PHYLLIS C. RICHMAN

FALL DINING GUIDE

Where else, at any price, can you find house-made doughnuts, biscuits and corn bread for breakfast; a long stretch of pies, puddings and custards at lunch and dinner; such side dishes as fried green tomatoes, spoon bread, real mashed potatoes; and, when the season is right, all the corn on the cob you can eat for the cost of one serving?

Sholl's is clean, orderly and efficient. Its food is basic, satisfying down-home American. And it's more. It's a slice of our history, a common ground for new immigrants and old-timers, bag ladies and bankers. It's the everyday dining room of many Washingtonians and an occasional nostalgia trip for others. It's a local institution that reminds us what a nice home town Washington can be.

1990 K St. NW. 202-296-3065. *Open: for breakfast Monday through Saturday 7 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.; for lunch Monday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; for dinner Monday through Saturday 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.; Sunday 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Cash only. No reservations. Prices: entrees \$1.50 to \$5.25, side dishes \$.65 to \$.95.*

Sushi-Ko Japanese food honors tradition, while American food celebrates change. Chef Kazuhiro Okochi came from Japan and has been here long enough to be pulled in both directions. Thus his sushi restaurant remains at the top in this town.

He goes to the fish markets himself to choose his catch, so his traditional sushi is reliably fresh and as varied as the season allows. The available fish are, in Japanese sushi-bar style, listed on wooden plaques hooked on the wall and visible in the glass case along the bar. The written menu explains each dish further and also describes the chef's own sushi rolls, which include some hand rolls that play soft fish and steamed rice against crunchy bits of rice-flour batter for an interesting contrast of textures. Those are the traditional offerings.

On a blackboard the chef presents the daily specials, his inventions. Often there's a remarkable tuna tartare topped with a quail egg yolk and black caviar, decorated with a small mound of sweet potato puree and drizzled with bright orange sauce from a squeeze bottle in the style of New American chefs. In summer, soft-shell crab is plump and sweet under its veil of crisp batter, a delicious creature to dip in thick sweetened soy sauce. And Alaskan salmon is crisped on a grill, then blanketed with a fascinating—though oversalted—sweet and spicy puree, all sitting on glossy and pleasantly chewy black rice. This chef's inventiveness spurs him to team smoked mackerel with sautéed eggplant, to fashion a salad out of local smoked trout. The atmosphere is pure tradition, with service that is both swift and quiet. Sushi-Ko combines the best of a

sushi bar and a New American restaurant. 2309 Wisconsin Ave. NW. 202-333-4187. *Open: for lunch Tuesday through Friday noon to 2:30 p.m.; for dinner Monday through Friday 6 to 10:30 p.m., Saturday 5 to 10:30 p.m., Sunday 5 to 10 p.m. AE, MC, V. Reservations accepted. Separate smoking section. Prices: appetizers \$6.50 to \$9, entrees \$8.50 to \$15.*

Tabard Inn Since it is perennially one of the most charming restaurants in town, the Tabard Inn gets a lot of leeway from those of us who have loved it over the years. Its walled garden is peaceful, the sofas and fireplaces in the anteroom are inviting, and the dining room itself—with its kind of '60s church-pew-and-flea-market conglomeration of furnishings—is endearing. Still more: Tabard Inn grows some of its own vegetables and makes its own potato and other vegetable chips, obviously maintaining a commitment to fresh, seasonal ingredients.

On the other hand, it changes chefs from time to time, and the cooking is erratic. The current chef came from Pesce, so she is well-versed in seafood cookery. Her codfish and potato cakes with a creamy tapenade are a delicious appetizer, her soft-shell crabs are left to shine without too much fussing over them, and she steams sweet tiny clams and mussels without toughening them. One warning is necessary: Forget the pasta. Mine was wadded and unseasoned, a blight on the landscape of my lunch. The Tabard made up for it, though, with a mango-and-berry crisp that lived up to every summer-fruit fantasy I entertained over the winter.

1739 N St. NW. 202-833-2668. *Open: for breakfast Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., Saturday and Sunday 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.; for lunch Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; for dinner Tuesday through Saturday 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., Sunday and Monday 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.; for brunch Saturday and Sunday 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. MC, V. Reservations suggested. Separate smoking section. Prices: breakfast \$2.50 to \$7.50; lunch entrees \$7.50 to \$11; dinner appetizers \$5.50 to \$8, entrees \$14 to \$24; brunch \$8 to \$9.*

Trattoria al Sole Washington now has such a wealth of Italian restaurants that you can choose according to your mood and still be sure of dining well. When I'm in the mood for light, simple Italian cooking but I want a wide choice of dishes, Trattoria al Sole—the new, improved Vincenzo—is an obvious pick. The vegetables alone—asparagus with butter and Parmesan—are enough to thrill. The fried zucchini is as light and crisp as any Japanese tempura chef dreams of producing. And factory-made pasta—here a good Italian brand—is cooked so perfectly that the first bite tastes a little stiff so that the rest stays al dente right to the end.

The appetizers are straightforward: steamed mussels, seafood salad, baked peppers and such dishes as vitello tonnato or orange-and-olive salad in accord with the season. The pastas are few and familiar—with shellfish or tomato sauce with capers and olives or hot pepper, and perhaps a stuffed agnolotti or fettuccine tossed with seasonal vegetables. And while the entrees include a few meats—a veal stew, braised rabbit and such—they are mostly seafood. Choose grilled fish, sparkling fresh and heightened with lemon and oregano, or fried seafood. Few other places would I trust to produce delicious fried shrimp. And for dessert, if you've room, there are lovely old-fashioned Italian cakes and custards. If you haven't, at least leave with the sweet taste of orange or chocolate sorbet on your tongue.

Al Sole has a long handsome dining room with the sun beaming through its curved glass ceiling so it looks like a Florentine sidewalk cafe. It serves bread made in-house that has the proper crust and grainy density. And its prices are no higher than lazy, overbearing spaghetti houses in the suburbs that survive on their captive audiences. This year has been a fresh start for Vincenzo.

1606 20th St. NW. 202-667-0047. *Open: for lunch Monday through Saturday noon to 2 p.m.; for dinner 6 to 10 p.m. Closed Sunday. AE, DC, MC, V. Reservations suggested. Separate smoking section. Prices: appetizers \$4.75 to \$9.75, entrees \$11.75 to \$17.75.*

Trumpets To find Trumpets the restaurant, you have to wade through the raucous crowd at Trumpets the gay bar. Few restaurants are worth wading through a noisy bar, but this one is. It's not just that David Hagedorn is a talented chef or that his servers are efficient and professional as well as personable, or that the prices are reasonable, or even that the colorful restaurant—with its menus in industrial-metal covers—is pleasant and its noise level surprisingly comfortable. The main ingredient that sets Trumpets apart is this chef's wit.

Many New American chefs serve dishes that sound bizarre and taste like mistakes. Hagedorn's cooking is actually more inventive than it sounds, and he definitely knows what he's doing. This is food created by a chef with a keen sense of taste as well as humor. His appetizer of corn on the cob is actually a cooked carrot cob implanted with corn kernels. The sweetness of both the corn and the carrot are remarkably complementary, and the Southwestern seasonings raise this to a memorable dish. Shrimp satay, the skewers waving at eccentric angles, is as spicy, tangy and delicious as the best Thai versions. And nachos made on a base of artichoke leaves rather than fried corn chips, with a tart guacamole in the center for dipping, are far more sensible than the

Time Out

Guide

Washington, DC



2001

Tabard Inn

1739 N Street, NW, between Connecticut Avenue & 17th Street, Dupont Circle (785 1277). Dupont Circle Metro. Breakfast 7-10am Mon-Fri; 8-10am Sat; 8-9:30am Sun. Lunch 11:30am-2:30pm Mon-Fri, Sat. Dinner 6-10pm Mon-Thur, Sun; 6-10:30pm Fri, Sat. Brunch 11am-2:30pm Sat; 10:30am-2:30pm Sun. Credit AmEx, DC, MC, V. Main course breakfast \$3-\$8; lunch \$9-\$15; dinner \$18-\$28; brunch \$5-\$15. The food can vary in quality here, mainly because the chefs don't seem to stay. That said, the Tabard is still a great restaurant. It owes much of the draw to the cosy, grandma's living room ambience, not to mention the glorious, enclosed outdoor courtyard that opens in spring. It's located in one of the oldest hotels in DC (opened in 1924) and the lounge is popular for cocktails. Much of the produce is grown on the Tabard Farm in the Virginia countryside and the wine list is one of the most diverse in town.

operated hotel in the District; the floors and doors squeak and there's no lift or TVs. Don't worry – you won't miss them at all.

Hotel services Bar. Business services. Continental breakfast. Laundry. Parking. Restaurant. Sports facilities & pool (passes to the nearby YMCA). Room services Dataport.

Adams Morgan

Adams Morgan is funky, as DC goes, with plenty of ethnic restaurants, bars and nightclubs. But it's also relatively far out – and there's no convenient Metro station. You'll have to hike across the Ellington Bridge or take a bus to get to and from the Woodley Park-Zoo or Dupont Circle Metro stops. Parking is a horror, and the area starts to get sketchy the further north you go.

Best hotel...★

To keep your mistress

Swissôtel Watergate (p125) in Foggy Bottom, where private 'diplomat' entrances secure you from prying eyes.

To plan for higher office

The Hay-Adams Hotel (p127) in Downtown has such a great view of the White House that you can almost see yourself inside it.

To survive an assassination attempt

Washington Hilton & Towers (p133) in Adams Morgan, where Reagan was shot by a Jodie Foster-obsessed John Hinckley. Since that infamous occasion the hotel has built an underground passageway to safeguard the limousines of visiting luminaries.

To sell your soul

The Jefferson Hotel (p127) in Downtown almost invented the concept of lobbying. Listen to the insider gossip at lunchtime in the pricey restaurant.

To be pampered

The Four Seasons (p134) in Georgetown, which has the best health spa in town and staff who would sell their grandmothers into slavery for you – with a smile.

To drop acid

Joke. But if you did, the Tabard Inn (p131) in Dupont Circle, with its naked mannequin and multi-coloured décor, would provide the raw materials for a great trip.



Tabard Inn: individual and funky (page 131).

Room 12

Tabard Inn

1739 N Street, NW, at Connecticut Avenue, Dupont Circle, DC 20036 (front desk 785 1277/fax 785 6173). Dupont Circle Metro. Rates single/double (shared bath) \$65-\$95; single/double (private bath) \$99-\$155. Credit AmEx, MC, V.

This is the only hotel where you'll be directed to your room with the instruction: 'Go past the naked mannequin in the bathtub.' The Tabard Inn employs a full-time interior designer – and it shows. Each of the 42 rooms is decorated in brilliant colours with a hodgepodge of slightly chipped antiques. Unique and funky, the Tabard draws locals with its excellent restaurant and offers a garden courtyard in summer months and a roaring drawing-room fire in the winter. It's made up of three nineteenth-century townhouses – making it the oldest continually

Time Out Washington Guide 131

Restaurant

beyond the bloody mary Brunch of the Month

by Lori Welch

Tabard Inn

I could sum up my review of the Tabard Inn in three words. **They get it.** They get how to make their customers happy. They get that their patrons want good food, good service and good value. They get that if they give customers what they want, they'll come back.

Let's face it, most of us go out for the experience of dining even more than we venture out in search of great cuisine. I've been to loads of restaurants that have entrees that are to die for, but won't go back because it either wasn't a good value or I didn't receive the level of service I expected. *Believe it or not, there are some restaurants out there that still think their customers should be grateful to them instead of the other way around. They're clueless.* The Tabard Inn is clued in.

You have to look for the Tabard Inn, but that's part of its charm. It's off the beaten path a tad nestled in the middle of the block on N Street in Northwest. The restaurant is part of a small forty-room hotel overflowing with character. The lobby leads you to a Victorian parlor complete with fireplaces and welcoming couches and arm chairs. My guest, Rock, and I arrived early and decided to relax over a cup of coffee in the sitting area. During my visit, I kept making mental notes about

bite there as many of our fellow patrons were doing) and into the dining room. The dining room isn't spacious by any means, but it's fun, energetic and highchair friendly. On this particular Sunday, the dining room was filled with many young families, retirees, and Banana Republic cloaked thirty-somethings.

When we arrived at 12:30, the dining room was full to capacity, but started to thin out close to one o'clock. I was grateful as the noise level did make it a little difficult to hear our waiter, Tien.

Tien handed us our menus, which change daily, and made a few suggestions. Tien told us we had to try the homemade doughnuts served with whipped cream, which we opted to save for dessert. We decided to start out with one of the five salads listed on the day's menu. As we waited for our salad, we nibbled on the basket of muffins and breads Tien had put before us. Within moments, our house-made mozzarella and roasted pepper salad arrived, and it was wonderful. The mozzarella was fresh and the red peppers were beautiful. It was the perfect starter, very flavorful and not too heavy. Heavy came next.

I chose the house-made smoked pork sausage with poached eggs on focaccia with Hollandaise from among the other selections which

of coriander, fennel and chili flakes which gave it a little kick. The poached eggs were done to perfection and the Hollandaise didn't overwhelm the flavor of the sausage.

My kudos to Chef Andrew Saba who has done a fabulous job in both presentation and execution. I was amazed at the diversity and breadth of offerings on a menu that changes daily. The selections were imaginative, yet recognizable. Andrew received his training in Europe and worked at several hotel properties in England and Scotland before coming to Washington in 1995. He's been pleasing customers at the Tabard Inn since November 2001.

Pastry chef Huw Griffiths was recently nominated as Pastry Chef of the Year by the DC Chapter of the National Restaurant Association, and it's evident why. I asked Tricia for a recommendation as I couldn't decide between the half dozen offerings which included a White Chocolate Apricot Brioche Bread Pudding with Blackberry Ice Cream and Chocolate Gianduja Hazelnut Praline Cheesecake with Kahlua Caramel Anglaise. Her recommendation, the Chocolate Espresso Almond Dacquoise, was incredible, but a little rich as a fol-

low up to my brunch entrée. Being a chocolate enthusiast, it was hard to tear myself away from the smooth, creamy chocolate, but it left more for my dining companion and for that he was glad. I'd definitely recommend a stop by the Tabard for dessert and coffee after a show.

We tag teamed the desserts and decided to take Tien's suggestion and try the freshly fried doughnuts doused with cinnamon sugar. Krispy Kreme watch out. They were out of this world. Unfortunately, they weren't off my thighs. *Mental note: Ask Old Town Crier if I can start reviewing gyms.* Seriously, do not make the trip to the Tabard Inn without having the doughnuts. Unfortunately, the minimum order is six, but you can do what we did. Share with your neighbors. It's a nice, friendly way to start off the day, and who can turn down a free doughnut? The side of vanilla whipped cream vaults them to a "10" on the decadence scale.

Another great reason to return to the Tabard Inn. I can't wait to come back on a nice, sunny day and enjoy their terrific brickwalled patio and garden area. I kept gazing out the window and wishing I was sitting at one of the wrought iron tables sipping a Mimosa, basking in the sun.

Let's face it. Many establish-



Freshly fried doughnuts doused with cinnamon sugar.

ments in Washington have been hammered for their deficient customer service. There's nothing worse than having your outing marred by a rude server or lengthy waiting period. At the Tabard, I think you'll find all the essentials for a great brunch—pleasant atmosphere, friendly service, great food beautifully presented, and good value (entrees range from \$9-\$16)—and here's why: **They get it.**

Tabard Inn
1739 N Street, NW
Washington, DC
202-785-1277

Hours:

Breakfast: Mon-Fri 7-10 am, Sat 8-10 am, Sun 8-9:30 am

Lunch: Mon-Fri 11:30 am - 2:30 pm

Brunch: Sat 11 am to 2:30 pm, Sun 10:30 am to 2:30 pm

Dinner: Sun-Thu 6-10 pm, Fri & Sat 6 pm to 10:30 pm

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behind it to accommodate a couple of chefs who prepare the cooked dishes. Sushi aficionados should know that the three grades of tuna are always in stock here, which allows the opportunity to enjoy it in a vertical tasting. The fish's resemblance to various grades of beef is amazing: start with the regular tuna, whose red, fat-free appearance resembles a Select-grade filet mignon; follow with the medium-fatty variety, which looks like a nicely marbled cut of Choice strip steak; and end with toro, the belly tuna that is as rich with internal fat as a USDA Prime rib eye and has the buttery, melting texture of a terrine of foie gras. Those six small cuts of fish (two pieces of each grade) will cost almost \$20, but the pleasure they offer is worth every penny.

Along with the standard tempura, teriyaki, and a number of very good meal-size noodle soups, Sushi Taro has a number of small dishes and appetizers that distinguish it from much of its Japanese competition. Listed only on the dinner menu but yours for the asking at lunch, some memorable specialties include black cod with sake paste, Spanish mackerel with miso paste, and a whole salt-broiled pike mackerel.

Sushi Taro, 1503 17th St., NW; 202-462-8999. Open Monday through Friday for lunch, daily for dinner. —RS

TABARD INN

Expensive

PEOPLE SEEM EITHER TO LOVE THE TABARD Inn or hate it, and it doesn't have much to do with the food. It depends on diners' reactions to the auction-house decor—a dark lounge with a cozy fireplace, overstuffed sofas, and walls hung with American kitsch; a low-ceilinged dining room with white table cloths and utilitarian wooden furniture; and beyond it, an unexpected brick-walled courtyard that's a lovely place for outdoor dining in good weather.

The quality of the cooking at the Tabard Inn has waxed and waned. The kitchen seems to be on an even keel under Andrew Saba, who has worked for Robert Wiedmaier at Marcel's and Jean-Louis Palladin at Jean-Louis at the Watergate. Saba continues the restaurant's Modern American emphasis and its commitment to fresh regional ingredients.

A recent menu began with a gratin of lump crabmeat with black trumpet mushrooms, spinach, and garlic confit—a largely unsuccessful attempt to dress up top-quality crabmeat, best left as close to its natural state as possible. A much better appetizer was a warm tart of Stilton and walnuts served with baby mâche fig compote.

Main courses included a splendid grilled

veal chop, cooked medium-rare as ordered and well accompanied by mashed potatoes, hedgehog mushrooms, and beet greens, and a nicely cooked roast chicken breast with a delicious, earthy gratin of root vegetables. A homey sweet-tart rhubarb cobbler provided a pleasant ending.

Tabard Inn, 1739 N St., NW; 202-785-1277. Open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, Saturday and Sunday for brunch. —TH

TOPAZ BAR

Expensive

"INSIGHT ON THE ROCKS" IS THE PROMISE printed on Topaz Bar's business cards. For the moment, the arbiters of fashion among the twentysomething set have decreed that this cozy blue cocoon is one of the hippest places in town to drink away an evening.

Unfortunately, Topaz Bar may be too hip—if not for its own good then for that of chef John Wabek's generally impressive interpretation of East-West fusion cuisine. Between 8 and 10 on a recent Friday night, while the bartenders were pouring at full throttle, the kitchen seemed at a standstill.

Lunch, which still remains a relatively undiscovered secret, is the best time to appreciate Wabek's intelligently composed, artfully presented dishes. The menu may be



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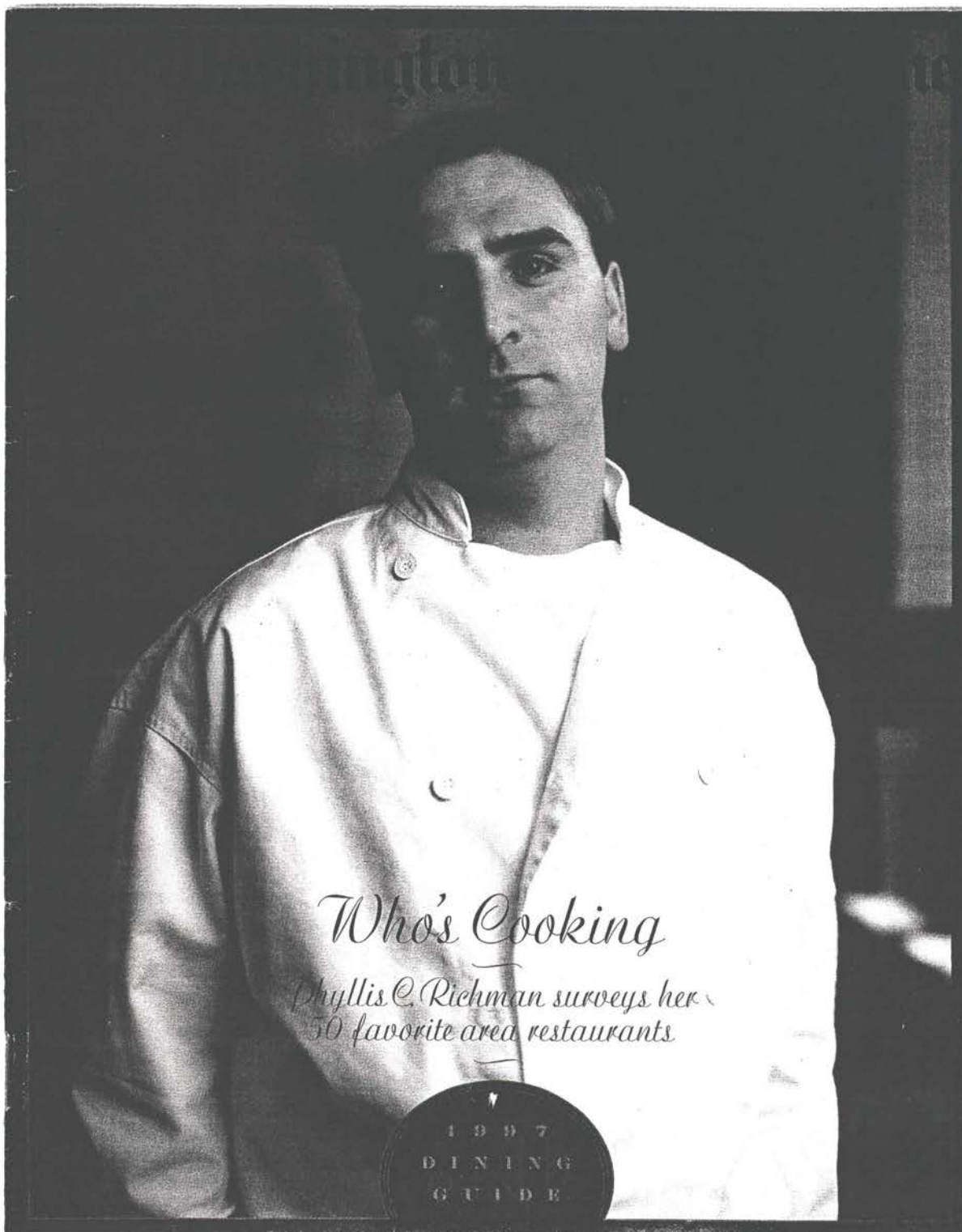
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Who's Cooking

*Phyllis C. Richman surveys her
50 favorite area restaurants.*

1997
DINING
GUIDE

And good as it is, Sushi-Ko is undoubtedly going to get better, when it completes the renovation of its kitchen and dining rooms later this year. Unfortunately, none of this is likely to make the prime-time wait for tables any shorter. Try for a reservation, or come for lunch or early dinner.

309 Wisconsin Ave. NW. 202-333-4187. Open: lunch Tuesday through Friday noon to 2:30 p.m.; for dinner Monday through Friday 6 to 9:30 p.m., Saturday 5 to 10:30 p.m., Sunday 5 to 10 p.m. AE, MC, V. Entree prices: lunch \$6.50 to \$17, dinner \$7.50 to \$18.50.

SWAGAT Vegetarians in Western restaurants often have to make do with a single "vegetarian plate" or perhaps a choice of pasta primavera or spinach lasagna. Indian vegetarian menus are, in contrast, dozens of dishes and several pages long. It could take weeks to eat our way through one. Vegetarianism in India strikes me as not so much a limitation as an opportunity.

Swagat is hard to find from a car whizzing on University Boulevard, and nothing outside indicates the spaciousness and charm of its dining room, with its riveting photos framed by lacy white wall paintings and its earth-tone booths. Once inside, the difficulty is choosing from so many menu offerings.

One way for a newcomer to understand the menu is to try the buffet, which displays a range from soups to appetizers to curries and ryanis, accompanied by breads, chutneys and salads, followed by dessert. A thali—a kind of re-person mini-buffet—is another option for taking the most of Swagat's breadth. I prefer ordering à la carte, though, to make sure I get the khasta kachori—a hefty appetizer that's like short-crust turnover filled with vegetables and topped with chutney and yogurt. I also can't resist the dosas, those crisp rolled rice pancakes the length of a baseball bat, filled with sliced potatoes, onions and chilies or mixed vegetables. Among the curries, the mixed vegetables are excellent—each one's taste and texture stands intact—and the house-made cheese, paneer, can be combined with various raves, spinach, mixed vegetables or peas. My favorite is kadai paneer, a combination of vegetables in a moderately hot red sauce.

Complicated as the choices are, there's an easy solution. Service is solicitous, and the staff acts as if you are doing it a great favor if you ask for advice. So do.

763 E. University Blvd., Adelphi. 301-434-247. Open: for lunch Monday through Friday 1:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday noon to 4 p.m.; for dinner Monday through Friday 5 to 9:30 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 5 to 10 p.m.; for lunch Sunday noon to 4 p.m. AE, D, MC, V. Entree prices: \$2.99 to \$6.25.

TABARD INN I celebrate the seasons at Tabard Inn. In winter, I love the lounge with its time-worn sofas gathered around a fire-

place. In spring, the walled garden is the nicest place for a midday escape called lunch. And the dining room itself has the cozy laid-back comfort one hopes to find in a small inn.

Over the years the food has sometimes achieved splendor and sometimes been forgettable, but it's always been composed of fresh and lively ingredients, often from the Inn's own farm. While not long ago I found the food undistinguished, this year the cooking has perked up again. Despite lapses such as limp, bland pasta diluting the impact of clams steamed in tomato fennel fumet at lunch one day, the kitchen seems to be back on track. To start, the house-smoked salmon is as succulent as one could want, and it's draped over brioche toast, drizzled with creme fraiche and accompanied by a salad garnished with caper berries. In a heavier mode, the pâté is home-style, smooth and pungent with dried currants and cranberries.

The Tabard Inn is experimenting, going beyond clichés. The entrees might include Peruvian potato croquettes or gumbo with duck and oysters; there is always plenty for vegetarians as well as straightforward burgers at lunch. And while everyone else does crab cakes, the Tabard Inn makes smoked trout cakes, a savory change of pace. The list of wines by the glass is impressive. Desserts are a big deal, minglings of chocolate and tangerine, pears and caramel, apples and red currants, in pies, tarts, cheesecakes and crisps. Richness galore.

1739 N St. NW. 202-833-2668. Open: for breakfast Monday through Friday 7 to 10 a.m., Saturday 8 to 10 a.m., Sunday 8 to 9:30 a.m.; for lunch Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; for dinner Sunday through Thursday 6 to 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday 6 to 10:30 p.m.; for brunch Saturday 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Sunday 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. AE, MC, V. Entree prices: lunch about \$8.50 to \$13.75, dinner about \$17.50 to \$22.50.

TABERNA DEL ALABARDERO I love nibbling. I'm delighted to have a meal of tapas, mezze or zakuski, in which the table is covered with small dishes of hot and cold appetizers. There are many places to dine thus in our city. What sets Taberna del Alabardero apart from the others is its Old World formality. The banquettes in this ornate dining room are velvet, with lace against which to rest your head. The napery is weighty and the service has dignity—even when the waiter has no talent for English. The burbling voices in the dining room are largely Spanish, and most of the diners look as if they just flew in from Madrid.

I'll admit that the large, flat platters of paella look tempting, but they are for two people, and I'd rather sample a lot of small dishes than make a whole meal of rice. Besides, I can order a small dish of paella among my tapas. I inevitably include the roasted duck leg, the meat nearly melting under the crackly skin. Fresh sardines are

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The Tabard Inn makes me crave spring and summer. Also winter, and even damp and chilly fall.

As soon as the weather suggests I don't need a coat, the Tabard Inn's brick-walled garden comes to mind. It is a joyful little mingling of masonry, trees, vines and flowers that together turn a meal into a vacation. On the other hand, cold or rainy days allow me to hope for a fire in the Tabard's lounge, so I can sink into a sofa and plan my dinner with drink in hand—a glass from the restaurant's exceptionally astute wine list, a beer from the chalkboard's plentiful array of microbrews or an oh-so-fashionable single malt scotch. If the weather is just ordinary, it's still nice to sit at the bar

and imagine I'm not in a small Washington hotel but somehow in Manhattan, just a few steps from Central Park West.

This is definitely an Upper West Side crowd, maybe with a touch of Greenwich Village. It's a restaurant where your waitress is not an aspiring actress, but a part-time silversmith. Look around the dining room—which is easy to do since it's so small—and you'll guess you are seeing academics in D.C. for a conference, journalists not with sources but with gossip pals, lawyers who wouldn't work for corporations but only for public interest groups. You'll be right. The younger diners are probably children of the above who have been coming here since they were old enough to appreciate a spinach salad.

What is not readily apparent is that the Tabard Inn has expanded. In addition to its cozy, low-ceilinged dining room with pegged wood floor and black-and-white tiles, it now has an overflow upstairs dining room to take the pressure off weekend evenings and other

crowded mealtimes. And it has a new chef, Richard Flanagan.

Both are subtle but welcome changes. The news is that the Tabard Inn seems more stable than ever. As always, the food is New American (and it was so even before the term was coined). It displays an abundance of fresh produce, from the trendy fennel and blood oranges in a salad with olives and frisee, to apples and blackberries cooperating in a dessert crisp. The menu is small and changes daily, and it is heavy on seafood: oysters with trout roe, smoked scallops or trout, sauteed rockfish or halibut, shellfish with pasta. Often the pedigrees are promoted: The smoked trout is from Mount Walden in Virginia, the scallops from Georges Bank, the oysters from Nantucket. And since the restaurant has its own farm near Front Royal, spring and summer are likely to occasion boasts of the Tabard Inn's own vegetables.

Chef Flanagan is committed to bold flavors. You know it right from the first bite. Even the bread basket exudes cheese and spice fragrances. His steamed clams—the sweet little Manilas—swim in a broth of beer with branches of thyme and mincings of garlic, and the toasts balanced on the rim of the bowl give off waves of garlic aroma. His soup of fennel, white beans and tomatoes is tingly with spices. The most delicate first course has been a wild mushroom bisque.



More of a good thing: The Tabard Inn has a new chef and a newly expanded dining room.

This creamy soup with its haunting earthiness at first tastes subtle, then unfolds as you eat.

Most of the appetizers are salads, and these have always been the Tabard Inn's strength. A combination of pea shoots and cannellini beans with slivers of veal tongue is like winter



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Dining Around has been dining around – a lot. How else do you think Sidewalk can keep you abreast of an ever-changing restaurant scene and stay current with a database of nearly 1,000 restaurants? Recently, we dropped in on four places that merit another taste test, some because they've changed faces in the kitchen, one because we wanted to sample an old standby. Here's what we discovered.

Evening Star Cafe



Blue velvet-covered chairs, pretty red tables and sunny-yellow walls add whimsy to Del Ray's favorite dining room.

A delicate golden curry vinaigrette or moist-centered salmon; the crisp-skinned fish is poised atop a chewy-soft risotto cake threaded with mushrooms and gilded with a gently sweet sauce of butternut squash (this is a kitchen that pays attention to accompaniments). Salads – pear teamed with Stilton cheese, roasted beets glistening with garlic vinaigrette – yield fresh and pretty still lifes. But there are homey dishes, too, such as juicy, herb-flecked roast chicken (too bad the skin is flabby) with stellar mashed potatoes and a gravy that has "home sweet home" written all over it, plus grilled pork chops with melting cabbage. Pasta with mushrooms, however, is a

This restaurant is my fail-safe response to any number of questions. Its warm, whimsical dining room, splashed with friendly colors and decked out with lights made from toy parts, is as good for a date as for a family outing. And even if Mom and Dad are inclined to order Gorgonzola-stuffed quail with a thicket of fries or pecan-crusted rockfish, they can also be assured of finding a very good hamburger to appease smaller and more conservative appetites. Everyone's welcome – gay and straight, young and old, yupscale and downscale – and there's something to suit any taste and a range of budgets. Go fancy with tender seared scallops in a

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A native of Scotland, David Craig left the fish-friendly Pesce for Tabard Inn in July: "If I could do 100,000 things with fish," he said then, "I could do a million dishes with everything."

late of Pesce: Whole grilled spade, the size of a slightly deflated football, looks like a creature you'd see in the National Aquarium and tastes delicious atop its base of soft-crunchy black-eyed peas, spinach tendrils and butternut squash *coulis*. Cod is sautéed to a crisp-golden turn and partnered with an excellent risotto; swirled with sweet English peas and enhanced with a glorious, Parmesan-enriched sauce of sweet corn and cream, it is a risotto to remember. Of the seafood dishes, in fact, only a woefully salty plate of fresh *tagliarini* with mussels and clams falls short. But guess what? Craig understands meat and fowl, too. His grilled veal chop is terrific, and roasted squab shows up with a skin that gently crackles as you bite into it. A hit parade of contemporary desserts follows: Consider warm mango tart with toasted coconut, banana cheesecake set in a rich macadamia nut crust or a sampler of supernal ice creams – maybe rum raisin, coffee or roasted banana – served with lovely house-made cookies. So what's not to admire? I want to love (not just like) my \$12 appetizer, and considering the high prices, you'd think the place could offer better utensils and wine glasses that don't look as if they came from a college dorm. What's more, side dishes don't always live up to the appeal of featured attractions. Still, I can't wait to return.

Tabard Inn, 1739 N St. N.W., Washington, (202) 833-2668

Tragara



Tragara is the kind of Italian restaurant where the waiters wear tuxedos and dinner hours are punctuated with tableside pyrotechnical displays. Opera music wafts through the roseate dining room, which is heavily patronized by – oh, how to put it? – men and women of a certain age, who probably appreciate the

Where to stay

> AFFORDABLE DISTRICT HOTELS

Rudy Maxa (aka National Public Radio's "Savvy Traveler") advises the budget-minded to "log on to www.priceline.com and search for a DC hotel for about \$75 per night. Among the city's best hotels to match this price (sometimes) is Georgetown's **Monarch** [2401 M St. NW; 429-2400; www.monarchdc.com; normally \$240-500]. At under \$100 a night, this elegant new hotel is a steal—but they'll never quote this price over the phone."

"I send all my favorite guests to the **Tabard Inn** [1739 N St. NW; 785-1277; www.tabardinn.com; \$90-200]," says Courtney Rubin, a *Washingtonian* magazine writer. "It's near Dupont Circle, and it's an utterly comfortable, shabby-chic small hotel with a fireplace in the sitting room and a terrific restaurant with a garden deck. Plus, it's quiet and inexpensive."

A good full-service hotel that balances value and location is **Jurys Washington Hotel** (1500 New Hampshire Ave. NW; 483-6000; www.jurys.com; \$125-235). This Irish-owned Dupont Circle hotel is clean and contemporary. Much of the staff was born and trained in Ireland, and the hotel's Irish-American restaurant and pub serves (what else?) Guinness pints.

If you're looking for a trendier inn, there's good news. DC is finally getting the sort of cool boutique hotels that other cities have had for ages. "And hotels are getting smarter, too—most new ones have great sports and spa facilities," says Maxa. Among his favorite newcomers: **Hotel George** (15 E St. NW; 347-4200; www.hotelgeorge.com; \$175-355), a sleek Capitol Hill hotel filled with pop art and urbane, monochromatic rooms; the Kimpton Group's three new jazzy properties—the Dupont Circle-area **Topaz Hotel** (1733 N St. NW; 393-3000; www.topazhotel.com; \$145-275), the **Hotel**



Hay-Adams sightseeing: Some rooms come with a White House/Washington Monument view.

Rouge (1315 16th St. NW; www.hotelrouge.com; 232-8000; \$145-275), and, downtown, the **Hotel Monaco** (F St. between 7th and 8th Sts. NW), scheduled to open in June 2002 in the Old Tariff Building—can be counted on for great service, high-octane interiors, and lots of pillows.

> DIPLOMATIC DIGS

Who doesn't sleep well in an expensive bed? There are many of these in DC, and Barbara Mendlowitz, who visits monthly from Pittsburgh, believes the very best is Georgetown's **Four Seasons** (2800 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 342-0444; www.fourseasons.com; \$390-555). "For concierges who recall your preferences and address your every need [dinner reservations, spa-treatment appointments, theater tickets], this is it," she says.

A few blocks up M Street is the new **Ritz-Carlton** (1150 22nd St. NW; 835-0500; www.ritz-carlton.com; \$395-525), with the city's most comprehensive hotel fitness center and, every night, fresh-baked brownies with turndown service.

The hushed **Hay-Adams** (800 16th St. NW; 638-6600; www.hayadams.com; \$425-725), just emerged from a 14-million-dollar makeover, is a clubby enclave loved by lobbyists. And for everyone from Mark Twain to Tom Cruise, the **Willard Inter-Continental** (1401 Pennsylvania Ave. NW; 628-9100; www.washington.interconti.com; \$425-580) is swanky on a grand scale. It was at the hotel's Round Robin Bar, for instance, that Henry Clay mixed Washington's first mint julep. Veteran doorman Steve Blum, who welcomed the last six U.S. presidents to the Willard, happily helps tourists—sometimes famous ones—find their way. "Jimmy Stewart once asked me for a cab to the White House, which is only a block away. I told him to walk over and knock on the door. You know what? They let him in! Now that's hospitality," Blum says.

More trip-planning assistance: Get up-to-the-minute logistical information on Washington, DC, by logging on to www.nationalgeographic.com/traveler/tw.

MAY/JUNE 2002

National Geographic Traveler June 2002



by Tom Sietsema

Lasting Pleasures

Seasonal food and easygoing service keep the Tabard Inn humming

RESTAURANTS COME and restaurants go, but it seems like Washington will always have the Tabard Inn.

For more than 25 years now, it's been the place many of us head in spring and summer for a chance to dine outdoors, surrounded by a brick wall and abundant greenery. In fall and winter, the destination of choice is one of the many low couches in the lounge, which is as dark as a cave but warmed by a working fireplace. The Tabard Inn reminds me of countless small, chef-owned restaurants in Seattle and Berkeley, Calif., with their focus on keeping things simple and seasonal; at one time, the inn even had its own farm. A parade of chefs have passed through the kitchen over the years, among them Peter Pastan, now of Obelisk; David Craig, of Black's Bar & Kitchen; and David Hagedorn, of David Gregory. In the restaurant's most recent passage, former sous-chef Pedro Matamoros has taken over from chef Andrew Saba, who left for the nearby Jefferson Hotel.

One dish perfectly captures this time of year. Half a dozen oysters, dusted with semolina and fried to a slight crisp, encircle a hash of diced sweet potatoes tossed with bits of bacon, onion and fresh sage. The nice tug between crunch and creaminess, and between savory and sweet notes, is very satisfying, and the dish doesn't need much more embellishment. But the chef adds one more element: a coarse mustard sauce, just a few brush strokes on the plate. A bite of oyster dredged in that robust dip, followed by a forkful of hash, and I'm a happy guy.

On a more virtuous note, there are also oysters on the half shell; subtly sweet and smelling of clean ocean air, they do not need the mignonette that accompanies them. The inn's "classic" Caesar salad is arranged with whole spears of romaine and grated Parmesan cheese, but it lacks the proper punch. There seems to be no lemon or anchovy in the dressing, just a single tiny fish—a silvery afterthought—atop the greens. A better way to launch into a meal is with a rustic slice of pork pâté, served with dabs of two different mustards (and a silly, sweet raspberry coulis). Or, if it's offered, try the crab and corn soup, a small treasure of cream, crab and sweet diced vegetables topped with airy croutons.

When does gentle lighting become a flaw rather than an asset in a restaurant? Even if you don't need glasses, you'll probably have to hold the dinner menu close to the votive candle on your table to read the type at the Tabard Inn, which dims its lights to midnight levels. "There's more light outside than in here," a friend cracked—at 6 o'clock on a recent winter's evening. The darkness not only makes it hard to order, it denies diners the pleasure

RATINGS GUIDE

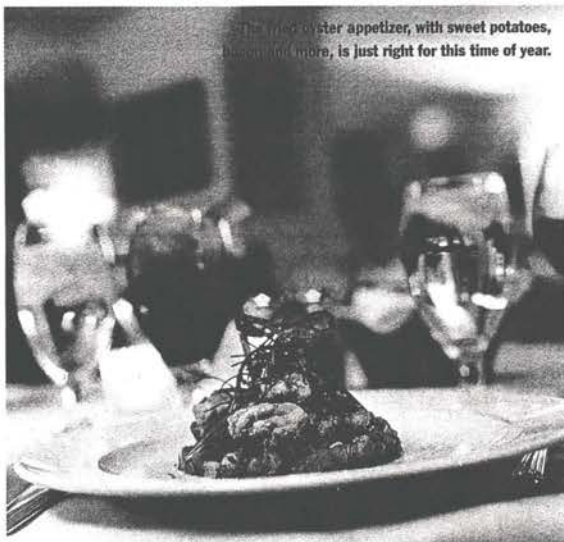
- ★ Satisfactory
- ★★ Good
- ★★★ Excellent
- ★★★★ Superlative

Restaurants that earn no stars are rated Poor. Ratings are based primarily on food quality but take into account service and ambience.

★★ Tabard Inn

1739 N St. NW (near 17th Street)
202-833-2668
www.tabardinn.com

Open: for breakfast Monday through Saturday 7 to 10 a.m., Sunday 7 to 9:30 a.m.; for lunch Monday through Friday 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; for brunch Saturday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sunday 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; for dinner Sunday through Thursday 6 to 9:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday 6 to 10 p.m. All major credit cards. No smoking at lunch; separate smoking area at dinner. Not wheelchair accessible. Metro: Dupont Circle. Valet parking Friday and Saturday after 7 p.m., Sunday during brunch. Prices: lunch appetizers \$4.50 to \$8, entrees \$10 to \$15; dinner appetizers \$7 to \$13, entrees \$19 to \$26. Full dinner with wine, tax and tip about \$70 per person.



The fried oyster appetizer, with sweet potatoes, bacon and more, is just right for this time of year.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRIS HARTLOVE

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August 2005
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Tabard Inn (Dupont Circle, expensive). The Tabard Inn is such a brunch favorite that it pays to make reservations well in advance. We walked in cold one Sunday at 11 AM and lucked into two seats at the bar; 15 minutes later the bar was jammed.

The Tabard is in demand for its warm, funky atmosphere and fantastic kitchen. Light flows into the dining area from a skylight over the bar and windows on the back walls. In warm weather the patio is a lovely place to dine.

The menu ranges from the basic to the exotic. Poached eggs (\$12) came Southwestern-style with chilies and guacamole, Southern-style with grits and oysters, or Benedict with ham and hollandaise. You can have pan-fried cod filet or a seafood stew for \$14. My salad of house-smoked salmon and smoked trout was plenty filling. The quiche was a lofty three inches high, substantial and fluffy at once.

We had to try the house-made doughnuts (\$6), six powdered pastries served with a dollop of vanilla whipped cream. Louise ate two and said, "I could give up Krispy Kremes forever." With wine, the bill quickly reaches \$30 a person.

Tabard Inn, 1739 N St NW; 202-785-1277; tabardinn.com. Saturday brunch 11:30 to 2:30, Sunday brunch 10:30 to 2:30.

—HARRY JAFFE

SURPRISES IN ETHIOPIA: WHAT TO EXPECT OUT OF AFRICA

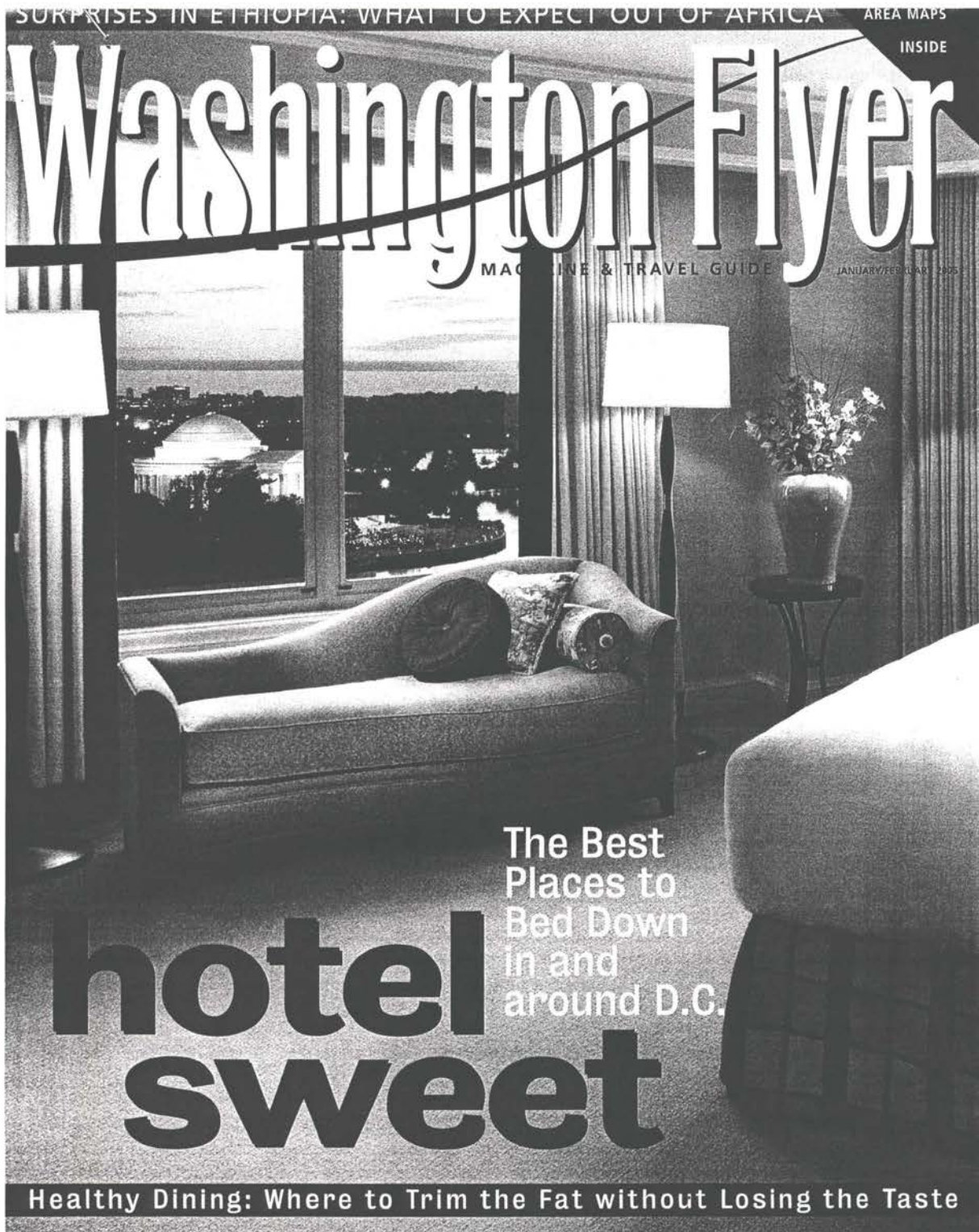
AREA MAPS

INSIDE

Washington Flyer

MAGAZINE & TRAVEL GUIDE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2005



The Best
Places to
Bed Down
in and
around D.C.

hotel sweet

Healthy Dining: Where to Trim the Fat without Losing the Taste



You may never leave the Ritz Carlton Georgetown.

Your Home Away from Home

Not your father's Ritz, the **Ritz Carlton Georgetown** (3100 South St., NW; 800/241-3333 or 202/912-4100; www.ritzcarlton.com/hotels/georgetown; doubles from \$329) is a study in slate, steel and brick—much of it remaining from the historic trash incinerator from which the site was so spectacularly converted. With its 165-foot smokestack looming overhead, the hotel burrows far underground, looming larger than its 86 boutique rooms would suggest. The pampering spa, trendy bar and M Street's famous array of shops together attract weekend visitors and long-term guests—none longer than those who purchase one of the 27 luxury condos within the hotel, which average a cool \$3.3 million.

For Big Shots

Between the 15-foot ceilings and the horde of NBA players dribbling over from the MCI Center arena across the street, you may feel a bit diminished—in height only—at **Hotel Monaco** (700 F St., NW; 877/202-5411 or 202/628-7177; www.monaco-dc.com; doubles from \$169). Still, the hotel's service makes everyone feel like a star. The 19th-century neoclassical architecture and masses of marble in this historic landmark belie the modern art and cool furnishings within. Well-dressed hipsters flock to Poste, the airy, stone-and-steel bar just off the lobby.

For the Entitled—Truly

The Federalist-style **Madison Hotel** (1177 15th St., NW; 800/424-8577 or 202/862-1600; www.themadisondc.com; doubles from \$199) conducts business with so many foreign embassies that it holds occasional

Inn-sider

FOR SOME SHABBY WITH YOUR CHIC

It was Colonel Mustard in the lounge with the knife. One of Washington's most special properties, the 40-room **Tabard Inn** (1739 N St., NW; 202/785-

1277; www.tabardinn.com; doubles with en suite bath from \$140) blends a mix of antiques, dark-stained wood and original artworks to create a feel reminiscent of Grandma's parlor. The popular restaurant and lounge screams ambience, from the brick-walled summer garden to the fireplaces and low couches, ideal for blustery winter nights.

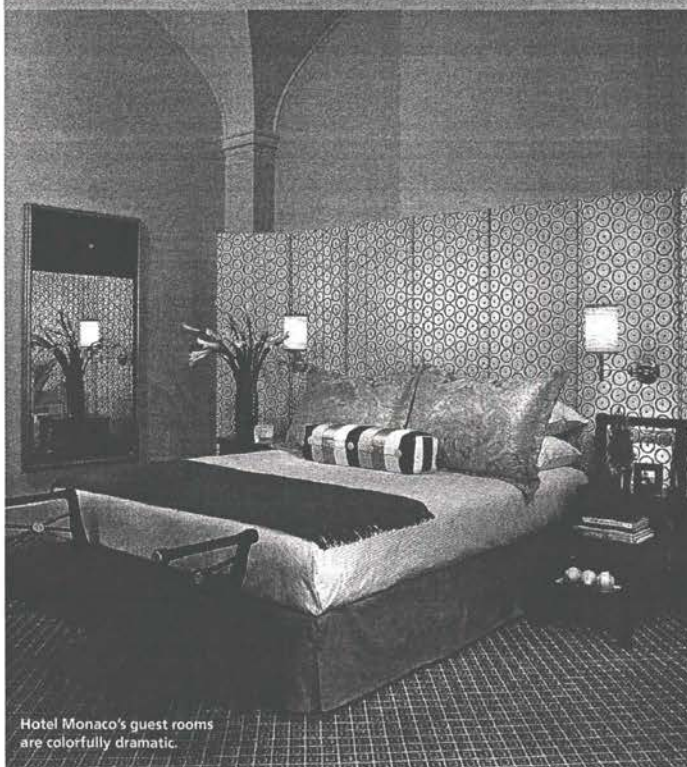
A private parlor at Tabard Inn.

AN OASIS AMONG THE STRIP MALLS

Fairfax County has grown up around the circa-1800, Federal-style **Bailiwick Inn** (4023 Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax, Va.; 703/691-2266; www.bailiwickinn.com; doubles from \$145), an oasis of charm among the area's recent development. The Civil War Battle of Fairfax Courthouse took place here, and the proprietors take their history seriously: Each of the 14 bedrooms is named for a famous Virginian and decorated in a style appropriate to that individual, although all are replete with antiques and featherbeds.

ESCAPE FROM WASHINGTON

With a population of 49, it's tough to get less urban than Paris, Va., home to the 1829 **Ashby Inn** (692 Federal St., Paris, Va.; 540/592-3900; www.ashbyinn.com; doubles from \$145). The quiet hunt-country inn, comprised of the main house and a converted schoolhouse, is surrounded by vineyards and horse stables. The Appalachian Trail is visible from the inn's windows—the perfect way to work up an appetite for its destination restaurant, which has been recognized by the James Beard Foundation.



Hotel Monaco's guest rooms are colorfully dramatic.

ne Weingarten's plan to save print journalism | Jeanne Marie Laskas on the wrong way to try

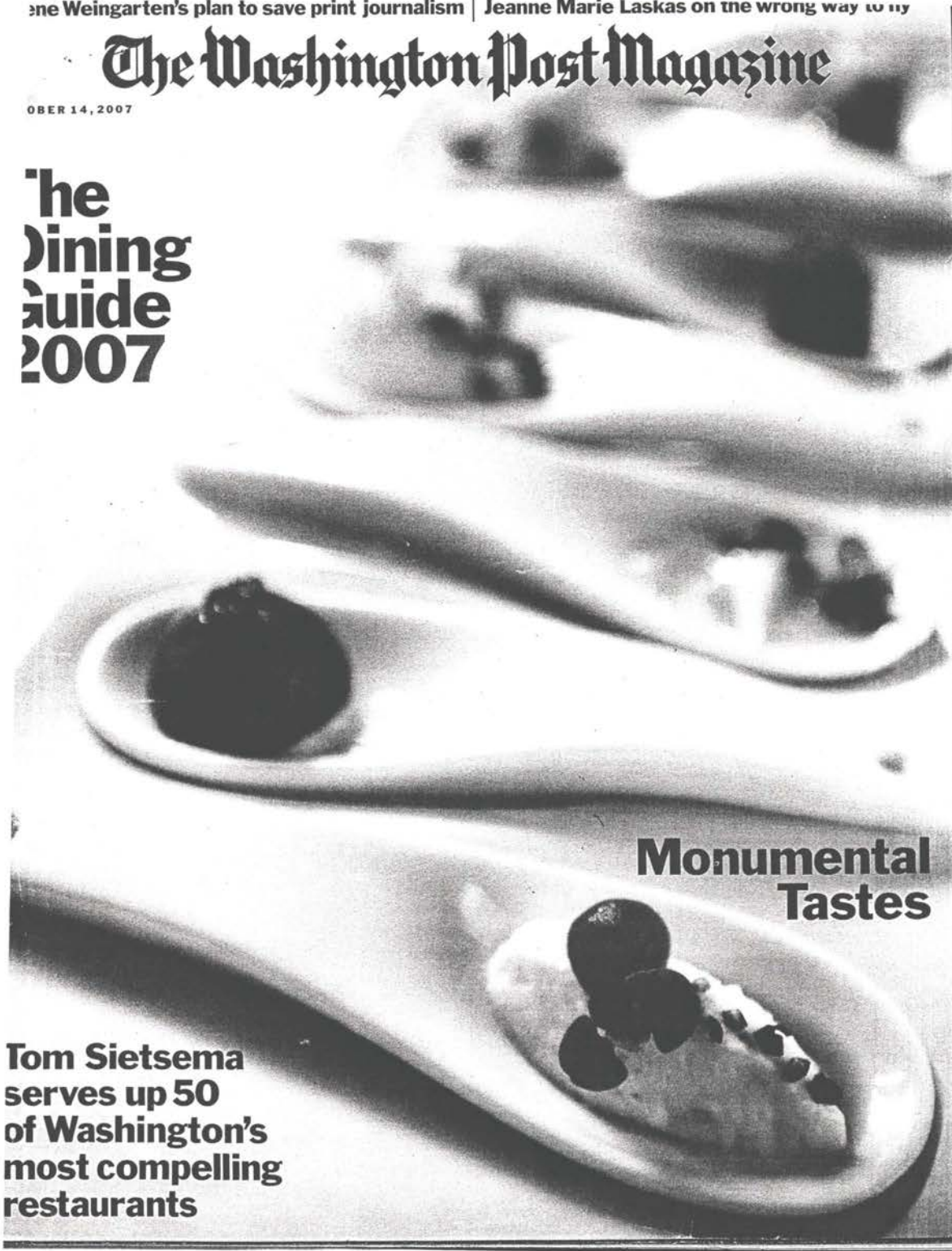
The Washington Post Magazine

OBER 14, 2007

**The
Dining
Guide
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**Monumental
Tastes**

**Tom Sietsema
serves up 50
of Washington's
most compelling
restaurants**



brushed with a sauce of mirin, sake and soy sauce. Each bite transported me. Cool aside: Head chef Koji Terano had the day off on my visit, but you'd never know by the look and taste of his underlings' fine handiwork. Better yet, there's more where that came from: Sushi-Ko is poised to open a bigger, sexier branch in Chevy Chase.

2309 Wisconsin Ave. NW; 202-333-4187.
www.sushiko.us. Open: lunch Tuesday through Friday; dinner daily. All major credit cards. Entree prices: lunch \$9 to \$15, dinner \$10 to \$25.

★★ 1/2 THE TABARD INN

LIKE AN OLD FRIEND, I CAN ALWAYS RELY ON THE TABARD TO BE THERE FOR ME. In fall and winter, its comfortably worn, fire-place-lit lounge is one of the first places I head for a warm-me-up; in spring and summer, I can count on the brick-walled garden to impress any visitors. A talented parade of chefs has marched through the kitchen over the decades, and the latest, Paul Pelt, follows the inn's long-standing recipe for fresh and contemporary American fare. Pelt's croquettes, sweet with shrimp and nutty with Manchego cheese, whisk me to Spain, though their cayenne-shocked tomato jam is very New World. And his twin barbecue duck sandwiches are both adorable and scrumptious, refreshingly paired with a light slaw of thread-thin shredded jicama, mango and cilantro. There's something to appeal to every hankering on the daily-changing script: short ribs bedded on polenta and ringed with chimichurri, grilled quail that evokes the Caribbean with its peppery jerk spices, a crab cake here and a hanger steak (with bernaise sauce) there. Huw Griffiths's desserts — cappuccino pots de creme, lemon meringue pudding cake, carrot cake lavished with coconut — bring up the rear, and you need to know going in that they are very, very hard to resist. So save space. And bring some cotton balls for your ears, because this decades-old charmer is as clattery as it is cozy.

1739 N St. NW; 202-833-2668.
www.tabardinn.com. Open: breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. All major credit cards. Entree prices: lunch \$10 to \$18, dinner \$22 to \$30.

★★ 1/2 TABERNA DEL ALABARDERO

ALMOST EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS GRANDLY FORMAL RESTAURANT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE I'M IN SPAIN FOR A MEAL. A shot of gazpacho, cool and refreshing, and skewered chorizo, hot and zesty, serve as my



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BEST ROMANTIC HOTEL

Tabard Inn

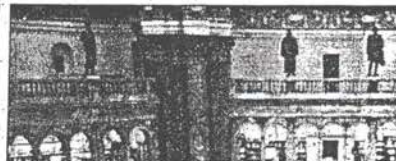
1739 N St. NW
785-1277

This is the perfect place for starting or nurturing a romance, tucked away on a one-way lane between 17th and 18th Streets off Dupont Circle.

Beyond the check-in desk at the front door sprawls an antique-bedecked labyrinth of not only rooms for sleeping but cozy furnished nooks made for having an intimate drink with a friend. The main parlor features a clutter of sofas surrounding a fireplace. Ascend a staircase and find a piano lonely for a pianist in another miniature living room. Around every corner, on every landing, is another place to tarry. Beyond the main parlor is a restaurant, an enchanting patio for drinks in the

Services

spring and summer, and a bar from which you can purchase libations and carry them wherever you want to sit or *whatever*.



FOOTLOOSE

Dining Out

CONNECTICUT AVENUE CORRIDOR

Two inns along tree-lined N Street make the block between 17th Street and Connecticut Avenue NW an outdoor dining find. The Tabard Inn is known around town for its nouvelle-American cuisine, with distinctive touches like toasted French bread croutons for your salad, or chive orange butter with your fish. Enter through the homey lobby and cozy lounge (an excellent spot for a fire-side cognac during the winter, by the way) and move out to the breezy patio pleasantly shaded by the trees and a canopy of billowing parachute silk. Full meals are offered outdoors at lunch, a daily "light fare" menu and cocktails the rest of the day. Or just go for the desserts. Treat yourself to a white satin tart or rum chestnut cheesecake.



At the Tabard Inn, all the guest rooms have high ceilings and an array of period furniture.

Tabard Inn: perfect for 'power' people

By Kristin Holmoe
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

There's nothing slick about the Tabard Inn — Washington's quintessential small hotel — unless it's the clientele. On the first day I lunched there, a journalist was interviewing a female "mover and shaker" on my right. On my left, a fresh-faced young man in a three-piece suit was discussing his chances in an upcoming election. And just about everybody else looked as though they felt right at home making momentous decisions in the corridors of power.

What gave this scene its particular charm was that it took place in such a relaxed, friendly, and unpretentious setting as the dining room at the Tabard Inn.

The food at the Tabard is delicious and carefully prepared. Produce is delivered fresh from a private farm in Virginia. The atmosphere and the service couldn't be more pleasant. If you get there early enough, or are

Washington

TRAVEL

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

ARTS • LEISURE

25

INN from page 23

willing to wait long enough in the right season, you can have breakfast or lunch outside on the brick-enclosed patio, shaded by bright umbrellas and surrounded by potted impatiens and geraniums. Dinner is served only indoors.

Even waiting at the Tabard is no hardship. In the walnut-paneled lounge you can sink into one of nine comfy sofas and gaze at the venerable prints, paintings, and memorabilia that surround you. You can read the paper at a round, marble-top table in the corner, or, in winter, enjoy the warmth and cheer of the fireplace.

What's so refreshing about the inn, located in the heart of downtown Washington, is that the place is so homelike, cozy, and genuinely welcoming.

Having meals at the Tabard is rather like eating in an old, familiar club — only the food is better.

I happened on the Tabard as I prowled down N Street, just off Scott Circle, looking for a place to eat. What I longed for — but didn't dare dream of finding — was

that institutional quality of the hotel at which I was staying. To my astonishment, I found just what I was looking for.

The Tabard Inn consists of three late-Victorian townhouses connected on the inside by several quirky, creaking staircases. There are 40 guest rooms on four floors and no elevators. The rooms range in size from palatial to small, and in price from \$106 with bath, to \$43 without. All have high ceilings and a delightful array

of mostly period furniture, some picked up at auctions.

The floral motifs and odd pieces of old porcelain recall the charm of small hotels in London.

Room 24, for example, has a fireplace and drawing-room area, a snow-white candlewick bedspread on its wrought-iron double

bed, and an upright piano in one corner. The vivid pink and green of its sofa and large, inviting armchairs are repeated in an oval of plasterwork molding on the ceiling. Light pours in through the three large windows facing N Street. The floral motifs and odd pieces of old porcelain recall the charm of small hotels in London.

Number 24 has a small, old-fashioned, spotlessly clean private bath. There is a telephone in the room, but no television. Anyone who absolutely must watch tele-



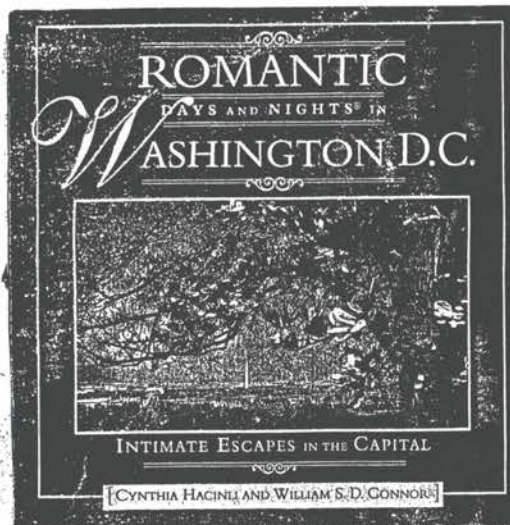
Hurrying to the Tabard's outdoor restaurant, a waiter uses a roundabout route.

tally, making friends with some other guests. Or, on the shelves of a quaint old secretary in number 24, there is a collection of well-thumbed books.

Because there are no elevators at the Tabard, there is also no room service.

Breakfast in the dining room or on the patio has become a tradition for local Washingtonians as well as for guests in the hotel. After all, "movers and shakers" need to get an early start — but they obviously like their comforts, too.

NEAL MENSCHER — STAFF



LAST ONE: AFTERNOON

You're staying at the **Tabard Inn** (1739 N Street NW; 202-833-2668; \$114 to \$165—rates generally lower in summer), a quirky bed-and-breakfast named for the hostelry in the

[*Romantic Days and Nights: Washington, D.C.*]

Canterbury Tales; it is made up of three Victorian town houses on a lazy tree-lined street in Dupont Circle. Oozing the sort of Left Bank charm Gertrude Stein's Lost Generation found so seductive, the Tabard has been around since WWI. In the seventies, demolition was a near thing but for vociferous protest from the nearby Mayfair neighborhood. More recently, Jonathan



Romance at a Glance

▼ Stay at the Tabard Inn, a string of three Victorian town houses in Dupont Circle (202-833-2668).

▼ Dine on New American cuisine, much of it grown on the inn's own farm in Virginia, in the romantic, walled garden of the inn or its intimate dining room.

▼ Take in live jazz at the laid-back 18th Street Lounge (202-466-3922).

▼ Wander through the avant-garde galleries of the New Downtown.

▼ Browse the boutiques of U Street, the East Village of D.C.

Demme, the American Truffaut when it comes to love, and Julia Roberts, who's up there in the hearts-and-flowers department, have stayed here, albeit on separate occasions. One of the thirty-nine rooms has an upright piano for pounding out tunes like Cole Porter's "Let's Fall in Love," others have fireplaces—some that actually work. We like the penthouse with its outdoor balcony overlooking the back courtyard. Be sure to make a dinner reservation at the inn's stellar restaurant while you've got the front desk on the phone.

Dinner

After unpacking, repair to the second-floor lounge for a retro cocktail, a Manhattan perhaps. Lighting is atmospheric—you'll feel like you're wearing Ray Bans—the overstuffed Victorian camelbacks are well worn and private enough for soulful kisses. In summer, the walled garden is the place to dine. During winter months, commandeer a table in the small dining room with its speakeasy checkerboard floor. Much of what you'll be eating is organic, grown on the owner's farm. Nearly every dish on Chef David Craig's ever-changing eclectic New American menu (expensive) soars. Other than the Europeans who stay at the inn, the restaurant attracts artsy types, jaded liberals, left-wing power lunchers, and at least one sex therapist.

Tabard Inn Weekly Delivery Truck and Trash Recovery Schedule

(Monday through Friday)

Type

of visits in alley per week

Trash --8 yard container
Trash --Recycling
Trash --Grease Removal
Trash-- Grease Trap Cleanout

5
4
0.5
0.5

Food-Seafood (premium)
Food--Seafood (sustainable)
Food-Seafood (choice)

4
2
3

Food --Meats (super premium)
Food--Meats (local & sustainable)
Food --Meats (choice)

3
2
3

Food-- Produce (local & sustainable)
Food --Produce (premium)
Food --Produce (choice)

4
3
2

Food --coffee
Supplies--premium
Supplies --choice

2
3
1

42 deliveries per week in alley

Type

of deliveries from N Street

Linens for Hotel and Restaurant
UPS, Fedex, Miscellaneous Deliveries

5
25

Liquor --Washington Wholesale
Liquor --Republic National

2
2

Wine ---
8 distributors per week

8

Total Weekly Deliveries From N Street

42 deliveries per week

84 deliveries per week



October 3, 2009

Mr. Jeremiah Cohen
Tabard Inn
1739 N. Street NW
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Cohen:

We have received your down payment of \$12,916 for a solar water heating system and have delivered some of the components and worked with your plumbing contractor to integrate the solar system with the existing water heating systems in the building. We have prepared permitting documentation and also received clearance from the historic district review at the DCRA. As you know, the DC Government has been delayed in issuing its program and associated rules to support installation of solar water heating systems with grants. We are waiting for the program to open and begin accepting applications.

I am writing to express concern about potential shading of the solar water heating system we are in the process of installing. Our site examination determined that the solar collectors should be placed on the roof of the central building of the Inn and pushed back to the northern most edge of this roof area. You should be very aware that the building to the east of the Inn, a non-conforming structure, will cast shadows on the solar collector array in the late fall and winter months in the early daylight hours. Because of this and the space available on the roof, we are planning to face the collectors about 15 to 20 degrees west of south.

There were plans proposed for the property to your west, 1743-1755 N Street, NW, that called for erection of a penthouse on the roof that appears to be planned for an elevation of 55 feet, plus additional structure for the elevator equipment. The shadowing study Robert Swartz conducted on these structures confirmed our concerns that this structure will cast shadows onto the solar array, substantially cutting the energy it can deliver. In December when days are short, the shadowing of the solar array will be total by 4 p.m. It is particularly bad because of our intent to turn the collector array towards the west. For example at 2:00 p.m. at 40 degrees north latitude, on January 21 the sun is only 23.8 degrees above the horizon and is 30.9 degrees west of south. Any structure that is 31 degrees west of south and 24 degrees above the horizon will shade the solar collector array. The difference in energy collection is substantial. For example, on an overcast day, only about 35% of solar energy available on a sunny day in Btu per square foot of area will reach a collector surface. Shading would have the same effect, a dramatic reduction of incident solar energy.

The solar system we have designed, a Thermomax with 180 evacuated tubes, offers you an economic return on your investment. If the solar radiation on the solar collectors is intercepted by an adjacent structure, it will reduce the delivered energy from the solar energy system and call into question the economic value of the project. If you cancel this project because of shading of your roof by an adjacent structure, you stand to lose an estimated \$65,000 in energy savings over 25 years. The table and figures below show how we calculated this figure.

This table shows the energy output per month for a Thermomax solar water heating system with 180 tubes. The figures are calculated using insolation data from the closest measurement site, which is Baltimore, Maryland. This table shows the solar collector array delivering 73,169,596 Btu per year to the hot water storage tank to be installed with the system.

Average Daily Thermomax Output** BTU's for water heated by 60F	
180 Tube Array 198 sq. Feet	
BTU	USgal
150,572	301
180,687	361
206,499	413
223,708	447
228,010	456
240,916	482
236,614	473
232,312	465
219,406	439
197,895	396
154,875	310
133,364	267
73,169,596	146,339

daily
cum per year

With 73,169,596 Btu delivered to load converted by 100,000 Btu per therm, the number of therms the solar energy system contributes annually equals 732. You savings will be higher because the solar energy will offset fuel consumption including losses for a conventional gas-fired water heater, which is typically at best 70% efficient. Consequently the solar energy system will save an average of 1045 therms per year. If each therm cost \$1.60, then the annual savings would amount to \$1,672. Multiplying by 25 years, the life of the system, the energy savings would total \$41,811 if there were no inflation over those 25 years in the price of natural gas. No doubt, energy prices will increase in price, and if an inflation rate of 3.5% per year is used, the savings will amount to \$65,142.

In conclusion, solar energy access rights for buildings in urban and other areas have to be taken into consideration as energy prices escalate and solar energy systems expand in the market as a cost-effective solution for gaining control over future energy prices. It is not just a question of preserving the character of historic neighborhoods, it involves access to reliable energy at a reasonable cost. We encourage you to take whatever steps you can to protect your solar access rights and gain full value for the investment you have committed to make.

You will not be alone. Some of the first statewide solar access laws were passed as early as 1978. Three that were enacted that year were the California Solar Rights Act, Wyoming Solar Rights Act and New Mexico Solar Rights Act. These States passed law impeding any entity from restricting solar access to home and business owners. A national check shows that thirty-four States now have some type of laws enacted protecting access to solar energy. They can be enacted by local jurisdictions, or statewide.

Thank you for choosing Capital Sun Group to be your solar energy company.

Sincerely



Carlo La Porta
President



