

Peter Fay Tells Why
He Decided to
Become a Woman

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Award
Winning
Homes

Wedding Bells:
Couples Tell
Tales of Love

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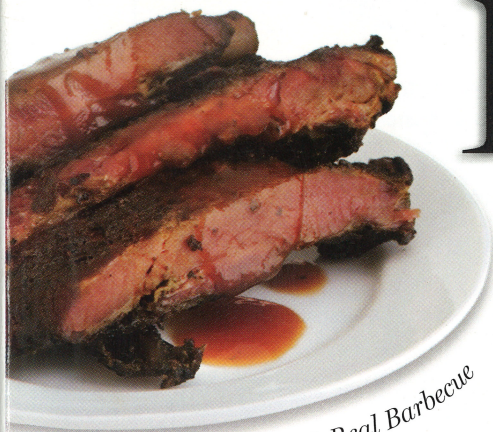
PAD THAI at Ruan Thai



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TACOS at Taqueria Nacional



SUSHI at Kotobuki

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ing out winning shore fare.

What to get: Fried bay scallops—smaller and sweeter than their cousins from the sea—with lemon; fried clams with tartar sauce; fried shrimp on a potato roll; a budget-busting lobster roll bound with house-made mayo; wood-grilled whole calamari with basil-walnut pesto, a signature Hook appetizer; wood-grilled asparagus; spicy braised greens; vinegary potato salad and classic coleslaw; cinnamon blueberry pie.

Best for: Quick pickup dinners; a meal when you're nostalgic for the beach.

Insider tip: The strong, smoky flavor the wood grill imparts is alluring—in doses. So if you order grilled fish, it's best not to pair it with grilled sides.

Open daily for lunch and dinner.

Taqueria Nacional

400 N. Capitol St., NW | 202-737-7070



Why go: James Beard Award-winning chef Ann Cashion—the woman behind the fancier Johnny's Half Shell next door—has joined the upscale downscale trend, putting well-sourced meats and veggies in the service of humble taqueria fare. Hit the salsa bar, which offers three ways to punch up the flavor of your tacos.

What to get: Tacos filled with chunks of beef or smoky, shredded-pork *carnitas*, each topped with chopped onion and cilantro; batter-fried fish tacos with crunchy cabbage slaw and a slightly sweet *crema salsa fresca*; *aguas frescas*, cool and refreshing drinks that come in such flavors as sweet mango-orange or summery watermelon.

Best for: Takeout—there are no seats inside and only eight outdoors. Pick up a couple of tacos for a picnic in a nearby park or before hopping a train at Union Station.

Insider tip: Lovers of *horchata*, the almondy milk drink that's a staple of most taquerias, will appreciate the version here made in the Spanish style with chufa nuts instead of ground rice and light on the cinnamon.

Open Monday through Friday for breakfast and lunch.

A Taste of Burma

126 Edds La., Sterling | 703-444-8510



Why go: To experience the crossroads of Indian, Thai, and Chinese food in a spunky dining room complete with warm hand towels on arrival, sunshine-colored walls, Burmese artwork, and sequined pillows.

What to get: Fermented-tea-leaf salad, an irresistible marriage of flavor and texture; triple-layer pork with a mélange of vegetables; *ohnno kaukswe*, a sweet and thick chicken-coconut-and-noodle soup; *farluda*, a layering of ice cream, custard, and noodles that looks like something Hello Kitty would order for dessert.

Best for: Anyone in the mood for bright and lively Asian flavors but bored with the usual Thai; couples looking for a romantic oasis in a strip-mall desert.

Insider tip: The kitchen is very accommodating, allowing substitutions and honoring requests that fat be trimmed from the triple-layer pork or that peanuts be left off a dish.

Open daily for lunch and dinner.