

27 FIOLA

601 PENNSYLVANIA AVE., NW;
202-628-2888

Chef Fabio and wife Maria Trabocchi have greatly expanded their restaurant empire in the five years since opening this fine-dining flagship. Keeping things fresh is a new tasting-menu format that embraces the kitchen's many luxurious tendencies. Just say yes to creamy Belon oysters and caviar, lobster ravioli garnished with a half tail and a claw, and pine-smoked duck with seared foie gras—not to mention Alba white truffles in season. The price reflects the ingredients, starting at \$95 for three inevitably rich courses. (À la carte dining is still available at the bar and by request.) Servers are in the business of catering to needs, VIP and not, as is head sommelier Jennifer Foucher—as affable with pairings as with recommendations by the glass. *Very expensive.*

ALSO GREAT: AHI CRUDO WITH UNI AND HAMACHI; OSSO BUCO TORTELLINI; CHESTNUT CAPPUCCINO; TURBOT WITH MUSSELS AND SAFFRON; TIRAMISU.

28 BLUE DUCK TAVERN

1201 24TH ST., NW; 202-419-6755

This glass-walled dining room in the Park Hyatt sports a woody-chic, West Coast vibe, though the farm-to-table menu is grounded in the Mid-Atlantic. Reservations are a must, but spontaneous souls can head to the restaurant's romantically lit lounge. The same Modern American menu is served in both places, so you won't have to forgo classics like thrice-cooked duck-fat fries that couple perfectly with prime steak, or whole fish from the wood oven. Don't stop with spuds—the kitchen wants you to eat your vegetables, dressing up crispy Brussels sprouts with *bottarga* and *tonnato* sauce or pairing parsnips with toasted oats and pickled grapes. For dessert, another tavern classic beckons: buttery deep-dish apple pie for two, or for an indulgent one. *Expensive.*

ALSO GREAT: BABY GEM SALAD WITH GREEN GODDESS DRESSING; TAGLIATELLE WITH SWEETBREAD BOLOGNESE; CHEESY GRITS WITH CHARRED ONIONS; SUGAR COOKIES.

IN
NEWCOMERS
TO THIS
YEAR'S LIST

AFGHAN BISTRO

ALL-PURPOSE
PIZZERIAANXO CIDERY &
PINTXOS BAR

BAAN THAI

BANTAM KING

BINDAAS

CONOSCI

EATBAR

FIELD & MAIN

HANK'S
PASTA BAR

HAZEL

HIMITSU

KINSHIP

KOGIYA

KYIRISAN

LAPIS

MÉTIER

PINEAPPLE
AND PEARLSRAPPAHANNOCK
OYSTER BAR

RPM ITALIAN

SALLY'S
MIDDLE NAME

1789

SUSHI OGAWA

SUSHI TARO

TAIL UP GOAT

TIMBER PIZZA CO.

VERMILION

WHALEY'S

29 PRESERVE

164 MAIN ST., ANNAPOLIS;
443-598-6920

As its name suggests, this casual Annapolis joint specializes in all things fermented and jarred. So take a cue and don't skip the pickles—an ever-changing assortment that might include Bloody Mary celery, Old Bay turnips, or bread-and-butter green tomatoes. The rest of chef Jeremy Hoffman's food is just as comfortably familiar yet cleverly eclectic. (He's an alum of New York's Nobu and Per Se, after all.) Pierogi with caramelized onions and decorative dollops of sour cream nod to his Pennsylvania Dutch upbringing. Gnocchi are substituted for rice cakes in a dish with Korean kimchee. And good luck not inhaling the Indian-accented crunchy fried-kale salad. *Moderate.*

ALSO GREAT: GRILLED-BEEF-HEART SALAD; SPICY SHRIMP LETTUCE WRAPS; PORK AND SAUERKRAUT; STEWED BEEF MEATBALLS; CHICKEN-FRIED CATFISH; BREAD PUDDING.

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KAPNOS,
KAPNOS
TAVERNA,
KAPNOS
KOUZINA2201 14TH ST., NW, 202-234-5000;
4000 WILSON BLVD., ARLINGTON,
703-243-4400; 4900 HAMPDEN LA.,
BETHESDA, 301-986-8500

Mike Isabella's affinity for Greek cooking is beautifully expressed at this trio of restaurants. At the original Kapnos in DC, huge hunks of meat such as goat and lamb sizzle along a wall of rotisserie spits, wafting meaty perfume. Kapnos Taverna in Ballston explores the briny deep; splurge on a gorgeous seafood tower with its array of raw-bar items. At the newest outpost, Kapnos Kouzina, Isabella explores rustic plates including stellar Greek-fried chicken with burnt-honey harissa. The best shared qualities among the siblings are puffy house-made flatbreads, dips and spreads (never miss the *taramasalata*), grilled whole fish, and barman Taha Ismail's crafty cocktails—we're particularly fond of Kapnos's boozy lemonades. *Moderate to expensive.*

ALSO GREAT: SPANAKOPITA WITH SPINACH AND LEEKS; SWORDFISH KEBABS; CHARRED OCTOPUS; LAMB SHOULDER WITH HARISSA; FRIED GREEK POTATOES; SPIKED GREEK COFFEE.