

# Bloomberg

## The Best New Restaurants in Washington, Chosen by Top Chefs

These 13 spots range from a fried chicken destination to a glamorous dining room that specializes in 40-layered lasagna.

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Power dining has always had special significance in the U.S. capital. For years the place to eat was in dining rooms near Capitol Hill—not for the food, but for the politicians, you could sit alongside.

In the last decade, though, the city has thrown off its steakhouse stereotype to become one of the most dynamic dining scenes in the country. The power-dining scene hasn't disappeared altogether; some dining rooms maintain in-house security for the concentration of VIPs sitting down to eat.

Now D.C. is working to bring back the travelers that before the pandemic made it one of the country's most popular cities for domestic tourists: In 2019, it hosted 24.6 million visitors. The city has been attracting a new round of out-of-town talent, such as the dean of New York restaurants Keith McNally, who's planning an outpost of Minetta Tavern, as well as chefs like New Orleans favorite Kristen Essig, who's brought her winning take on Cajun classics to the new Dauphine's.

Her restaurant is named one of the top new spots in the Washington area, all picked by notable chefs below. Places include Moon Rabbit in the \$2.5 billion, 24-acre Wharf development, where chef Kevin Tien offers elevated Vietnamese dishes, and Ruthie's All Day Cafe in Arlington, Va., where the not-so-secret weapons are a custom wood smoker and an Argentine grill.

Read on to learn more about these terrific spots and the reasons why Washington should be at the top of your go-here-now list.

### **Moon Rabbit**



Before he opened Moon Rabbit, chef Kevin Tien made a name for himself at the buzzy Emilie's. Then, during the pandemic, he started a takeout series to stop hatred directed at the Asian American Pacific Islander community. His new restaurant specializes in elevated Vietnamese cuisine and has a waterfront view. "Chef Kevin has a creative take on flavors that's still true to his Vietnamese heritage," says master chef Peter Chang. "He beautifully combines execution and creativity in everything from the cocktails to the evolving menu." Chang especially likes the grilled pork with lemongrass. "The flavors are perfectly balanced and refreshing, giving the dish the right notes of acid for an awesome taste combination." *Recommended by Peter Chang, chef and owner of Q by Peter Chang in Bethesda, Md.*